Keeping Tertiary Education Functioning in Conflict–Affected Areas: Resilience and Development

Global Conflict Tracker
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Can You Keep Tertiary Education Functioning in Conflict–Affected Areas?

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You can’t

If you are left alone

Education 2030

Does your QA agency acknowledge academic solidarity as a quality indicator?

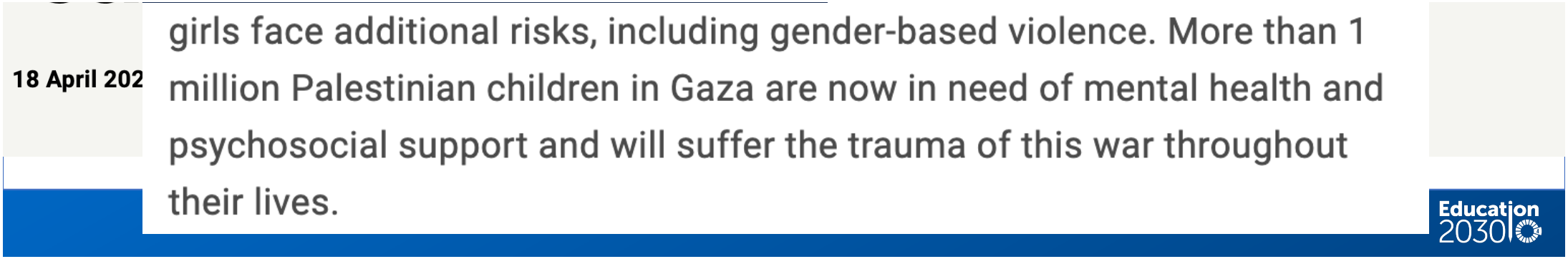
UNESCO Constitution (1945)

- That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.

- That a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.

A **joint study** by the World Bank, the Ukrainian government, the European Union and the United Nations concluded that, as of February 2024, 21% of Ukraine higher education institutions have been damaged or destroyed during the ongoing Russian invasion. For research institutions, the rate rises to 31%.

The report also shows how damage to Ukraine's higher education institutions is the most severe in the country's east, where Russian forces are concentrating their attacks.



What can be done?

Overall aims

1. Stabilization and Securitization
2. Reconstruction
3. Statebuilding
4. Peacebuilding

Some practical avenues

1. Establish and strengthen **inter-institutional partnerships:**

   Nonresident virtual scholar-in-residence programs, dual-degree programs, and collaborative research projects

   - **Arizona State University (ASU)**: Honored for its Afghan Women's Education Project.
   - **Kent State University**: Partnership with the University of Rwanda for peace and conflict studies.
   - **Universidad de La Salle** (Colombia): Utopia project provides higher education and entrepreneurial opportunities to students from rural, conflict-affected areas.

Some practical avenues

1. Establish and strengthen **inter-institutional partnerships:**
   Nonresident virtual scholar-in-residence programs, dual-degree programs, and collaborative research projects
2. Invest in **digital infrastructure and virtual exchange** programs
3. Advocate for the protection of **academic freedom and university autonomy**
4. Foster **global coordination** and knowledge sharing among stakeholders
5. Integrate higher education in **post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding efforts**

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Two challenges

1. Focus on capacity strengthening

2. Support sustainability

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Key figures

68%

of refugees

are enrolled in primary education

37%

of refugees

are enrolled in secondary education

42%

of non-refugees

have access to tertiary & higher education

7%

of refugees

have access to tertiary & higher education

Public policies

- **France**: Flexible procedures for recognizing prior learning, including undocumented credentials.
- **Germany**: Supportive preparatory programs and comprehensive data collection on refugee students.
- **Turkey**: Inclusive higher education policies and specific support programs for refugee students.
- **Norway**: Complementary educational programs for refugees with professional qualifications.

Two UNESCO initiatives

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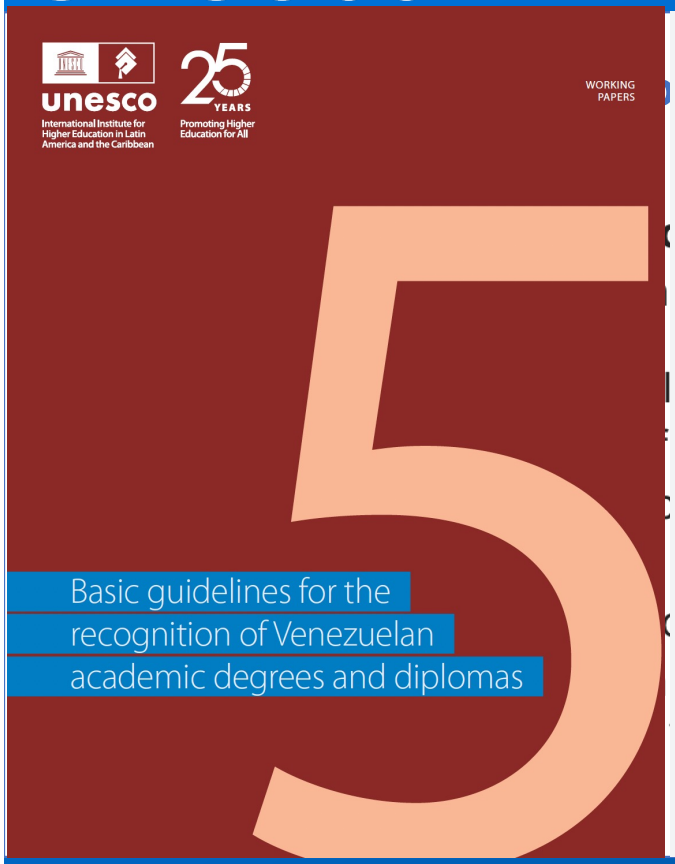

UNESCO IESALC: Mapping policies to enforce the right to higher education of Venezuelan refugees in the LAC region

How can the educational rights of Venezuelan R/VM in Latin America and the Caribbean be protected and fulfilled?

This research aims to **examine the policies and strategies** in place to support Venezuelan R/VM in both 'destination' and 'transit' nations. 'Destination' nations, like Colombia and Peru, are where R/VM tend to settle long-term, while 'transit' countries, such as Mexico and Panama, serve as temporary stops on the way to other destinations.

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