

A critical analysis of how UNICEF is developing sustainable practices in education around the world supporting the focus area of immigrant/refugee children

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ECIE6004 Global Perspectives in Education
Assessment Component Two

A VIDEO PRESENTATION BY:

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LINK TO THE VIDEO RECORDING OF THE WHOLE PRESENTATION WITH NARRATION:

[NP KC AND RM VIDEO FOR ASS 2 ECIE6004 GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES IN EDUCATION.MP4](#)



(UNICEF, 2024)

Introduction

2

THIS PRESENTATION'S AIM IS TO UNDERTAKE A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF...

- The UNICEF report: *'All In: Towards Tangible Solutions for Equity and Inclusion in Education'* Referred to as *'The Report'* (UNICEF, 2024)
- Relevant international and national legislation, policy and practice frameworks alongside pertinent theories

with the purpose to enable a critical analysis to be undertaken on how UNICEF is assisting in developing sustainable practices in education around the world, for the focus area of supporting immigrant/refugee children

THE PRESENTATION'S STRUCTURE WILL FOLLOW...

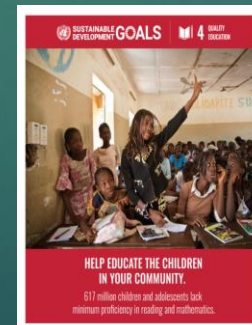
- **Firstly** - an initial introduction and context section regarding the report
- **Secondly** - each student will present their own individual critical analysis of one of the UNICEF report's fourteen case studies, which they feel supports the presentation's chosen focus area of immigrant/refugee children
- **Thirdly** - the presentation will close with a collective summary of the three case studies critical analyses' findings, conclusions and suggested ways forward



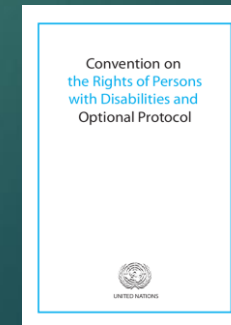
(UNICEF, 2024)



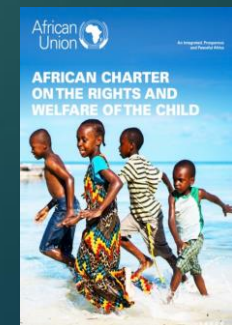
(UNCRC, 1989)



(UN, 2015)



(UN, 2006)



(OAU, 1990)

The Right to Inclusive Education

The Report quotes:

- UNCRC (1989) Article 28
- UN Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) Article 24
- UN Sustainable Development Goals (2015) SDG 4

These international rights and goals aim to ensure equitable and inclusive quality education, alongside opportunities for lifelong learning, **for all**, for the benefit of all global citizens

However:

The report goes on to quote that globally **244 MILLION PRIMARY & SECONDARY CHILDREN WERE OUT OF SCHOOL IN 2021**, with huge disparities affecting specific groups of marginalised children.
(UNICEF, 2024)

Background

Who are the most marginalised children?

The Report introduces Crenshaw's, late 1980's Concept of Intersectionality (Runyan, 2018):

This concept believes each citizen of the world has multiple social identities which are determined by their personal circumstances, these then combine to create their individual experience of privilege or oppression in the life situations which surround them.

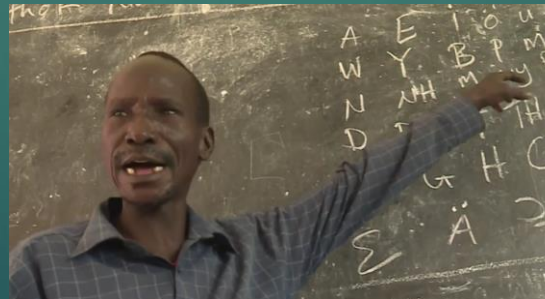
UNICEF further defines this as: intersectional discrimination occurs where several types of social oppression or disadvantage co-exist creating challenges which result in marginalisation such as: **disability; gender; poverty; educational status; religion; indigeneity; race; age; armed conflict; displacement and others.**

Additionally emphasising that these create barriers to the individual's access

to participate fully in society.
(UNICEF, 2024)

Click on the link below to hear a refugee teacher's views on the importance of quality education to empower refugee children (UNHCR, 2019):

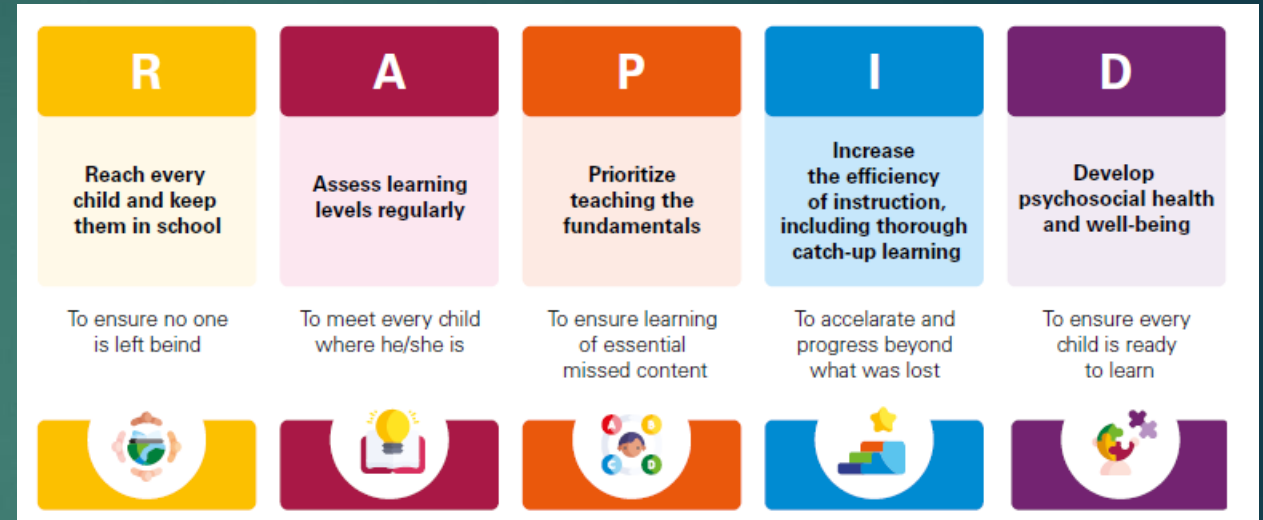
[South Sudanese teacher dedicates his life in exile to empowering refugees](#)



Background Cont...

The RAPID Learning Recovery Theoretical Framework

- The report uses the RAPID framework (2022) as an organisational tool for tackling the urgent need to provide quality education to the most marginalised children globally (see the infographic shown to the right).
- In the UNICEF adapted version of the framework, the report (in section 2.2) also lists sub-strategies termed 'lessons' under each of the individual letters of the RAPID acronym.
- UNICEF in 2022 urged all governments to commit to the RAPID agenda.
- In 2023 UNICEF published their analysis of those initiatives which had committed to the RAPID theoretical framework and that analysis forms the basis of the report we are analysing.
(UNICEF, 2024)



(UNICEF, 2024)

Enablers of Inclusion

The report discusses good practices which are termed 'Enablers of Inclusion' these are listed as: **multisectoral co-ordination; strong partnerships; enhanced accountability, monitoring and knowledge management; digital solutions; evidence and data; and community engagement.**

These will be discussed further wherever pertinent in the following case study analyses.
(UNICEF, 2024)

The Promising Practices

The fifteen case studies detailed in the report align themselves to the RAPID framework and are termed in the report as 'Promising Practices'.
(UNICEF, 2024)

A Critical Analysis by Nicola Parsons (2115499) of Case Study Number 9 Nigeria in the UNICEF Report: *All In: Towards Tangible Solutions for Equity and Inclusion in Education*

5

Case 9: Nigeria: Meeting the academic and socio-emotional needs of out of school children

Intersectionalities and Barriers: Children affected by displacement and/or armed conflict; children living in poverty

Programme Title: Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) model in Nigeria. This comes under the 'P' of the RAPID framework to Prioritise teaching the fundamentals.

Organisations: International Rescue Committee (IRC); Creative Associates International; UK Aid.

Target Group: Children from Northeast Nigeria (i.e. Borno , Adamawa and Yobe states, known as the BAY area) who have been out of formal education for more that two years or have never attended school.

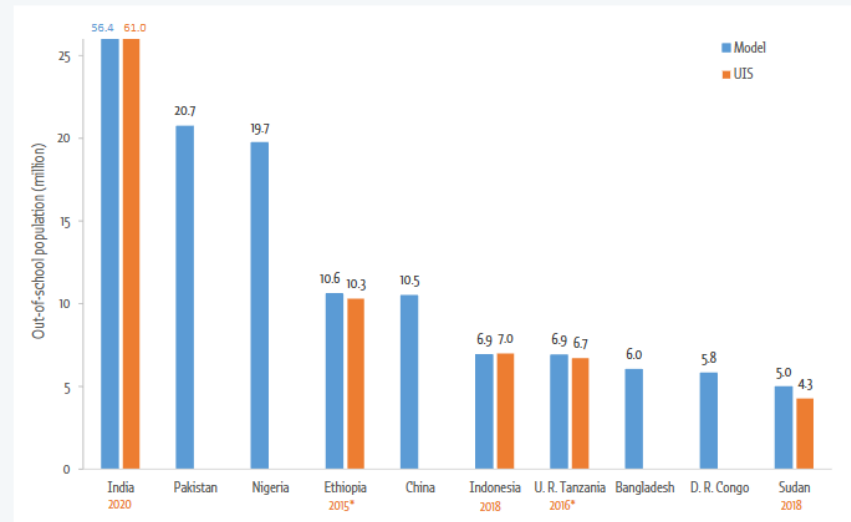
This News Central video from January 2026 (link below), illustrates just how urgent the 'need' for education remains in refugee camps in the central area of Nigeria. Click on link below to watch:

[Children Born in Exile: Nigeria's Refugee Crisis Deepens](#)



(UNESCO, 2022)

Number of out-of-school children, adolescents and youth, top 10 countries, 2020 model estimates and latest UIS estimate since 2015



The 'Need' for the implementation of the programme from Case Study 9

In recent years multiple areas of Nigeria and its neighbouring countries have been hard hit by armed conflict and its resulting large displacement of people, creating a high refugee population across the region. **In 2022, Nigeria's child out of school statistics remained high and are consistently increasing. With an estimated 9.6 million primary age children and 10.1 million youth and adolescents are out of school/education.** The **BAY area** was chosen to deliver an ALP programme, due to the area at that time having a statistic of **75% of children being out of school** (UNESCO, 2022, UNICEF, 2024).

The ALP programme implemented in the BAY area aimed to address the shortage of certified teachers by firstly recruiting local community individuals to be learning facilitators (LF's) and prepared them with pedagogy and content skills to successfully teach foundation literacy, numeracy and social-emotional skills (SEL), preparing their students readiness to enter more formal education.

The inclusion of SEL supports Rogers' (1969) humanism learning theory where mutual respect and empathy is paramount for successful learning to occur as well as Watson's (1913) behavioural theory where a supportive learning environment can support a learner's pre-disposition to learning.

THE LF's were supported in two ways: 1) Initial face to face training for the LF's and the provision of a non formal and well-resourced learning centre (NFLC) to deliver the ALP curriculum; 2) On-going 1:1 professional development sessions for the LF's and monthly Peer Support Teacher Learning Circles (UNICEF, 2024)



(Instagram, 2022)

The Programme's Evaluation (UNICEF, 2024):

- The report tells us that **35,500 children aged 9 to 14** were helped by the programme's intervention across 400 NFLC's
- The learners, LF's and LF Coaches all reported that **social and emotional learning (SEL) was of great benefit and improved learning ability**
- The ALP programme was **economically viable at US\$ 82/child** which delivered substantially improved outcomes in reading, comprehension, language fluency and maths in out of school children



The Programme's Key Learning's (UNICEF, 2024):

- SEL was negatively impacted by different indigenous understandings and experiences. The International Rescue Committee is now working with Stakeholders from Nigeria to individualise the SEL curriculum and resources to better reflect local needs
- Peer supporting monthly learning circles were found to be very valuable to the LF's, **this supports Vygotsky's (1978) cognitivism learning theory where learning occurs from exposure to more knowledgeable others**. However, the monthly coach's 1:1s, were felt to be less productive, not cost-effective and required adapting
- Pre-positioned Education in Emergencies Resource Packs enabled a speedier response for refugees



Does the Programme hit any of the Report's 'Enabler's of Inclusion'? (UNICEF, 2024)

- **Multisectoral Coordination:** **YES**, in as far as the recruitment and training for LF's being co-ordinated across a large area. Plus, stakeholder's involvement in the restructuring the SEL curriculum
- **Strong Partnerships:** **YES**, as is required to continue attracting funding for the programme's implementation
- **Enhanced Accountability, Monitoring and Knowledge Management & Evidence Data:** **YES**, as is needed to continue evidencing the value and need for the programme.
- **Digital Solutions:** **YES**, for the collection of ongoing evidence producing statistical data. **NO**, for teaching, as the NFLC's in refugee areas demonstrate a need for 'no tech' or 'low tech' teaching solutions
- **Community Engagement:** **YES**, as imperative to foster trust and instil the hope and future benefit that education facilitates both individually and societally



Critical Evaluation of the Programme:

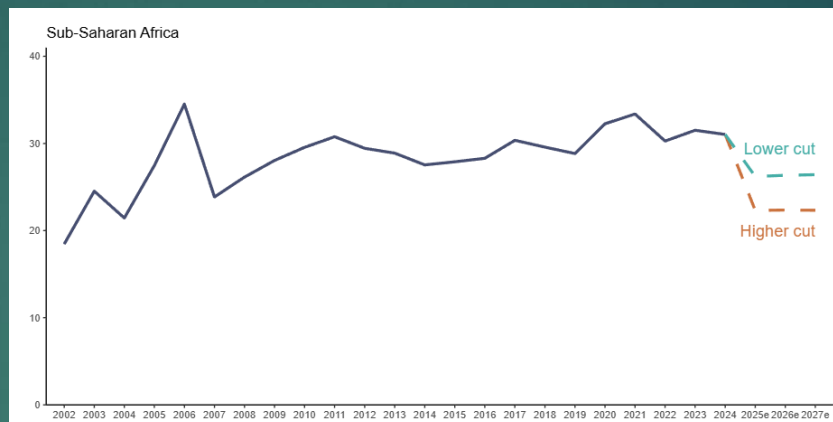
1. **SUSTAINABILITY:** The programme in case study nine is cited in the report, as one of the fifteen 'promising practices' and should be used as an exemplar in other regions where marginalised children are excluded from inclusive education. The report states that the programme is both **cost-effective** and **efficient in delivering accelerated foundational education**. However, is this programme sustainable?
 - **Continued Funding:** the question remains can this programme continue to attract aid funding in today's global financial climate. According to the OECD (2025), **aid funding to lower income countries fell by 9% in 2024, a further fall is expected to be in the region of 9% to 17% during 2025, with predictions expecting higher falls from 2026 onwards, with Sub-Saharan countries expected to be disproportionately negatively affected.**
 - **Upscaling:** with the OECD aid funding projections, it seems unlikely that funding will be able to support any significant upscaling of the programme in Nigeria. Whilst **the programme assisted 35,500 learners in the BAY area, UNESCO (2022) states that there are 19.7 million children and adolescents in Nigeria who are out of school and require urgent support.**
 - **UN SDG 4 (Quality Education for All) Attainment by 2030:** The UN states that current trends indicate **only one in six countries across the globe will meet SDG 4's target by 2030, leaving an estimated 300 million marginalised learners without basic literacy and numeracy skills.** The UN additionally states that the global pandemic has resulted in a 'generational catastrophe' in learning (UN, 2023).



Critical Evaluation of the Programme Cont...

9

The OECD (2025) prediction for cuts to aid funding from high income countries to Sub-Saharan countries from 2025



2. **REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEGISLATION:** The UNICEF report and case study nine's evaluation does not reference the **African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child** (OAU, 1990) to which Nigeria signed up to in 2001, or the **Nigerian National Priority Agenda for Orphans and Vulnerable Children** (FGN, 2016). Both of which reflect African contextual realities at regional and national level. The failure of the UN and UNICEF to encompass this legislation can be critiqued as their involvement in Africa being western-centric and neo-liberal driven, due to their failure to integrate the African indigenous psyche of childhood and education into their aid educational programmes and policies (Easterly, 2006).
3. **CULTIVATING 'BUY-IN' OF MARGINALISED LEARNERS TO EDUCATION:** In Nigeria, school education can be fee based, even in refugee camps (although government run schools offer subsidised education for refugees, costs are still found to be prohibitive). Due to high levels of poverty and displacement pressures, education fees & costs, and attendance frequently is secondary to survival priorities. Additionally, culturally, there is historic stigma associated with remedial learning (UNHCR, 2026)

Conclusions and the Way Forward

10

- ❑ There is a substantial need for remedial foundation education in Nigeria
- ❑ Predicted cuts to aid funding, are likely to drive a significant detrimental effect, in the ability to undertake any large upscaling of the UNICEF 'Promising Practices' programmes in Nigeria. Subsequently, adversely impacting any positive effect to the attainment of the UN SDG 4 by 2030
- ❑ Social and emotional learning curriculum and teaching requires to be tailored to circumstances
- ❑ Educators and learning facilitators require development to deliver inclusive, standardised practices and accountability. Alongside, large scale recruitment of community learning facilitators to deliver remedial foundation education in Nigeria
- ❑ Peer support opportunities are valuable and productive for educators and learning facilitators
- ❑ Community engagement is critical to engage refugees in the importance of remedial foundation education
- ❑ Improvement of pre-positioning of 'Education in Emergencies' resources to increase speed of response for refugees is required (UNICEF, 2024)

THE WAY FORWARD

The UN (UNOCHA, 2025) has responded to the aid funding crisis by issuing its 2026 request for aid funding, in which the UN states that they must now:

- **make 'brutal' funding choices**
- **prioritise support for only the most desperate in need globally**
- **be innovative in securing new ways of funding support**
- **recognise that the attainment of the SDG 4 target of 2030 will require to be revised**

In the appeal Aid Agencies said that they are at crisis point and are "overstretched, underfunded and under attack" whilst the UN made an urgent plea for the countries of the world to show greater solidarity with each other, this is supported by Klees (2023) who says **money alone cannot create global equity in education, there must also be the global political will.**



Finally...

11

When you have time watch the UNHCR (2016) video on the link below, for an insight into how one Nigerian refugee child, from the BAY area, called Uma, feels about his educational journey and his ambition to one day become the president of his country

[Nigeria: Back to School](#)



Reference List for - Nicola Parsons 2115499's Section of the Presentation (Slide Nos 1 - 11)

12

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A Critical Analysis by Karen Cook (2213741) of Case Study Number 7 in the UNICEF Report: All In: Towards Tangible Solutions for Equity and Inclusion in Education

A Critical Analysis by Richard Morgan (2214234) of Case Study Number 10 in the UNICEF Report: *All In: Towards Tangible Solutions for Equity and Inclusion in Education*

14

Our presentation's overall conclusions and suggested ways forward...

Our Combined Conclusions:

- Globally, refugee children continue to have a substantial need for remedial foundation education
- Predicted cuts to aid funding are likely to drive significant detrimental effects in the ability to upscale the UNICEF promising practices to meet the level of need
- Remedial foundation education curricula requires to: be evidence based; inclusive; meet local curriculum needs; be intersectional in design; structured; monitored; and include targeted support for adolescents and girls
- Social and emotional learning curriculum and teaching requires to be locally grounded and tailored to local psychosocial circumstances
- There needs to be large scale recruitment with quality professional development of locally based community learning facilitators (LF's), who receive adequate remuneration, to deliver the scale of remedial foundation education required
- LF's peer support opportunities are valuable and productive in ongoing professional development for learning facilitators
- Community engagement is critical to engage refugee families in the importance of remedial foundation education
- Pre-positioning of 'Education in Emergencies' packs to be crisis-ready are successful in increasing the speed of response for refugees, alongside the subsequent expansion of quality learning infrastructure to provide safe learning environments



Our Suggested Ways Forward:

- Global acceptance that UN SDG 4 is unlikely to be met by 2030
- Innovative new ways of generating aid funding require to be urgently found, to continue the upscaling of the UN Promising Practices to meet the level of need
- A global political will to create sustainable global equity in quality education must be generated, to succeed in meeting the level of need

**Many thanks to you for
your attention and time
today**