


















Integrated gender and climate-responsive education and child protection project in refugee and IDP settings in the Benishangul Gumuz region of Ethiopia, 2023-2026

Final version

14 December 2023 | Migration, Stabilization and Fragility (MNS)

Integrated gender and climate-responsive education and child protection project in refugee and IDP settings in the Benishangul Gumuz region of Ethiopia, 2023-2026

<p>Key results: Increased enrolment of children in refugee, internally displaced persons (IDP) and host community settings in Benishangul Gumuz region, in protective, gender- and climate-responsive primary and secondary education.</p> <p>Justification for support: Ethiopia is the third-largest refugee-hosting country in Africa, while also having 4.6 million IDPs, putting a significant strain on the government to provide services. While the government is committed to inclusion of refugees into the national education system, 45% of school-age refugee children are out of school. The targeted region hosts 10% of the country's refugees and IDPs, while having a relatively very small host population, which challenges the provision of services. At the same time, girls' access and retention in school faces significant challenges, while the impact of climate change similarly causes challenges for refugees, IDPs and host communities alike, affecting protection and education.</p> <p>The project provides an opportunity to further strengthen the public-private partnership across the Danish MFA and the LEGO and Grundfos Foundations, as the foundations are joining the MFA to contribute to the same overall objective. While each will support different types of interventions, the projects will be interlinked and complementary, implemented at the same time in the same areas, through the same partner, for holistic, durable impact.</p> <p>Major risks and challenges: Political unrest and conflict, mitigated by applying a conflict analysis and peacebuilding lens; Risk of weak government accountability to deliver services, mitigated through joint monitoring; Risk of limited and weak local partners, responded to through capacity building. Finally, UNICEF has robust financial management systems that effectively reduce fiduciary risks.</p>	File No.	23/32684				
	Country	Ethiopia				
	Responsible Unit	MNS				
	Sector	11110 Education				
	Partner	UNICEF				
		<i>DKK million</i>	2023	2024	2025	Total
	Commitment		12.5	12.5	12.5	37.5
	Projected disbursement		12.5	12.5	12.5	37.5
	Duration	2023-2026				
	Previous grants	n/a				
	Finance Act code	06.36.04.12				
	Head of unit	Karen Grønlund Rogne				
	Desk officer	Line Friberg Nielsen				
Reviewed by CFO	YES: Antonio Ugaz-Simonsen					
Relevant SDGs						
 No Poverty	 No Hunger	 Good Health, Wellbeing	 Quality Education	 Gender Equality	 Clean Water, Sanitation	
 Affordable Clean Energy	 Decent Jobs, Econ. Growth	 Industry, Innovation, Infrastructure	 Reduced Inequalities	 Sustainable Cities, Communities	 Responsible Consumption & Production	
 Climate Action	 Life below Water	 Life on Land	 Peace & Justice, strong Inst.	 Partnerships for Goals		

Objectives

Improve access to inclusive, equitable quality education in the Benishangul-Gumuz region of Ethiopia, targeting refugee and internally displaced children, alongside children in host communities, for holistic learning outcomes and resilience.

Environment and climate targeting - Principal objective (100%); Significant objective (50%)

	Climate adaptation	Climate mitigation	Biodiversity	Other green/environment
Indicate 0, 50% or 100%				
Total green budget (DKK)				

Justification for choice of partner:

UNICEF is a recognised, key partner in Ethiopia within the education sector, taking an integrated approach to education and protection, incl. the promotion of gender equality in and through education and addressing the impact of climate change on children's rights, incl. to education. UNICEF has an existing country program that includes education and also covers Benishangul Gumuz region.

Summary:

The Danish MFA, the LEGO and Grundfos Foundations have joined forces to increase access to inclusive, quality education in Ethiopia, targeting the most vulnerable, i.e. refugee, IDP and host community children, in the Benishangul Gumuz region, for holistic learning outcomes and resilience. The Danish MFA project, contributing to the overall initiative, will focus on promoting gender equality and climate change resilience in and through education, building on relevant strategies of the Government of Ethiopia and UNICEF's country program.

Budget (engagement as defined in FMI):

Total Programmable cost	34.5 million DKK
UNICEF Standard Recovery Cost (8%)	2.6 million DKK
1% Levy cost	0.4 million DKK
Total	37.5 million DKK

Abbreviations

ALP	Alternative learning programme
CEE	Climate, energy, and environment
CEED	Climate, energy, and environment and DRR
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
GRF	Global Refugee Forum
GRP	Gender responsive Pedagogy
GPI	Gender parity index
HRBA	Human rights-based approach
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced People
LNOB	Leaving No One Behind
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MHH	Menstrual hygiene and health
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoWSA	Ministry of Women and Social Affairs
NCMS	National case management system
ODA	Official development assistance
OOSC	Out-of-school children
PSEA	Protection from Sexual and Exploitation Abuse
REB	Regional Education Bureaus
RRS	Refugees and Returnees Service
SBC	Social, and behavioural change
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples region
SRGBV	School-Related Gender-Based Violence
TPLF	Tigray People's Liberation Front
UASC	Unaccompanied and separated children
WASH	Water sanitation and hygiene

Table of content

1.	Introduction.....	1
2.	Background.....	1
3.	Context, strategic considerations, rationale and justification	2
3.1.	Global level	2
3.2.	National level.....	2
3.2.1.	<i>Refugees and IDPs, and the issue of inclusion</i>	3
3.2.2.	<i>Gender equality and girls' education</i>	4
3.2.3.	<i>The impact of climate change on Ethiopia</i>	5
3.3.	Regional level - Benishangul Gumuz.....	5
3.3.1.	<i>Intersectionality between education, climate change and gender</i>	6
3.4.	Lessons learned	8
4.	Project Objective	10
5.	Theory of change	11
5.1.	Summary of the results framework.....	14
6.	Alignment	15
6.1.	Danish development assistance	15
6.2.	Ethiopian context: Government of Ethiopia and UNICEF.....	16
7.	Inception phase	17
8.	Budget	18
9.	Institutional and Management arrangement.....	19
10.	Financial management, planning and reporting	20
10.1.	Financial management	20
10.2.	Planning and reporting	21
11.	Risk Management.....	22
12.	Sustainability	23
13.	Closure	23

Annexes:

1. Context analysis
2. Partner Assessment
3. Result Framework
4. Risk Framework
5. Budget Details
6. Process action plan for inception phase
7. Overall initiative – narrative and ToC
8. Signed table of appraisal recommendations and follow-up actions taken
9. Quality Assurance Checklist

1. Introduction

The present project document outlines the background, rationale and justification, objectives and management arrangements for development cooperation and funding for the **integrated gender and climate-responsive education and child protection project in refugee and IDP settings in the Benishangul Gumuz region of Ethiopia, 2023-2026**, as agreed between the parties: UNICEF Ethiopia and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The project document is an annex to the legal bilateral agreement with the implementing partner and constitutes an integral part hereof together with the documentation specified below.

2. Background

The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the LEGO Foundation have a strategic partnership agreement (2021) that is focused on support to global education and with a commitment to pursue shared objectives where possible. At the same time, the Danish MFA, the LEGO Foundation and Grundfos Foundation are part of an existing Danish public-private funders alliance, with the shared overall aim to contribute to inclusive and durable solutions for vulnerable populations in Africa. In that vein, the Danish MFA, the LEGO Foundation and Grundfos Foundation came together in the latter part of 2023, to explore shared thematic and geographical interests. A common ambition emerged, to improve access to quality education in Ethiopia, targeting the most vulnerable, i.e. refugees, IDPs and host communities. Agreement was reached to work with UNICEF Ethiopia as implementing partner, based on UNICEF's unique role and comparative advantage, in terms of education programming in Ethiopia, as well as opportunities to build on related, existing programmes and projects in the country.

Each party to the alliance will support a separate project. These are conceived on the basis of one analysis, one overall theory of change and working towards achieving one overall objective (see annex 7¹), i.e. to improve access to education for refugee, IDP and host community children, with a focus on foundational and social-emotional learning, in a gender and climate-responsive, protective learning environment. The three projects will be delivered in the same schools and communities in the target region of Benishangul Gumuz, enabling a multi-pronged approach to achieving integrated, holistic outcomes and impact. While the Danish MFA project will focus on promoting gender equality and climate change resilience in and through education, the LEGO Foundation and the Grundfos Foundation projects will promote learning through play, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and improve access to WASH in schools. Together, the projects will build on and contribute to relevant GoE strategies, just as they will build on UNICEF's existing education programme in the country and in the target region of Benishangul Gumuz.

The present Danish MFA project - integrated gender and climate-responsive education and child protection project in refugee and IDP settings in the Benishangul Gumuz region of Ethiopia, 2023-2026 - will be based on a contribution of a total of 37,5 mio. DKK.²

¹ UNICEF, November 2023: Presentation of the joint initiative across the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, the LEGO Foundation and the Grundfos Foundation, with UNICEF (pdf).

² The Danish contribution in 2024 and 2025 is subject to parliamentary approval in those years. The LEGO Foundation program will be funded with 30 mio. DKK for the same period, and the Grundfos Foundation with 10 mio. DKK for the same period.

3. Context, strategic considerations, rationale and justification

3.1. Global level

During the past three decades, access to education has improved across the world, contributing to upholding people's rights and advancing social, political and economic development. However, the COVID-19 pandemic had an enormous negative impact on education the world's poor and fragile countries, exacerbated by existing and new conflicts, climate change and, more recently, inflation and food insecurity. This leaves education related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda severely off track and risks leaving children and young people very poorly equipped to navigate uncertain futures.

The 2030 Agenda and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) stress the importance of equal access to quality education for all forcibly displaced children, youth and their host communities, regardless of legal status, gender or disability. Globally, however, refugee children and youth struggle to reach the classroom – 48% of refugee children were estimated to be out of school in 2020- 21, with lower enrolment rates at secondary and tertiary levels³. Low rates of educational engagement for refugee learners are heavily influenced by a lack of durable solutions and the lack of continuity across different educational pathways, with often limited access to secondary school. This is all the more concerning as the number of refugee children worldwide has increased dramatically, by an estimated 116% in the period between 2010 and 2020⁴.

Based on ECW's estimates released in June 2023, forced displacement, armed conflicts, climate change and other crises have increased the number of crisis-impacted children in need of urgent quality education to 224 million. About 72 million of the crisis-impacted children in the world are out of school, with 14.8 million of them being refugee children⁵. More than half are girls. Around half of all out-of-school children in emergencies are concentrated in only eight countries, one of which is Ethiopia⁶. At the same time, 127 million in-school children are not achieving the minimum proficiencies as outlined in SDG 4. Finally, there are several demonstrated correlations between exposure to risks related to climate change and access and quality of education. Approximately 83% of out-of-school children, and approximately 75% of in-school children facing learning deprivation, live in countries with a Climate Change Risk Index higher than the global median value (UNICEF Climate Change Risk Index (CCRI)). Between 2022 and 2023, the number of crisis-affected children of school age has increased by 25 million, i.e. a 12.5% increase, driven by a combination of conflict and extreme natural events like droughts and floods, the causes and effects of which have been exacerbated by climate change⁷.

3.2. National level

In Ethiopia, only 10% of children achieve minimum proficiency, with nine out of 10 children unable to read and understand a simple sentence by the age of 10. The lack of well-trained teachers on child centred pedagogy and active learning methodology compounded with large classroom size that compromise teachers' ability to provide individual learning support contributes to poor learning outcomes. Yet, Ethiopia has made significant progress toward universal primary education with a net enrolment of 88.7% in the

³ Building Inclusive Education Systems for Refugees, UNCHR, 2023.

⁴ Child Displacement, UNICEF, 2022.

⁵ <https://www.unhcr.org/news/announcements/new-unhcr-report-reveals-over-7-million-refugee-children-out-school>

⁶ The other seven countries: Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar, Mali and Nigeria.

⁷ ECW, 2023.

2021/22 school year. The challenge, however, is that while most children enroll in school, many do not progress, with only 33.1% making it to secondary school. Further, 3 million children are at risk of dropping out-of-school.

3.2.1. Refugees and IDPs, and the issue of inclusion

As of August 2023, Ethiopia was home to a significant population of forcibly displaced persons, including more than 940,000 refugees and asylum seekers mostly from South Sudan, Somalia, Sudan, and Eritrea, making it the third-largest refugee-hosting country in Africa⁸. Ethiopia has registered more than 4.6 million IDPs across the country which has put significant strain on government and humanitarian actor response budgets to provide the required services to this vulnerable population.⁹

In 2020, conflict broke out in Tigray region between the Ethiopian Government and the dominant regional force, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). The conflict further spread into neighboring Amhara and Afar regions displacing millions, setting a world record for the highest number of displaced people in a single year¹⁰. The conflict continued to escalate until November 2022 when the parties agreed to a permanent cessation of hostilities¹¹. However, the situation has remained tense, and access to conflict affected areas has remained challenged.

Ethiopia is a pioneer in the roll-out of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). The country continues to demonstrate a commitment to addressing the drivers of forced displacement, realizing the human rights and needs of forcibly displaced communities and host communities – as evidenced by progress related to the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) in Ethiopia. Notwithstanding multiple and overlapping crises, which have an ever-worsening impact on Ethiopia's development outcomes, the country continues to reiterate its firm commitment to the principle of burden and responsibility-sharing as articulated in the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

A National Refugee Education Strategy 2020-2025 was developed by UNHCR and the Ethiopian Refugee and Returnees Service (RRS) unit, emphasizing that a safe and conducive learning environment in schools will be ensured through a multi-sectoral approach that strengthens linkages with other sectors, e.g. child protection, SGBV, health, livelihood, nutrition and WASH. The strategy was developed in close consultation with partners, including UNICEF.

At the same time, the Government has included refugee education in its sixth Education Sector Development Programme and the 10-year perspective development plan. A refugee secondary education transfer institutional framework has also been signed, and three Refugee Secondary schools transferred to MoE management (UNICEF).

While there have been dramatic increases in enrolment, 45% of school-age refugee children are still out of school. There are shortages of classrooms, supplies and qualified teachers, and most refugee schools do not

⁸ UNHCR- <https://www.unhcr.org/countries/ethiopia>

⁹ IOM (2023) *Ethiopia National Displacement Report 16 - Site Assessment Round 33 and Village Assessment Survey Round 16: November 2022 - June 2023*

¹⁰ <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2022/05/28/1100469734/ethiopia-set-a-world-record-for-displacements-in-a-single-year-5-1-million-in-20>

¹¹ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/11/10/two-years-of-ethiopias-tigray-conflict-a-timeline>

meet minimum standards for safe learning¹². The refugee-hosting regions have a low capacity to absorb refugee children into their public education system because of the persisting low technical and financial capacities coupled with infrastructural problems to accommodate the refugees. Yet, emergency-affected children, i.e. refugees and IDPs in particular, are at the absolute epicentre of the learning crisis in Ethiopia: it is estimated that crisis affected children may acquire foundational skills six times slower compared to those who are not affected by emergency due to forced displacement, trauma and other factors.

At the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) 2023, the GoE made pledges in a number of areas, including climate action and inclusion of refugees into national systems. The climate change pledge recognizes the devastating effects of climate change on refugees and host communities, worsening their living just as they have triggered further displacement within and across borders. It also recognizes that climate change impacts girls and women disproportionately. To address these challenges, the GoE will implement a range of interventions, including the promotion of the socio-economic inclusion of refugees, IDPs and their hosts, making prevention of violence against women integral part of environmental policies and programs, and empowering women to have more agency and influence in environmental stewardship and adaptation to climate change. The inclusion pledge focuses on the need to strengthen inclusion of refugees in national ID systems and in Gender-Based Violence services, amongst other things. It also explicitly addresses the ambition to enhance inclusion of refugees' secondary schools in the national education system. The pledge notes that for full integration of refugee secondary education into the national system, predictable financial support from the international community, based on the burden and responsibility sharing principles, is required, to ease the pressure on the existing national secondary educational system.

3.2.2. Gender equality and girls' education

Although Ethiopia has made remarkable progress towards increased net primary enrolment rates for girls from 51% in 2003/04 to 86% in 2020/21, girls still face particular challenges. Only two in five girls who start grade 1 reach grade 7, the completion rate to grade 8 is 67%, and fewer than one in three of secondary school-aged girls are in secondary school. Several factors contribute to these poor education indicators for girls in Ethiopia.

First, girls face harmful social norms. Child marriage rates in the country are one of the highest in the world. Child marriage is cited as the key reason for more than one in 10 girls' dropping out of secondary school, and each additional year of child marriage reduces the possibility of girls' enrolment in secondary school.¹³ Ethiopia is home to 17.3 million child brides (7.5 million of them married before 15 years of age), which is one-third of the total child brides in East and Southern Africa. The threat of the impact of climate crisis exacerbates this: when climate-induced disasters like drought and flooding happen, followed by economic difficulties, some families make the difficult decision to marry off their daughter, thereby having one less mouth to feed while receiving dowry in return. Analysis of data in one of the most drought-affected regions in the country demonstrated an increase of 119% in reported child marriage during the height of the Horn of Africa drought in 2022.

¹² *Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), Ethiopia, 2019.*

¹³ Wodon, Q., C. Male, A. Nayihouba, A. Onagoruwa, A. Savadogo, A. Yedan, A. Kes, N. John, M. Steinhaus, L. Murithi, J. Edmeades, and S. Petroni (2018). *Economic Impacts of Child Marriage: Ethiopia Country Brief*. Washington, DC: The World Bank and International Center for Research on Women.

Sexual and gender-based violence is also prevalent, including in and around schools, affecting children's rights to development, education and protection. According to EDHS 2016, almost one-quarter of girls and women aged 15-49 have experienced physical violence since age fifteen; one in ten reported having experienced sexual violence. 25% of girls and women who have experienced any type of physical or sexual violence have sought help; 66% have neither sought help nor told anyone about the violence.

Finally, many schools do not meet the needs of girls in terms of available WASH facilities including menstrual hygiene and health contributing to learning poverty. Without proper WASH facilities to deal with menstruation, girls have no other means but to stay at home, skipping classes. The Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) showed 60% of students have insufficient reading skills at the end of grade 3, with girls being overrepresented in this category. Displaced, refugee, and poverty-stricken girls face greater challenges, as complex circumstances interplay.

3.2.3. *The impact of climate change on Ethiopia*

Ethiopia is also highly vulnerable to climate shocks and is also among the most drought-prone countries worldwide¹⁴. Ethiopia recently suffered from the worst drought in 50 years (the 2020-2023 drought in the Horn of Africa) as a consequence of the triple-dip La Niña phenomenon and increased global mean temperature. Ethiopia has experienced continued climate-induced disasters including drought, torrential rainfall and flooding. In the midst of a 1.1°C global mean temperature increase vis-à-vis the pre-industrial period, Ethiopia's average temperature increased by 1.23°C from 1901 to 2020. Due to the El Niño event in 2014-2016, 9.7 million Ethiopians (out of globally impacted 60 million) suffered from drought and flooding, while the La Niña phenomenon in 2020-2023 led to drought in the Horn of Africa—the worst drought in the country in 50 years.¹⁵ The climate-induced disasters will worsen in intensity and frequency. Children and adolescents in Ethiopia are at particularly high risk of climate change (CCRI)¹⁶ and bear the brunt, with existing vulnerabilities exacerbated. Women and children are disproportionately affected by both conflict and climate crisis impacts and make up more than two-thirds of the people in need in 2023.¹⁷ The conflict and climate crises have led to increased humanitarian needs for the target population across Ethiopia. As of October 2023, over 7.6 million children (60% girls) in Ethiopia are out-of-school due to emergencies in Ethiopia, primarily due to climate shocks as well as conflict¹⁸.

3.3. Regional level - Benishangul Gumuz

Benishangul-Gumuz (BG) is a regional state in Ethiopia located in northwestern Ethiopia, with international borders to Sudan and South Sudan and internally with Amhara, Oromia and Gambella regions. The region's administrative centre is located in Assosa. According to the 2019 Central Statistical Agency population projections, Benishangul Gumuz has an estimated population of approximately 1.1 million people of which 13% is under-five years of age and 44% is under 18 years of age. Ethnic groups include the indigenous Berta

¹⁴ *International Federation of Red Cross And Red Crescent Societies (2023) Ethiopia | Drought - Early Action Protocol Summary (EAP No: EAP2023ET02, Operation No: MDRET033)*

¹⁵ Baseline findings from the UNICEF Ethiopia 2023 Climate Landscape Analysis for Children

¹⁶ *Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis report, p.14*

https://www.unicef.org/media/105531/file/UNICEF_climate%20crisis_child_rights_crisis-summary.pdf

¹⁷ *Humanitarian Response Plan Ethiopia 2023*

¹⁸ *Ethiopia Education Cluster, OOSC and School Damaged Data - Sept 2023*

(also called Benishangul), Gumuz, Shinasha, Mao and Komo. The federal government of Ethiopia has classified Benishangul-Gumuz region as a Developing Regional State (DRS).

As of September 2023, Benishangul Gumuz is hosting almost 80,000 refugees, i.e. 8.4% of the refugee population in Ethiopia, most of them coming from Sudan and South Sudan (UNHCR, 2023). The number of refugees is projected to have increased since UNHCR's last report due to the crises in Sudan. The protracted internal conflict in Benishangul Gumuz between unidentified armed groups and government military forces, has also caused widespread displacement since 2018, resulting in a large number of IDPs (as of June 2023, more than 124,000 IDPs remain in Benishangul Gumez region¹⁹), loss of life, damaged infrastructure, and limited access to basic and durable social services. These conflicts have had a profound impact on the psychosocial well-being and economic situation of the affected populations. Addressing the immediate needs of those affected by the conflict is crucial for their survival, including within the school community.

Refugees live in three camps of Sherkole, Tsore and Bambasi. Considering that the host community population around these refugee camps is estimated at just below 24,000 people, the high caseload of refugees and IDPs has put great strain on the infrastructure and delivery of social services in the hosting areas. Humanitarian presence and response capacity in the region is limited, just as there is a critical lack of funding going there, resulting in significant gaps the ability to meet children's needs.

At the same time, Benishangul Gumuz region continues to face the negative impact of climate change: seasonal flooding, drought and strong winds, leading to gradual deterioration of agricultural production, loss in livestock productivity and crop cultivation, shortages of water, spread of water and vector borne diseases after the rainfall, and seasonal migration of people²⁰. As written above impacts of climate change is being experienced across the country, Benishangul Gumuz has experienced a significant shortage of resources to address the impact of climate change on the social sectors, including education, due to funds being channeled to address the impact of the conflict in the north of the country.

3.3.1. Intersectionality between education, climate change and gender

The Ethiopia Education Cluster report from September 2023 estimates that 48,116 children, i.e. 21% of the school-age population, are out-of-school in Benishangul Gumuz (4,116 children). 27,176 of these children are out-of-school due to conflict. In addition, Benishangul Gumuz is struggling with a high degree of dropout and repetition, compared to the national average: dropout rate of 19.7% in grades 1-8 and a repetition rate of 4%²¹. Further, only 16.1% of teachers were qualified for teaching at primary school level, which is much less than the national average of qualified teachers, suggesting that students are not receiving the appropriate pedagogical support, leading to poor learning outcomes. That only 1/3 of teachers in the region are women further reduces girls' opportunity to benefit from experiencing role models.

On top of the needs of internally displaced and host community children, Benishangul Gumuz also supports the education needs of the school-age refugee population residing in the region, including 26,539 children aged 7-18 years, almost half being girls. More refugee girls than boys are out of school: one in three in primary school age and two in five in secondary school age. Due to the high number of refugee children and thus

¹⁹ Ethiopia National Displacement Report 16, Site Assessment Round 33 And Village Assessment Survey Round 16 November 2022 - June 2023

²⁰ <https://iiste.org/Journals/index.php/RHSS/article/download/44406/45809>

²¹ Ministry of Education Ethiopia, Education Statistics Annual Abstract 2021/2022

large class sizes, there is a need to expand classrooms. In response to the challenge, UNICEF built three primary schools and one secondary school, which are being handed over to the government (Regional Education Bureau) for sustained operationalization and to not have parallel education system for refugees. Benishangul Gumuz was also ranked fourth among regions with severely damaged schools, primarily related to conflict but also the impact of climate change, further underlining the need to invest in schools and classrooms.

Benishangul-Gumuz further demonstrates the significant correlation between high climate risks, negative coping mechanisms, and poor learning outcomes. Households' income and livelihood is severely affected by the hazards induced by climate change, leading to many children being deprived of an education. Families have to look for alternative income and livelihoods and struggle to cover the direct and indirect education costs. Some children are hired in hazardous mineral extraction, while others are forced to stay at home and look after their siblings while the parents are searching for an income. As a result, children drop out of school. In drought affected areas, UNICEF has observed an increase in child marriages and girls dropping out of school; currently, 1 in 2 girls in Benishangul Gumuz are married as children. Those who try to continue their education experience low school attendance and poor learning outcomes. In the face of this, Benishangul Gumuz recognizes the need for better disaster preparedness and risk reduction and aims to enhance social cohesion and resilience by ensuring the provision of more effective and relevant education services as one of the strategies. Communities need knowledge and skills to mitigate the impact of climate change and adapt to the changes at the same time, such as understanding the importance of maintaining forests and trees and how to address land degradation. Hence, in Benishangul-Gumuz, schools will be supported to establish clubs that will initiate disaster risk reduction strategies for testing in the school compound and the surrounding area, to be documented and implemented at scale. Schools will also be used as platforms to reach out to the communities with social mobilization activities that send messages on the impact of climate change and ways to mitigate them.

The lack of school infrastructure, including classrooms, is particularly a challenge for secondary education. In Benishangul Gumuz, there are 594 primary schools and only 89 secondary schools²². Of these schools, 279 schools have been either partially or severely damaged by the ongoing conflict in the region²³. The fragile security environment, violence and the limited capacity of regional and local authorities also leads to a lack of gender-sensitive infrastructure and services in schools, where there is often a lack of water, gender-segregated latrines and adequate spaces for menstrual hygiene management.

In Benishangul Gumuz, gender inequality in education becomes clear as girls advance from primary to secondary education, dropping from 93 to 43.5%²⁴. The gender dimension and impact of displacement is further pronounced in the gender parity index (GPI) for refugee girls, which drops from 0.93 to 0.49 between primary and secondary education, for refugee girls residing in Benishangul Gumuz.

As per EDHS 2016, Benishangul Gumuz is among the regions with highest child marriage prevalence of 50% while the national rate is 40.3% for women age group 20-24. The region also has the second lowest median age of marriage at 15.9 years, with the national average being 17.4 for women 20-49. Studies have shown

²² Ministry of Education Ethiopia, Education Statistics Annual Abstract 2021/2022

²³ Ethiopia Education Cluster, OOSC and School Damaged Data - Sept 2023

²⁴ Ministry of Education Ethiopia, Education Statistics Annual Abstract 2021/2022

that child marriage is one of the main reasons contributing to girls dropping out of school at various levels. Marriageability is associated with various factors including FGM. The prevalence of FGM is 63% for women age 15-49 and 43% for 15-19 years. Thus, improved enrolment and retaining of girls in school requires addressing girls' vulnerability to child marriage as well as FGM, calling for an integrated approach across education, gender and protection.

According to the Alliance for Children in Humanitarian Action (2020)²⁵, children in refugee and IDP camps do not only experience challenges accessing education, but also suspension of basic rights, economic hardships, physical and psychological health risks, limited access to justice and stigma. To improve their access to education thus requires a response that is anchored in strong functional protection systems, both institutional and community based. In Benishangul Gumuz, UN OCHA (2022²⁶) noted major protection concerns and widespread abuses were reported, including killings, kidnappings, thousands of cases of orphans and family separation, forced recruitment and widespread sexual and gender-based violence. Conflict and displacement are widely acknowledged as violence risk factors, including family separation. With the high number of refugees and IDPs, and knowing how vulnerable and exposed they are when it comes to violence and abuse, in particular girls, there a need to strengthen the protection environment. Social workers need support to be able to better identify and appropriately manage cases, ensuring that vulnerable children are assisted in returning to school. In and around schools in refugee and IDP communities, where the risk of sexual violence is very high, there's a strong need for GBV prevention and response interventions that will also support girls' retention and return to school.

Another protection vulnerability in Ethiopia is low birth registration, with implications on the capacity of children to access services including education. According to the EDHS 2016 only 3% of children under the age of five were registered with civil authorities. Causes for low registration includes low community awareness and limited technical and institutional capacity.

3.4. Lessons learned

This project will build on multiple lessons learned from the "Girls are heroes" project in the Afar region, implemented by UNICEF and supported by the Danish MFA. The project aimed to increase the number of girls who access, complete primary school and successfully transition to secondary education in select pastoralist woredas (districts) in the region. The background for the project was the region's low primary education gross enrolment rate (GER) and comparably high child marriage rate. The recurrent emergencies (drought, flood and windstorms) had directly impacted on teaching and learning processes, with increased teacher absenteeism in the drought affected districts, families unable to cover the direct and indirect costs of schooling and parents removing their children from school due to extended migration periods in search of pasture and water.

The project provided access to dignity kits, for use during girls' menstrual period, to reduce absenteeism and enhance participation. The project also engaged boys in gender clubs, for positive masculinity and promotion of gender equality. The intervention positively impacted the girls in Afar and improved their confidence and

²⁵ Alliance for Children in Humanitarian Acton (2020)

https://alliancecpha.org/sites/default/files/technical/attachments/evidence_synthesis_covid-19_forcibly_displaced_children.pdf

²⁶ Ethiopia: Access Snapshot, Metekel Zone (Benishangul Gumuz Region) As of 30 June 2022.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-access-snapshot-metekel-zone-benishangul-gumuz-region-30-june-2022>

determination to complete school and achieve their dreams with the resilience skills they gained through the intervention. It also helped the targeted boys to challenge the stigma around menstruating girls, aside from equipping them with various life skills. Finally, the project included environmental protection clubs and teachers in target schools. As a result, green pepper, tomato and lettuce was produced in the school compound plots. Through school gardening, students learned methods to mitigate the effects of climate change and adapt, building their resilience.

Of major relevance to this project is the Danish support, since 2020, to the Ethiopia General Education Quality Improvement Program for Equity (GEQUIP-E), concerning the integration of secondary refugee education, with a focus on girls' learning. The objective of the program is to merge the systems of education, the public one and the one for refugees, in line with the pledges by the government of Ethiopia and in support of the roll-out of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). This program also receives considerable funding from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), one of Denmark's major multilateral education partners. The support to GEQUIP-E follows the Danish pledge made at the Global Refugee Forum in 2019, in support of the Government of Ethiopia's commitment to inclusion of refugees in the education system, ensuring access to education for both refugee and host community children. The MTR of the program, from 2021, showed mixed progress. Out of six KPIs, two showed progress, i.e. improvement in enrolment and in gender parity at the lower primary school level, incl. in Benishangul-Gumuz. At the same time there was deterioration when it came to enrolment and reading functional fluency level and learning outcomes in English and Math, in the upper level of primary school level, also in the Benishangul Gumuz region. The lack of progress can to some extent be explained by after-effects from the COVID pandemic and the conflict in Tigray, but it is illustrative of the particular challenges when it comes to the transition from primary to secondary education.

Currently, as part of its country programme for Ethiopia, Denmark supports a number of other relevant interventions. For instance, Denmark provides support to UN Women's Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) program, which addresses the root and structural causes of violence through prevention strategies that reduce social acceptance of VAWG, change discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, and promote favourable social attitudes and behaviours in Oromia, Sidama and Somali regions. The program engages the Ministry of Education, Amhara and Oromia regions' Bureaus of Education and Police University, and has developed curriculum, modules and textbooks, and coordinated the availability of safe spaces and respectful relationships in schools. It also strengthens the capacities of teachers, school communities and stakeholders to prevent and respond to school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV). The partnership between UN Women and UNICEF, in support of development of a five-year national strategy on prevention and response to violence against women and children, has also been supported. Similarly, Denmark also supports the promotion of climate resilient livelihoods within and around forest areas and pursuit of sustainable management of forest resources in the Kaffa Biosphere Reserve, through the promotion of participatory forest management. In addition, Danish support to UNICEF Ethiopia's water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) programme, 2022-2025, includes improving access to WASH services in schools, increase the installation of water points and promote safe hygiene practices. Finally, it is relevant to also highlight Danish support to the roll-out of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) for Ethiopia (2018-2020).

Finally, Denmark provides considerable core funding to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and to Education Cannot Wait (ECW), both of which have a focus on fragile, refugee hosting countries. The strategic focus areas in the Danish partnership with these two funds are: strengthened HDP-nexus approach and gender equality as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation in and through education. This aligns very much with the focus of present project.

Insights and lessons learned from these interventions and partnerships, as relates to inclusion of refugees into national education systems as well as promotion of gender equality and climate-resilience, will inform the finalization of the ToC, risk assessment, stakeholder mapping and results framework.

4. Project Objective

The development objective of the cooperation among the parties is:

To improve access to inclusive, equitable quality education in the Benishangul-Gumuz region, targeting refugee and internally displaced children, alongside children in host communities, for holistic learning outcomes and resilience.

The project will seek to make education more inclusive of refugees, through engaging and supporting regional education structures and similarly engaging communities to improve awareness of the education system and facilitate enrolment and retention in primary and secondary education. The project will further seek to enhance quality of education, and improving the learning environment, for children in refugee and IDP settings and host communities alike, to strengthen enrolment in education. Part of this will be to support catching up on lost learning.

The project will seek to improve gender equality in education by focusing on girls' access and retention, with a focus on their transition into secondary education, while building their resilience and giving them agency. Making the learning environment safe and gender-responsive will play a key role in improving girls' enrolment and retention, in particular for refugee girls. Social norms driving gender inequality and gender-based violence including child marriage will be addressed both through the curriculum, in school amongst learners, and at the community level, from a prevention and response angle.

At the same time, recognising the challenges that the impact of climate change poses for children and their education in Benishangul Gumuz region, the project will strengthen schools' and learners' climate change preparedness and resilience, by training teachers and integrating climate-responsive learning into the curriculum, and engaging communities on identifying risks, mitigation and adaptation measures.

For refugees, and girls across refugee, IDP and host community settings, the project will improve the safety and protection within the learning environment through the provision of complementary child protection interventions that help the children cope with the challenges that they are facing and strengthen their resilience.

5. Theory of change

Below is an initial intervention logic through which the intended changes will take place, to be further developed in the inception phase. The 'because' section outlines key assumptions, while more contextual key assumptions will be further developed as part of the inception phase.

If

- parents/caregivers and communities' attitude to the value of education for children, especially on girls' education, is improved;
- the protection case management system is functional and able to identify out of school vulnerable children and appropriately manage the cases;
- the learning environment is safe, protective and gender-responsive to the needs of refugee, IDP and host community children;
- girls have the knowledge, skills and agency to exercise their right to education and protection from gender-based violence (GBV) such as child marriage, including case management system;
- girls have more positive role models, in terms of completion of education;
- boys are supported to develop positive gender norms protective of their female classmates;
- the education offered meets the minimum quality standard;
- school children understand the negative impacts of climate change and are equipped with the knowledge and skills to mitigate the impacts and adapt to changes;
- schools are aware of climate change risks and put in place preparedness plans;
- communities are empowered to map climate-induced protection risks and identify positive coping mechanisms/adjustments;
- the education system is aware of and implements Ethiopia's commitments to inclusion of refugees into the national education system;
- the regional government systems across sectors are strengthened to support the needs for refugee and IDP children;

Then

- primary and secondary school-age children in refugee, IDP and host communities in the target area, will have improved access to equitable, inclusive quality education that is gender and climate responsive, contributing to holistic learning outcomes and resilience;

Because

- The nationally developed case management framework is adapted to regional context and implemented;
- Host communities and school management are willing to accommodate the needs of refugees and IDP children;
- Communities are open to change attitude towards value of education, in particular for girls;
- Existence of an enabling environment in regional education bureau, communities and schools, for promotion of gender equality and climate change resilience in and through education;
- Continued high level political commitment to refugee inclusion into education system;
- Government and regional level capacity sufficient to deliver and sustain services;

- The situation in the country and the region remains sufficiently stable, in face of conflict and climate change related risks;
- The security situation in the project locations progressively improves to the level that government and UNICEF staff have access to local villages;
- UNICEF cooperates effectively with GoE and regional authorities as well as UNHCR, enabling access to refugee sites and strengthening focus on the needs of refugee children;
- UNICEF ability to ensure synergies across projects under the overall initiative, and across stakeholders;
- Flexibility and continued attention to assumptions and risks during implementation;
- Government information management system provides required data for evidence generation.

Sub-thematic elaboration of the change theory:

- 1) *Improved gender equality in education:* For more girls to enroll and stay enrolled in education, the learning environment needs to be more responsive to their needs, parents need to be supported in understanding the value of girls' education, those out of school and those at risk of dropping out need special attention, and the risk of child marriage and other age-associated and conflict-induced barriers needs to be countered. This is done through improving access to menstrual hygiene management facilities, including dignity kits, and strengthening girls' critical awareness and self-efficacy, awareness and capacity to make informed decisions about their lives, including through support by their peers. For this, adolescent girls also act as change agents among their peers and their community, just as girls who succeeded in joining higher education will be supported to serve as role models for primary and secondary school girls. In addition, together with the girls, boys will also be supported to adopt positive gender norms. Community engagement will also target out-of-school learners and those at risk of dropping out, and their parents, to facilitate return and retention. This is done through back-to-school campaigns that emphasise girls' right to education, ending child marriage and ending child labour. The campaigns help identify, register, and enrol out-of-school girls. At the same time, there will be support to girls who need to catch up on learning, including through accelerated learning programmes. Finally, efforts will be made to strengthen girls' protection from sexual and gender based violence and their access to help.

- 1) *Improved climate resilience:* For children in Benishangul Gumuz to become more climate resilient they will need support to understand what climate change is, how the region is affected, and be supported to demonstrate the ways in which the community can mitigate negative impact and adapt to changes. This is done through addressing learning through the curriculum: working with teachers and community dialogue facilitators, to develop context-specific learning materials that explain specific climate-induced vulnerabilities in the region, and consequences thereof, including some of the negative coping mechanisms that can be seen in the region. The material will consider accessibility (e.g. in local languages). At the same time, it is addressed through co-curricular learning and action, such as supporting learners to co-create mitigation measures and facilitate their championing of them, addressing considerations of use of land, the importance of terracing and soil conservation to mitigate the impact of flooding and land degradation, etc. This will include building

the capacity of the learners to advocate for climate-smart actions at home and in the communities. The efforts will be relevant to learners as they'll be led by learners themselves, in an age-appropriate manner, using peer-to-peer approaches. Communities will be engaged on the need to identify climate change related risks and identify sustainable mitigation and preparedness measures. Contextually appropriate green skills and broader life skills for climate change resilience building will be identified and integrated into the co-curricular activities.

- 2) *Improved refugee inclusion into the national education system*: For more refugees to be included into the national education system in the region, the education actors, in particular the regional education bureau, need to be engaged on the national policies and commitments with respect to refugee inclusion, and be supported in their implementation. At the same time, the regional government systems across sectors need support to meet the needs for refugee and IDP children, to strengthen the foundation for refugee children access to education and their learning outcomes. Refugee parents' and caretakers further need to be supported to be aware of and understand the local school systems, and how to enroll their children. At the same time, refugee children will be supported to catch up on learning, including through accelerated learning programmes. Community level barriers to enrolment and retention of refugee children will also be addressed, linking to the change theory around gender equality in education, including improved protection, as school-based factors such as learning environment free from gender-bias and protection and safety at school are important, in particular as girls get older.

Key stakeholders and main actors

Key stakeholders of the project, and the main actors in the success of the theory of change, include the following:

- Beneficiaries in the region
- Government Ministries, in particular Ministry of Education
- Regional Government and Education Bureau
- Schools administration and teachers
- Case management workers
- Academic institutions, for the evidence and learning piece
- NGOs and CBOs, based on their strong community linkages and engagement approaches
- UN Partners, in particular UNHCR and the education cluster

The stakeholder mapping will be fully developed as part of the inception phase.

Human Rights Based Approach

The project focuses on the most marginalized, excluded and discriminated against, i.e. refugees and IDPs, as well as girls as a marginalized sub-group. It will contribute to non-discrimination, participation and inclusion, and aim to enhance transparency and accountability. In promoting human rights, Denmark places a particular importance to gender equality and a focus on young people as right holders and agents for change, something which will be at the core of this project. Hence, the project – in the inception phase, to begin with

– will unpack norms and behaviours and identify how they may be shifted, and identify ways in which power dynamics and structures that serve to reinforce exclusion and inequalities can be challenged.

5.1. Summary of the results framework

For results based management, learning and reporting purposes, Denmark will base the support on progress attained in the implementation of the project as described. Progress will be measured through the monitoring framework of UNICEF Ethiopia, focusing on a limited number of key outcomes and corresponding outputs and their associated indicators.

Result framework for the project (impact and outcome level)²⁷

Project	Inclusive, gender- and climate-responsive education project for children in refugee, IDP and host communities in the Benishangul Gumuz region, Ethiopia, 2023-2026		
Objective	Improved access to inclusive, equitable quality education in the Benishangul-Gumuz region of Ethiopia, targeting refugee and internally displaced children, alongside children in host communities, for holistic learning outcomes and resilience.		
Impact Indicator	<p>SDG 4: Ensure equitable and inclusive quality education</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1.2: Completion rate (primary education, lower secondary²⁸ education, upper secondary education) 4.1.3. Percent of Grade 4 & Grade 8 students who achieve 50% and above (composite score) in National Learning Assessment 4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels <p>SDG 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower women and girls</p> <p><i>Indicator:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence <p>SDG 13: Combat Climate Change</p> <p><i>Indicator:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13.1.3 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies <p>SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p>		
Baseline	(to be added during inception phase)		

Outcome 1	Increased enrolment of children in refugee, internally displaced persons (IDP) and host community settings in Benishangul Gumuz region, in protective, gender- and climate-responsive primary and secondary education.		
Outcome indicator 1	(UNICEF Country Programme Outcome Indicator) Primary and secondary education completion rates, sex-disaggregated, in the region		
Baseline	Year	66 percent for girls and 76 percent for boys (primary) TBD for secondary school (during inception phase)	2020/1
Target	Year	76 percent for girls / 80 percent for boys (primary) TBD for secondary school (during inception phase)	2026/27
Outcome indicator 2	(UNICEF Country Programme Outcome Indicator) Gender Parity Index (GPI) for primary, lower secondary and secondary schools, in the region		
Baseline	Year	0.87 for primary school	2020/21

²⁷ Means of verification to be added across entire results framework as part of inception phase.

²⁸ First 4 years of secondary.

		0.84 for lower secondary school TBD for secondary school (during inception phase)	
Target	Year	0.91 for primary and 0.89 for lower secondary school TBD for secondary (during the inception phase)	2026/27
Outcome indicator 3		% of women (20-24 years) married before age 18, in the region	
Baseline	Year	40,3%	2023
Target	Year	31.3%	2026/27
Outcome indicator 4		Presence of local disaster risk reduction strategy in regional education bureau in line with national disaster risk reduction strategy	
Baseline	Year	0	2023
Target	Year	1	2026/27
Outcome indicator 5		Number of refugee children enrolled in national education system in the region	
Baseline	Year	13,956 Primary (6,000 girls) and 7,834 secondary (2,358 girls)	2023
Target	Year	TBD (during inception phase)	2026/27

See annex 3 for a more detailed results framework.

6. Alignment

6.1. Danish development assistance

It is the aim of Danish development assistance to create hope and opportunities for people by promoting economic and social protection and development. Ensuring access to quality education in fragile countries and crises affected contexts is a priority in this regard. This is done through contributing to long-term and sustainable solutions while also responding quickly in the face of changing realities.

The project presented in this document is anchored in Denmark's overall commitment to the SDGs, here with a focus on SDG 4. Sustainable development hinges on every child receiving quality education. Quality education offers children and young people the tools to develop to their full potential, enabling upward socioeconomic mobility. Without quality education, children and young people are more likely to suffer adverse health outcomes and less likely to participate in decisions that affect them, threatening their ability and opportunity to shape a better future for themselves and their societies.

The project is equally anchored in the Danish Strategy for Development Cooperation 2021-2025, "The World We Share", which includes a focus on equal access to quality education for children and young people in fragile contexts, with particular focus on marginalised and vulnerable groups including women, children and young people. Education is recognised as a driver for human rights, democratic societies and economic development, while climate change and degraded ecosystems trigger and intensify conflicts and fragility, which in turn exacerbates poverty and inequality. Denmark is therefore committed to; 'Ensure access to healthcare services and quality education in fragile countries and regions of origin, with particular focus on marginalised groups and women, children and young people' (Objective 1 in the Danish Strategy for Development Cooperation).

Finally, the project is anchored in the Danish MFA 'How-to' notes on securing coherence between humanitarian aid, development cooperation and peacebuilding (the HDP nexus) and on social sectors and safety nets, in support of the implementation of the Danish strategy for development cooperation 2021-

2025. The latter underlines that support to education will primarily be channelled through multilateral partnerships. While Danish support to education is indeed predominantly multilateral, there is also interest in providing support bilaterally, where education needs are particularly significant and where there are several strategic factors that come into play, be it strong political will from the side of the partner country Government and/or opportunities for leveraging funding, or other such factors.

See also section 3.4., Lessons learned, for Danish supported interventions which this project is likely to benefit from aligning with, something which will be explored as part of the inception phase.

6.2. Ethiopian context: Government of Ethiopia and UNICEF

The project supports the global 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, especially the achievement of SDGs 4, 5 and 13 in Ethiopia. The project will build on and contribute to the GoE Education Sector IV (2020 to 2025), the revised Education Policy and the Adult and No-formal Education Strategy (2022) to improve access to quality education for in and out of school children, just as they will build on UNICEFs existing education programme in the country and the region.

The project will build strategic partnerships with MoE, REBs and NGOs to support refugee, IDP and host community children's access to education. The proposed strategies are guided by UNICEF Country Programme Action Plan 2020 – 2025 (CPAP) and the Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP VII 2021- 2025).

The interventions are in line with the MoE of Ethiopia's priorities as stimulated in its five years Education Sector Development Plan (2021 to 2025), the Revised Education Policy (2022) and the Adult and Non-Formal Education Strategy document (2021) and the National Case Management Framework of the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs. Joint initiatives between UNICEF and the MoE that are aimed at enhancing the girls' education and empowerment, such as the Life Skills Education modules targeting adolescent girls and boys aged 10 to 14 years, the Gender Club Guidelines that provide direction for schools how to establish and functionalize the clubs, and the School Related Gender Based Violence Prevention and Response packages including the Code of Conduct, will get enhanced traction in Benishangul Gumuz region through this funding.

This multisectoral, holistic intervention sits within a collaborative approach between LEGO Foundation, Grundfos Foundation and the Danish MFA, presented in the introduction, to address education, protection, water and sanitation disparities amongst the targeted populations, to promote resilience through the humanitarian-development nexus. UNICEF is uniquely positioned to deliver this approach, as the only UN agency working in both the humanitarian and development spaces to achieve rights for children.

UNICEF is committed to supporting adolescent girls and boys in developing and reaching their full potential. The work with adolescents and youth is guided through several strategic frameworks, and among these is UNICEF strategic framework for the second decade of a child's life. In Ethiopia, UNICEF focuses specifically on preventing the dropout of adolescents and increasing secondary school enrolment and graduation. For out-of-school adolescents in emergencies, alternative learning pathways are provided through existing structures, clubs and other platforms wherever possible, put in place SRGB including child marriage handling mechanisms. Multi-sectoral One Stop Centres are provided with a specific focus on child protection and education.

The Convention of the Rights of the Child informs all UNICEF programming on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, which have been recently revised to equip UNICEF and its partners to deliver principled, timely, quality and child-centred humanitarian response and advocacy. Responding to the needs of the most vulnerable children in Benishangul Gumuz is in line with UNICEF Core Commitments for Children (CCCs) in Humanitarian Situations. UNICEF works with authorities and partners to ensure every child, including those forcibly displaced, has access to quality learning opportunities in safe and protected environments.

This concept also aligns with several other internationally agreed commitments, including the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Local and international partners engaged in working with UNICEF under this initiative will commit to ensuring that all children – regardless of gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, or circumstances – realize their equality.

UNICEF works to build a world where children and youth with disabilities reach their full potential, growing up healthy, educated, protected from harm, heard and engaged in their communities. UNICEF work on disability inclusion is led by UNICEF Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy (DIPAS) 2022-2030.

With regard to climate change and the environment, the project is guided by UNICEF 2022-2025 Strategic Plan, which aims to ensure that every child has access to safe WASH services and lives in a safe and resilient environments.²⁹ The issues of climate, energy, and environment (CEE) are deeply intertwined with the rights of the children as well as their vulnerabilities. In this context, CEE and disaster risk reduction (DRR), so-called CEED, has been UNICEF's global framework for holistic approaches. UNICEF also addresses the linkages between climate change and the weakening of the protective environment for children, with climate change-induced vulnerabilities including family separation, child labour, child marriages and an increase in violence. The project will thus engage communities on the need to identify these risks and come up with sustainable mitigation and preparedness measures.

7. Inception phase

Recognising the iterative and collaborative nature of the process of developing the overall joint initiative, across the MFA, the foundations and UNICEF, the overall program and underpinning projects will start with a six-month inception phase. The foundational step for the initiative will include a rigorous consultation process, involving communities, schools, local authorities, and civil society organisations, particularly in Benishangul-Gumuz. An overarching assessment will inform more detailed interventions for the three projects, including detailed action plans and results frameworks. A co-creation approach across the MFA (Copenhagen and Ethiopia), the foundations and UNICEF (Copenhagen, Regional and Ethiopia) will be employed during this phase for that purpose, intended to create space to allow for identification of further elements, adapt and refine the activities and to build in complementarity where possible, as appropriate, and as resources permit, based on agreement across the parties.

²⁹ UNICEF Climate, Environment, Energy and Disaster Risk Reduction, "A Liveable Planet for Every Child: UNICEF's strategy-at-a-Glance for Climate, Environment, Energy and Disaster Risk Reduction (2022-2030)," p. 2, <https://www.unicef.org/documents/liveable-planet-every-child>.

Recognising the novelty of partnership model, the partners will also use the inception phase to co-create the vision for learning needs and evidence. This includes the development of a robust Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) framework ensuring each partner's individual and collective objectives are addressed. Learnings are envisaged to be multi-level and will address the joint public-private partnership innovation, cross-sectoral programme approaches and selected interventions within the nexus context. To achieve this, UNICEF will mobilise local, regional, and global expertise from across countries, sectors, UNICEF HQ, and partner organisations and include children, adolescents and young people to engage throughout the lifecycle of the initiative. The intention is dual: Firstly, to provide comprehensive, technical programme support and quality assurance at all stages of the initiative. Secondly, to emerge with a set of deliverables, which galvanize lessons learnt on effectiveness, to inform scalability and sustainability.

During the inception phase, the MFA will also work closely with UNICEF and the LEGO Foundation and the Grundfos Foundation, to prepare a communications plan for the overall joint initiative, which will detail activities and outputs, for communication of results and lessons learned from the separate projects and the overall initiative as a whole.

Please see annex 6 for a process action plan for the inception phase, covering the overall initiative as well as the present MFA project.

8. Budget

With the project having one outcome, the project budget is split across the outputs contributing to the outcome. See annex 5 for detailed output level budget. Below follows a budget summary.

The budget allocation for output 1 focuses on strengthening family and community care and protection systems, creating demand for girls' education, supporting the shift of social norms that are not protective of girls and strengthening supportive ones. Further, community engagement will infuse climate change discourse, focusing on the identification of negative coping mechanisms (harmful to girls) and the initiation of proactive mitigation measures. Additionally, the output will be to strengthen case management, ensuring the best interest determination principle is upheld in supporting vulnerable children. Lastly, the children will be directly engaged, focusing on girls, to build their agency and assertiveness to utilise protection systems.

For output 2, the budget allocation will be used for the following key activities; 1) rehabilitation of schools that were destroyed due to conflict and strong wind, provision of school furniture and recreational supplies (payment for contractor) ; 2) providing schools with supplies that will support to initiate climate resilience activities such as community mobilization supplies, school media materials, seedlings and meetings that will promote school based DRR strategies (supplies cost plus payments for organizing communities on DRR); 3) payments to procure dignity kits for adolescent girls, costs for community mobilization and dialogue to address social norms and undertaking back to learning campaigns; 4) procurement and distribution of assistive devices for children with disability and orientation for teachers on inclusive education and use of the assistive devices mobilization and dialogue to address social norms and undertaking back to learning campaigns; 4) procurement and distribution of assistive devices for children with disability and orientation for teachers on inclusive education and use of the assistive devices.

The budget under output 3 will be used for: 1) organizing capacity building workshop for teachers on improving gender transformative pedagogy and learning (per diem, refreshment and transport cost); 2) capacity building of gender club coordinators on strengthening them to promote girls' empowerment through life skills; 3) putting in place protective environment for vulnerable girls and boys including violence case management and engaging Girl Effect through Partnership cooperation agreement to scale up the "Yegna drama" a multimedia material that is interactive and engaging through drama series.

Finally, the budget allocation for the 4th output will fund data gathering and learning with a view to document promising practices for scale-up, across the projects under the joint initiative. It will be used to test assumptions that inform the planning, tracking results along the intervention logic, and identifying critical success factors. Therefore, the output will generate knowledge products to inform advocacy, future programme designs, funding priorities as well as well as monitoring and reporting of regional commitments towards the objective of the initiative. The budget allocation under output 4 is matched by the LEGO Foundation and Grundfos Foundation funded projects, in terms of 10% of respective, total funding.

Aside from the cost of field office operational costs, monitoring, reporting, and office contribution to support the project implementation, there is also a budget allocation for contribution to salaries of education and child protection specialists in the country office and the field office.

9. Institutional and Management arrangement

UNICEF will have the overall responsibility as the project owner. As responsible for the management and administration, UNICEF will apply their own policies, procedures and standards for fund management which in addition must meet the Danish MFA requirements. UNICEF will be responsible for all reporting and accounting towards Denmark.

In order to provide flexibility and respond to changes, adaptive management will be used to continuously quality assure and prioritize the support. It will be critical to ensure continuous learning and adaptation in line with the Doing Development Differently approach.

UNICEF has a field office in the intervention region with full-fledged technical and operation capacities. The specialists in the regional office play a crucial role in providing guidance and expertise to regional governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) partnering with UNICEF. UNICEF staff work together with implementing partners in this proposal aimed at increasing access, retention and completion rates of primary education for girls, as well as facilitating their transition to secondary schools. The management arrangement is aimed at ensuring adequate reporting, dialogue, learning and timely decisions about the project, including possible adaptations to ensure achievement of agreed outcomes. This includes linking and adding synergies across the three projects funded by MFA, Lego and Grundfos which are working in harmony to achieve common objectives.

Chiefs of Education and Child Protection (P5 level) from the country office will oversee the project, providing guidance and facilitating operational effectiveness. In addition, the Education and child protection (CP) managers (P4) and specialists (P3 and national officer) will be supporting the field office education and CP specialists (national officer) through technical support, mentoring, field visits and monitoring. The focal persons in the field office are also responsible for the implementation and reporting of day-to-day activities.

The implementation of the project will be supported by the UNICEF Regional Office (ESARO) who have additional technical specialists in the field of education, mental health, child protection, disability inclusion and other areas and -- capitalizing on cross-regional experience-- are aptly placed to support certain activities and the generation of learning, evidence and advocacy. Moreover, Regional Office has significant links with strategic and technical partners at regional and global levels and are therefore suitably placed to foster support and amplify learning.

The Danish MFA shall have the right to carry out any technical or financial supervision mission that is considered necessary to monitor the implementation of the project. The MFA will work with UNICEF to ensure adequate reporting, dialogue, learning and timely decisions about the project, including possible adaptations to ensure achievement of agreed outcomes.

After the termination of the project support, the Danish MFA reserves the right to carry out evaluations.

During the inception phase, the Danish MFA, the LEGO Foundation and the Grundfos Foundation will establish a program steering committee³⁰ that will meet at regular intervals (e.g. bi-annual following the receipt of reports) to monitor progress to ensure delivery of outputs, including progress towards outcomes through reviewing financial and narrative reports; approve budget and work-plans; address issues related to implementation, including developments of risks; draw lessons and ensure dissemination of learning; provide advice on potential changes and/or adaptations to the projects and the overall initiative, incl. risks and assumptions, for the achievement of outcomes. At the same time, establishment of a program committee across the Danish MFA and the Embassy and UNICEF Ethiopia and regional office will be considered, for ad hoc meetings through the implementation phase.

Annual field visits and participatory supportive supervisions to project implementation areas will be held to track progress and to provide onsite technical support to implementing partners.

During the inception phase, a detailed plan for reporting frequency, reviews etc., across the duration of the project, will also be developed.

10. Financial management, planning and reporting

10.1. Financial management

The activities of the project shall be subject to reporting as well as accounting, financial control and auditing in accordance with Danida's Guidelines for Accounting and Auditing of Grants channeled through Multilateral Organisations.

UNICEF shall prepare annual financial statements with respect to the Danish funding of the project. The annual financial statements shall be audited, and the auditors' reports shall be sent to the MFA as soon as available and in any case no later than within 180 (one hundred and eighty) days after the expiry of each financial year. The financial reporting shall be on the same detailed level as the budget. Within three (3) months of the completion of the fund activities in accordance with this Agreement, UNICEF shall account for

³⁰ Chairing and representation of stakeholders to be determined at the start of the inception phase.

the use of the Contribution in a final report to be submitted to the MFA. The MFA may request that UNICEF complements and/or clarifies the final report and UNICEF must promptly comply with all such requests.

The MFA shall have the right to carry out any technical or financial supervision mission that is considered necessary to monitor the implementation of the project. The representatives shall hereunder be permitted to visit premises and examine records and documents requested, and have access to UNICEF's auditors and the auditors' assessment of all information pertaining to the project activities implemented with the contribution. Confidentiality obligations on the part of UNICEF's auditors shall not hinder such access. Any access shall, however, not prejudice the confidentiality of other information which is not related to the contribution.

10.2. Planning and reporting

As responsible for the management and administration, UNICEF will carry out the planning and reporting and conduct surveys, annual/bi-annual forums, studies, evaluations and preparation of field notes. The structure of the reporting will be reflected in the agreement and adjusted in the inception phase. The reports will cover the overall status of the project and synergies with the other projects under the overall joint initiative, challenges and impacts (with a focus on rights, inclusion, climate and gender aspects). The progress reporting will include an update on risks and assumptions.

These reports will inform learning and dialogue and feed into required adjustments and adaptation. The financial reporting shall be on the same detailed level as the budget. Since adaptive management will be used, a strong focus on adaptation will be applied. UNICEF shall provide interim and annual progress and financial reporting bi-annually prior to the Steering Committee meetings.

The following activities are some of the major monitoring activities that UNICEF will conduct in order to report on the Danish funding of the project (the communication plan and the M&E framework will be developed as part of the inception phase):

- Regular and scheduled project monitoring visits to assess progress
- Project visits and spot checks for quality assurance and accountability
- Monitoring of bottlenecks and challenges for effective and efficient implementation
- Annual sustainability checks
- Disseminate and apply findings of monitoring, research, lesson learnt and best practices

In accordance with MFA guidelines, the project will be subject to a mandatory Mid-term Review (MTR), tentatively planned for 2025, managed by the MFA. This MTR will have a focus on process and progress towards results, especially in light of any context changes. It will be used to improve project management and results framework and will also provide an opportunity for any changes and adjustments of strategies (which will be developed by the partners under the overall initiative, alongside UNICEF) in line with the prevailing context. In line with UNICEF's evaluation policy, a final, independent, and summative evaluation will be carried out upon completion of implementation of the project, ideally in conjunction with evaluation of the complementary, foundation funded projects. Findings and recommendations from the evaluation will inform UNICEF's strategic planning, as well as future programming in related issues.

The evaluation will be managed by the monitoring and evaluation manager in the office and will follow a participatory approach that includes the multiple stakeholders involved in the implementation of the initiatives. The evaluation will follow the United Nations Evaluation Group's (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System and the UNICEF's evaluation policy. The evaluation criteria to be used include relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact, inclusiveness, participation, equality, non-discrimination, and social transformation. A management response will be prepared based on the recommendations of the evaluation. The management response will be submitted within six weeks of the final report being submitted.

An additional layer of monitoring by MFA of Denmark will be achieved by linking payments to reporting. As noted in the financial arrangements, UNICEF will be required to have spent at least 80% of the last 6-month tranche before the Danish MFA releases the next tranche.

The MFA shall have the right to carry out any technical or financial mission that is considered necessary to monitor the implementation of the programme. However, efforts will be made to minimise transaction costs by utilising opportunities for joint missions, together with the foundations, wherever feasible.

Both parties will strive for full alignment of the Danish support to the implementing partner rules and procedures, while respecting sound international principles for financial management and reporting.

See annex 2 (partner assessment) for further information on how UNICEF manages and monitors risk, what tools are available, etc.

11. Risk Management

The MFA of Denmark will focus its risk management on key contextual, programmatic, and institutional risks, based on UNICEF's own identified risks for their support to education and protection in Ethiopia and the target region. Below is a summary of the detailed risk framework presented in annex 4.

Contextual risks: The risk of political unrest will be mitigated by applying a conflict analysis and peace lens to project planning and implementation, to minimize risk of inadvertently creating cause for conflict, just as the project will track protection reports and follow guidance from relevant UN actors on how to respond. The risk of pressure on social services among host communities, IDPS and refugees will be dealt with through community engagement, encouraging peaceful co-existence. Finally, the risk of environmental impact will be mitigated by adhering to environmentally responsible practices and the availability of water in schools, supported by Grundfos, will also support greening initiatives including school gardens, and tree planting.

Programmatic risks: The risk of weak accountability on part of government counterparts to deliver services and supplies for the end users, i.e. the learners, will be mitigated through joint monitoring with government counterparts. There is also a risk of limited strong partners, locally, in part because the region is generally underfunded, which will be mitigated and responded to by building partner capacity and supporting local level systems.

Institutional risks: Given the post-conflict, volatile context, UNICEF will be guided by an in-house course on security in the field that provides guidance on how to keep safe in volatile situations and be advised by UN

security teams on risk assessments and safety measures. In terms of fiduciary risks, UNICEF has robust financial management systems, including assurance measures designed to reduce fiduciary risk. Additionally, UNICEF has a zero tolerance policy on fraud/corruption. From 2023, UNICEF, incorporated a mandatory clause on prevention of aid diversion in all contracts with implementing partners.

The management setup will secure a structure that regularly monitors and discusses risks, with exact details to be finalised with UNICEF Ethiopia in coordination with the other partners to the overall joint initiative, as part of the inception phase. Need for further risk mitigation measures will equally be identified as part of the inception phase.

12. Sustainability

The project will be aligned with UNICEF Ethiopia's country programme which centres around enhancing the well-being of children through bringing different stakeholders, i.e. government, communities, caretakers, school communities, other service providers, to support, undertake and own programme activities.

The government system, from the national level to the community level, will be involved in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation to build and ensure ownership and sustainability. Furthermore, the initiative will work with refugee- and refugee- supporting structures and actors, for a coordinated effort to support children in refugee camps and in IDP and host communities.

In addition, the commitment of the GoE to integrate refugees into the national education system, to enhance access to quality education, is crucial to ensure sustainability. The integration of refugee and displaced children within the national system will aid the integration, socialisation, and future employability within the host community and country.

Lastly, the project implementation will facilitate effective engagement with influential community members and religious leaders to ensure active community engagement and contributions to school development programmes. Apart from this, UNICEF, being the lead and co-lead of national and regional sector specific clusters, will use the different platforms including various actors in the sector for coordinated implementation, complementarity and scaling up of results elsewhere in the country and around the intervention areas.

During the inception phase, a more detailed plan and strategy for sustainability of the MFA project specific components related to promotion of gender equality and climate resilience in and through education will be investigated and developed.

13. Closure

In accordance with MFA guidelines, the project will be subject to a mandatory Mid-term Review (MTR) managed by the MFA. This MTR is tentatively planned for 2025. It is the ambition that this review will propose an exit strategy for the project. The MTR and preparation of an exit strategy will be done in collaboration with the LEGO Foundation and the Grundfos Foundation, alongside UNICEF Ethiopia, due to the interconnectedness and holistic approach that the contributing partners are employing towards a common overall objective.

Annexes

1. Context analysis
2. Partner Assessment
3. Result Framework
4. Risk Framework
5. Budget Details
6. Process action plan for inception phase
7. Overall initiative – narrative and ToC
8. Signed table of appraisal recommendations and follow-up actions taken
9. Quality Assurance checklist

Annex 1: Context analysis

1. Overall Development Challenges, Opportunities and Risks

Global

During the past three decades, access to education has improved across the world, contributing to upholding people's rights and advancing social, political and economic development. However, the COVID-19 pandemic had an enormous negative impact on education in the world's poor and fragile countries, exacerbated by existing and new conflicts, climate change and, more recently, inflation and food insecurity. This leaves education related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda severely off track and risks leaving children and young people very poorly equipped to navigate uncertain futures.

The 2030 Agenda and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) stress the importance of equal access to quality education for all forcibly displaced children, youth and their host communities, regardless of legal status, gender or disability. Yet, based on ECW's estimates released in June 2023, forced displacement, armed conflicts, climate change and other crises have increased the number of crisis-impacted children in need of urgent quality education to 224 million. About 72 million of the crisis-impacted children in the world are out of school, with 14.8 million of them being refugee children³¹. More than half are girls. Around half of all out-of-school children in emergencies are concentrated in only eight countries, one of which is Ethiopia³². At the same time, 127 million in-school children are not achieving the minimum proficiencies as outlined in SDG 4. Finally, there are several demonstrated correlations between exposure to risks related to climate change and access and quality of education. Approximately 83% of out-of-school children, and approximately 75% of in-school children facing learning deprivation, live in countries with a Climate Change Risk Index higher than the global median value (UNICEF Climate Change Risk Index (CCRI)). Between 2022 and 2023, the number of crisis-affected children of school age has increased by 25 million, i.e. a 12.5% increase, driven by a combination of conflict and extreme natural events like droughts and floods, the causes and effects of which have been exacerbated by climate change (ECW, 2023).

Local

Benishangul-Gumuz (BG) is a regional state in Ethiopia located in northwestern Ethiopia, with international borders to Sudan and South Sudan and internally with Amhara, Oromia and Gambella regions. The region's administrative centre is located in Assosa. According to the 2019 Central Statistical Agency population projections, Benishangul Gumuz has an estimated population of approximately 1.1 million people of which 13% is under-five years of age and 44% is under 18 years of age. Ethnic groups include the indigenous Berta (also called Benishangul), Gumuz, Shinasha, Mao and Komo. The federal government of Ethiopia has classified Benishangul-Gumuz region as a Developing Regional State (DRS).

As of September 2023, Benishangul Gumuz is hosting almost 80,000 refugees, i.e. 8.4% of the refugee population in Ethiopia, most of them coming from Sudan and South Sudan (UNHCR, 2023). The number of refugees is projected to have increased since UNHCR's last report due to the crises in Sudan. The protracted internal conflict in Benishangul Gumuz between unidentified armed groups and government military forces, has also caused widespread displacement since 2018, resulting in a large number of IDPs (as of June 2023, more than 124,000 IDPs remain in Benishangul Gumez region³³), loss of life, damaged infrastructure, and limited access to basic and durable social services. These conflicts have had a profound impact on the psychosocial well-being and economic situation of the affected populations. Addressing the immediate needs of those affected by the conflict is crucial for their survival, including within the school community.

Refugees live in three camps of Sherkole, Tsore and Bambasi. Considering that the host community population around these refugee camps is estimated at almost 24,000 people, the high caseload of refugees and IDPs has put great strain on the infrastructure and delivery of social services in the hosting areas. Humanitarian presence and

³¹ <https://www.unhcr.org/news/announcements/new-unhcr-report-reveals-over-7-million-refugee-children-out-school>

³² The other seven countries: Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar, Mali and Nigeria.

³³ Ethiopia National Displacement Report 16, Site Assessment Round 33 And Village Assessment Survey Round 16 November 2022 - June 2023

response capacity in the region is limited, just as there is a critical lack of funding going there, resulting in significant gaps the ability to meet children's needs.

At the same time, Benishangul Gumuz region continues to face the negative impact of climate change: seasonal flooding, drought and strong winds, leading to gradual deterioration of agricultural production, loss in livestock productivity and crop cultivation, shortages of water, spread of water and vector borne diseases after the rainfall, and seasonal migration of people³⁴. While climate change is being experienced across the country, Benishangul Gumuz has experienced a significant shortage of resources to address the impact of climate change on the social sectors, including education, due to funds being channeled to address the impact of the conflict in the north of the country.

Figure 1: Map for Benishangul Gumuz

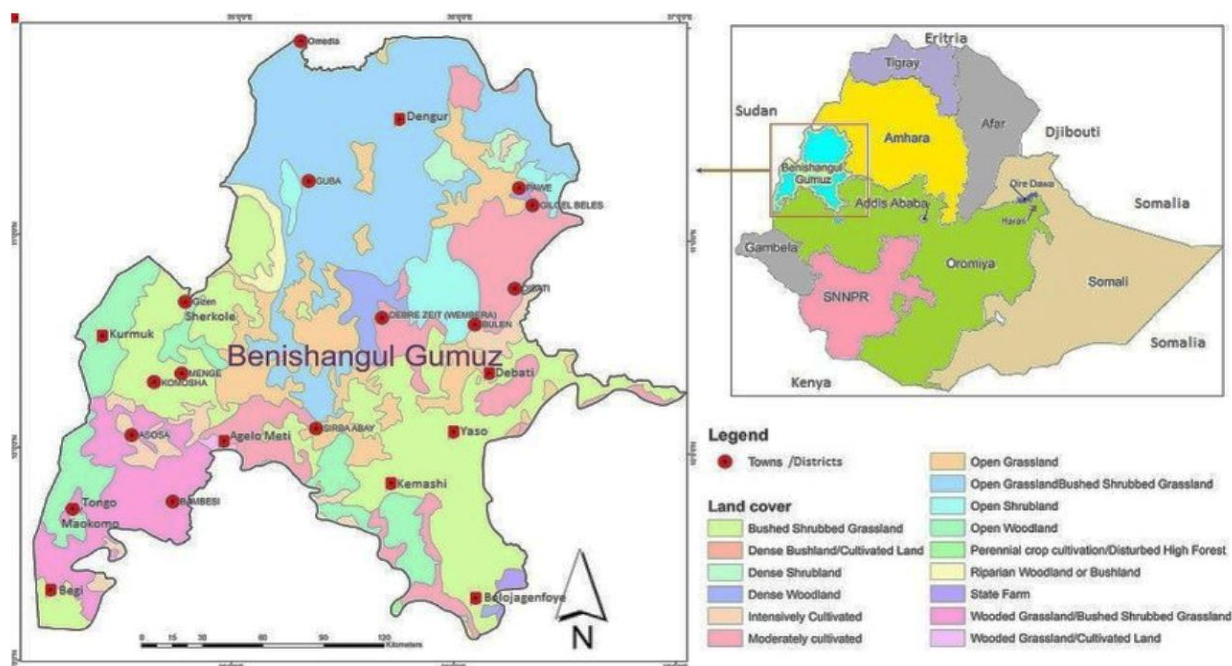


Table 1: Benishangul Gumuz host and refugee population

Location	Host community	Refugees	Total Population
Bambassi	6,613	20,036	26,036
Sherkole	10,250	16,000	26,250
Tsore	6,981	43,200	50,181
Total Population	23,844	79,236	102,467

³⁴ <https://iiste.org/Journals/index.php/RHSS/article/download/44406/45809>

Table 2: Benishangul Gumuz Demographic data

Population data in Benishangul Gumuz	Number
Total Population	1,218,00035
School-age population 4-18	375 054
IDPs (Total)	410,000
IDPs (Children)	217,000
Refugee (Total)	77,532
Refugees (Children)	37,847

2.1. Intersectionality between education, climate change and gender

The Ethiopia Education Cluster report from September 2023 estimates that 48,116 children, or 21% of the school-age population, are out-of-school in Benishangul Gumuz (4,116 children). 27,176 of these children are out-of-school due to conflict. In addition, Benishangul Gumuz is struggling with a high degree of dropout and repetition: compared to the national average, Benishangul Gumuz is the lowest-scoring region, with a dropout rate of 19.7% in grades 1-8 and a repetition rate of 4%³⁶. Further, only 16.1% of teachers were qualified for teaching at primary school level, which is much less than the national average of qualified teachers, suggesting that students are not receiving the appropriate pedagogical support, leading to poor learning outcomes. That only 1/3 of teachers in the region are women further reduces girls' opportunity to benefit from experiencing role models.

On top of the needs of internally displaced and host community children, Benishangul Gumuz also supports the education needs of the school-age refugee population residing in the region, including 26,539 children aged 7-18 years. There are more than 60,000 primary and secondary school age refugees, with almost half being girls. More refugee girls than corresponding boys in the region are out of school, with one in three primary and two in five secondary school age girls being out of school. Due to high number of refugee children and thus large class sizes, there is a need to expand classrooms. In response to the challenge, UNICEF built three primary schools and one secondary school which are being handed over to the government for sustained operationalization. The schools will be transferred to the Regional Education Bureau administration and management, thereby discontinuing the parallel education system for refugees. Benishangul Gumuz was also ranked fourth among regions with severely damaged schools, primarily related to conflict but also the impact of climate change, further underlining the need to invest in schools and classrooms.

Benishangul-Gumuz further demonstrates the significant correlation between high climate risks, negative coping mechanisms, and poor learning outcomes. Households' income and livelihood is severely affected by the hazards induced by climate change, leading to many children being deprived of an education. Families have to look for alternative income and livelihoods and struggle to cover the direct and indirect education costs. Some children are hired in hazardous mineral extraction, while others are forced to stay at home and look after their siblings while the parents are searching for an income. As a result, children drop out of school. In drought affected areas, UNICEF has observed an increase in child marriages and girls dropping out of school; currently, one in two girls in Benishangul Gumuz are married as children. Those who try to continue their education experience low school attendance and poor learning outcomes. In the face of this, Benishangul Gumuz recognizes the need for better disaster preparedness and risk reduction and aims to enhance social cohesion and resilience by ensuring the provision of more effective and relevant education services as one of the strategies. Communities need knowledge and skills to mitigate the impact of climate change and adapt to the changes at the same time, such as understanding the importance of maintaining forests and trees and how to address land degradation. Hence, in Benishangul-Gumuz, schools will be supported to establish clubs that will initiate disaster risk reduction strategies for testing in the school compound and the surrounding area, to be documented and implemented at scale. Schools will also be used as platforms to

³⁵ City Population, https://www.citypopulation.de/en/ethiopia/admin/ET06_benishangul_gumuz/ (accessed 08.11.2023)

³⁶ Ministry of Education Ethiopia, Education Statistics Annual Abstract 2021/2022

reach out to the communities with social mobilization activities that send messages on the impact of climate change and ways to mitigate them.

The lack of school infrastructure, including classrooms, is particularly a challenge for secondary education. In Benishangul Gumuz, there are 594 primary schools and only 89 secondary schools³⁷. Of these schools, 279 schools have been either partially or severely damaged by the ongoing conflict in the region³⁸. The fragile security environment, violence and the limited capacity of regional and local authorities also leads to a lack of gender-sensitive infrastructure and services in schools, where there is often a lack of water, gender-segregated latrines and adequate spaces for menstrual hygiene management.

In Benishangul Gumuz, gender inequality in education becomes clear as girls advance from primary to secondary education, dropping from 93 to 43.5%³⁹. The gender dimension and impact of displacement is further pronounced in the gender parity index (GPI) for refugee girls, which drops from 0.93 to 0.49 between primary and secondary education, for refugee girls residing in Benishangul Gumuz.

As per EDHS 2016, Benishangul Gumuz is among the regions with highest child marriage prevalence of 50% while the national rate is 40.3% for women age group 20-24. The region also has the second lowest median age of marriage at 15.9 years, with the national average being 17.4 for women 20-49. Studies have shown that child marriage is one of the main reasons contributing to girls dropping out of school at various levels. Marriageability is associated with various factors including FGM. The prevalence of FGM is 63% for women age 15-49 and 43% for 15-19 years. Thus, improved enrolment and retaining of girls in school requires addressing girls' vulnerability to child marriage as well as FGM, calling for an integrated approach across education, gender and protection.

According to the Alliance for Children in Humanitarian Action (2020)⁴⁰, children in refugee and IDP camps do not only experience challenges accessing education, but also suspension of basic rights, economic hardships, physical and psychological health risks, limited access to justice and stigma. To improve their access to education thus requires a response that is anchored in strong functional protection systems, both institutional and community based. In Benishangul Gumuz, UN OCHA (2022)⁴¹ noted major protection concerns and widespread abuses were reported, including killings, kidnappings, thousands of cases of orphans and family separation, forced recruitment and widespread sexual and gender-based violence. Conflict and displacement are widely acknowledged as violence risk factors, including family separation. With the high number of refugees and IDPs, and knowing how vulnerable and exposed they are when it comes to violence and abuse, in particular girls, there is a need to strengthen the protection environment. Social workers need support to be able to better identify and appropriately manage cases, ensuring that vulnerable children are assisted in returning to school. In and around schools in refugee and IDP communities, where the risk of sexual violence is very high, there's a strong need for GBV prevention and response interventions that will also support girls' retention and return to school.

Another protection vulnerability in Ethiopia is low birth registration, with implications on the capacity of children to access services including education. According to the EDHS 2016 only 3% of children under the age of five were registered with civil authorities. Causes for low registration includes low community awareness and limited technical and institutional capacity.

3. Fragility, Conflict and Resilience

As of August 2023, Ethiopia was home to a significant population of forcibly displaced persons, including over 942,792 refugees and asylum seekers mostly from South Sudan, Somalia, Sudan, and Eritrea, making it the third-largest refugee-hosting country in Africa. Ethiopia has registered more than 4.6 million IDPs across the country which has put significant strain on government and humanitarian actor response budgets to provide the required services to this vulnerable population.

³⁷ Ministry of Education Ethiopia, Education Statistics Annual Abstract 2021/2022

³⁸ Ethiopia Education Cluster, OOSC and School Damaged Data - Sept 2023

³⁹ Ministry of Education Ethiopia, Education Statistics Annual Abstract 2021/2022

⁴⁰ Alliance for Children in Humanitarian Acton (2020)

https://alliancecpha.org/sites/default/files/technical/attachments/evidence_synthesis_covid-19_forcibly_displaced_children.pdf

⁴¹ Ethiopia: Access Snapshot, Metekel Zone (Benishangul Gumuz Region) As of 30 June 2022.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-access-snapshot-metekel-zone-benishangul-gumuz-region-30-june-2022>

In 2020, conflict broke out in Tigray region between the Ethiopian Government and the dominant regional force, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). The conflict further spread into neighboring Amhara and Afar regions displacing millions and setting a grim world record for the highest number of displaced people in a single year. The conflict continued to escalate until November 2022 when the parties agreed to a permanent cessation of hostilities. However, the situation has remained tense, and barriers to access to reach conflict affected areas have remained.

Ethiopia is a pioneer in the roll-out of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). The country continues to demonstrate a commitment to addressing the drivers of forced displacement, realizing the human rights and needs of forcibly displaced communities and host communities – as evidenced by progress related to the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) in Ethiopia. Notwithstanding multiple and overlapping crises, which have an ever-worsening impact on Ethiopia's development outcomes, the country continues to reiterate its firm commitment to the principle of burden and responsibility-sharing as articulated in the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

The Government has included refugee education in its sixth Education Sector Development Programme and the 10-year perspective development plan. A refugee secondary education transfer institutional framework has also been signed, and three Refugee Secondary schools transferred to MoE management (UNICEF). At the same time, refugees continue to face challenges in education accessibility, quality and protection. The refugee-hosting regions have a low capacity to absorb refugee children into their public education system because of the persisting low technical and financial capacities coupled with infrastructural problems to accommodate the refugees. Yet, emergency-affected children, i.e. refugees and IDPs in particular, are at the absolute epicentre of the learning crisis in Ethiopia: it is estimated that crisis affected children may acquire foundational skills six times slower compared to those who are not affected by emergency due to forced displacement, trauma and other factors.

At the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) 2023, the GoE made pledges in a number of areas, including climate action and inclusion of refugees into national systems. The climate change pledge recognizes the devastating effects of climate change on refugees and host communities, worsening their living just as they have triggered further displacement within and across borders. It also recognizes that climate change impacts girls and women disproportionately. To address these challenges, the GoE will implement a range of interventions, including the promotion of the socio-economic inclusion of refugees, IDPs and their hosts, making prevention of violence against women integral part of environmental policies and programs, and empowering women to have more agency and influence in environmental stewardship and adaptation to climate change. The inclusion pledge focuses on the need to strengthen inclusion of refugees in national ID systems and in Gender-Based Violence services, amongst other things. It also explicitly addresses the ambition to enhance inclusion of refugees' secondary schools in the national education system. The pledge notes that for full integration of refugee secondary education into the national system, predictable financial support from the international community, based on the burden and responsibility sharing principles, is required, to ease the pressure on the existing national secondary educational system.

4. Human Rights, Gender, Youth and applying a Human Rights Based Approach

Although Ethiopia has made remarkable progress towards increased girls' net primary enrolment rates from 51% in 2003/04 to 86% in 2020/21, girls still face particular challenges. Only two in five girls who start grade 1 reach grade 7, the completion rate to grade 8 is 67%, and fewer than one in three of secondary school-aged girls are in secondary school. Several factors contribute to these poor education indicators for girls in Ethiopia.

First, girls face harmful social norms. Child marriage rates in the country are one of the highest in the world. The threat of the impact of climate crisis exacerbates this: when climate-induced disasters like drought and flooding happen, followed by economic difficulties, some families make the difficult decision to marry off their daughter, thereby having one less mouth to feed while receiving dowry in return. Analysis of data in one of the most drought-affected regions in the country demonstrated an increase of 119% in reported child marriage during the height of the Horn of Africa drought in 2022. Child marriage is cited as the key reason for more than one in 10 girls' dropping out of secondary school, and each additional year of child marriage reduces the possibility of girls' enrolment in

secondary school. Ethiopia is home to 17.3 million child brides (7.5 million of them married before 15 years of age), which is one-third of the total child brides in East and Southern Africa.

Second, gender-based violence robs girls of education. Other forms of violence against boys and girls, including sexual and gender-based violence, also occur in all settings including in schools, and affect children's rights to development, education and protection. According to EDHS 2016, almost one-quarter of girls and women aged 15-49 have experienced physical violence since age fifteen; one in ten reported having experienced sexual violence. 25% of girls and women who have experienced any type of physical or sexual violence have sought help; 66% have neither sought help nor told anyone about the violence.

Third, many schools do not meet the needs of girls in terms of available WASH facilities including menstrual hygiene and health contributing to learning poverty. Without proper WASH facilities to deal with menstruation, girls have no other means but to stay at home, skipping classes. The Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) showed 60% of students have insufficient reading skills at the end of grade 3, with girls being overrepresented in this category. Displaced, refugee, and poverty-stricken girls face greater challenges, as complex circumstances interplay.

5. Inclusive sustainable growth, climate change and environment

Ethiopia is also highly vulnerable to climate shocks and is among the most drought-prone countries worldwide. Ethiopia recently suffered from the worst drought in 50 years (the 2020-2023 drought in the Horn of Africa) as a consequence of the triple-dip La Niña phenomenon and increased global mean temperature. Ethiopia has experienced continued climate-induced disasters including drought, torrential rainfall and flooding. In the midst of a 1.1°C global mean temperature increase vis-à-vis the pre-industrial period, Ethiopia's average temperature increased by 1.23°C from 1901 to 2020. Due to the El Niño event in 2014-2016, 9.7 million Ethiopians (out of globally impacted 60 million) suffered from drought and flooding, while the La Niña phenomenon in 2020-2023 led to drought in the Horn of Africa—the worst drought in the country in 50 years. The climate-induced disasters will worsen in intensity and frequency. Children and adolescents in Ethiopia are at particularly high risk of climate change (CCRI) and bear the brunt, with existing vulnerabilities exacerbated. Women and children are disproportionately affected by both conflict and climate crisis impacts and make up more than two-thirds of the people in need in 2023. The conflict and climate crises have led to increased humanitarian needs for the target population across Ethiopia. As of October 2023, over 7.6 million children (60% girls) in Ethiopia are out-of-school due to emergencies in Ethiopia, primarily due to climate shocks as well as conflict.

6. Capacity of public sector, public financial management and corruption (N/A)

7. Matching with Danish strengths and interests, engaging Danish actors and seeking synergies

It is the aim of Danish development assistance to create hope and opportunities for people by promoting economic and social protection and development. Ensuring access to quality education in fragile countries and crises affected contexts is a priority in this regard. This is done through contributing to long-term and sustainable solutions while also responding quickly in the face of changing realities.

The project presented in this document is anchored in Denmark's overall commitment to the SDGs, here with a focus on SDG 4. Sustainable development hinges on every child receiving quality education. Quality education offers children and young people the tools to develop to their full potential, enabling upward socioeconomic mobility. Without quality education, children and young people are more likely to suffer adverse health outcomes and less likely to participate in decisions that affect them, threatening their ability and opportunity to shape a better future for themselves and their societies.

The project is equally anchored in the Danish Strategy for Development Cooperation 2021-2025, "The World We Share", which includes a focus on equal access to quality education for children and young people in fragile contexts, with particular focus on marginalised and vulnerable groups including women, children and young people. Education

is recognised as a driver for human rights, democratic societies and economic development, while climate change and degraded ecosystems trigger and intensify conflicts and fragility, which in turn exacerbates poverty and inequality. Denmark is therefore committed to; 'Ensure access to healthcare services and quality education in fragile countries and regions of origin, with particular focus on marginalised groups and women, children and young people' (Objective 1 in the Danish Strategy for Development Cooperation).

Finally, the project is anchored in the Danish MFA 'How-to' notes on securing coherence between humanitarian aid, development cooperation and peacebuilding (the HDP nexus) and on social sectors and safety nets, in support of the implementation of the Danish strategy for development cooperation 2021-2025. The latter underlines that support to education will primarily be channelled through multilateral partnerships. While Danish support to education is indeed predominantly multilateral, there is also interest in providing support bilaterally, where education needs are particularly significant and where there are several strategic factors that come into play, be it strong political will from the side of the partner country Government and/or opportunities for leveraging funding, or other such factors.

Programmes

The "Girls are Heroes" project in the Afar region in Ethiopia, that has received support by the Danish MFA, aimed to increase the number of girls who access, complete primary school and successfully transition to secondary education in selected pastoralist woredas (districts) in the region. The background for the project was the fact that the region was demonstrating a low Primary Education Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) and a high child marriage rate, compared to national levels. The recurrent emergencies (drought, flood and windstorms) had directly impacted on teaching and learning processes - with increased teacher absenteeism in the drought affected districts, families unable to cover the direct and indirect costs of schooling and parents removing their children from school due to extended migration periods in search of pasture and water.

The intervention positively impacted the girls in Afar and improved their confidence and determination to complete school and achieve their dreams with the resilience skills they gained through the intervention. They would directly request dignity kits during their menstrual period, leading to decreased absenteeism and enhanced participation. The project also took into consideration the importance of boys' involvement in gender clubs for positive masculinity and promoting gender equality. Beyond the skills they gained in negotiation, decision-making and learning skills, it helped the targeted boys to challenge their stigma around menstruating girls as the life skills have topics around informing the boys on menstruation and how to support girls in school. The project also included environmental protection clubs and teachers in target schools. As a result, green pepper, tomato and lettuce was produced in the school compound plots. Through school gardening students have learned methods to mitigate the effects of climate change and adapt, building their resilience. This proposal will build on multiple lessons learned from the "Girls are heroes" project.

Of major relevance to this project is the Danish support, since 2020, to the Ethiopia General Education Quality Improvement Program for Equity (GEQUIP-E), concerning the integration of secondary refugee education, with a focus on girls' learning. The program also receives considerable funding from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), one of Denmark's major multilateral education partners. The support to GEQUIP-E follows the Danish pledge made at the Global Refugee Forum in 2019, in support of the Government of Ethiopia's commitment to inclusion of refugees in the education system, ensuring access to education for both refugee and host community children.

Currently, as part of its country programme for Ethiopia, Denmark supports a number of other relevant interventions. For instance, Denmark provides support to UN Women's Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) program, which addresses the root and structural causes of violence through prevention strategies that reduce social acceptance of VAWG, change discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, and promote favourable social attitudes and behaviours in Oromia, Sidama and Somali regions. The program engages the Ministry of Education, Amhara and Oromia regions' Bureaus of Education and Police University, and has developed curriculum, modules and textbooks, and coordinated the availability of safe spaces and respectful relationships in schools. It also strengthens the capacities of teachers, school communities and stakeholders to prevent and respond to school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV). The partnership between UN Women and UNICEF, in support of development of a five-year national strategy on prevention and response to violence against women and children, has also been supported.

Similarly, Denmark also supports the promotion of climate resilient livelihoods within and around forest areas and pursuit of sustainable management of forest resources in the Kaffa Biosphere Reserve, through the promotion of participatory forest management. In addition, Danish support to UNICEF Ethiopia's water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) programme, 2022-2025, includes improving access to WASH services in schools, increase the installation of water points and promote safe hygiene practices. Finally, it is relevant to also highlight Danish support to the roll-out of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) for Ethiopia (2018-2020).

Finally, Denmark provides considerable core funding to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and to Education Cannot Wait (ECW), both of which have a focus on fragile, refugee hosting countries. The strategic focus areas in the Danish partnership with these two funds are: strengthened HDP-nexus approach and gender equality as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation in and through education. This aligns very much with the focus of present project.

Annex 2: Partner assessment

UNICEF is a highly recognized global organization, mandated to advocate for the protection of children's rights. As a lead UN agency for child rights, UNICEF has been operating in Ethiopia since 1952, with its headquarters in Addis Ababa and a presence in nine regions (Afar, Amhara, Benishangul, Gumuz, Gambella, Oromia, Sidama, Somali, SNNP and Tigray). UNICEF Ethiopia works to support national efforts to ensure the realization of the rights of children and women through improved child survival, development and protection. Over the past seven decades UNICEF has established strong relations with the government of Ethiopia, bi-laterals, donors, development partners and civil society.

The UNICEF Ethiopia annual budget is 126 million USD for emergency and development intervention. The country office, housing a total of 490 staff members (91 international), runs more than 250 grants in different parts of Ethiopia, responding to the humanitarian and development needs of children, caretakers, and communities.

The 2020-2025 UNICEF/Government of Ethiopia country programme is designed to support Ethiopia build on its successes towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and has six components: 1) Child Protection, 2) Health, 3) Learning and Development, 4) Nutrition, 5) WASH, and 6) Social policy, evaluation and research. UNICEF Ethiopia's four flagship priorities are: end child marriage; end open defecation; stop stunting; and every child accessing learning opportunities.

During the inception phase, the choice of partners for the implementation of UNICEF activities as part of present project will be made.

Below are key excerpts from a due diligence assessment of UNICEF Ethiopia conducted by UK FCDO in October 2023⁴²:

Internal control: UNICEF has a risk management policy (Enterprise Risk Management Policy), and country offices are expected to review the risks on an annual basis. Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)- and Annual Risks Assessments are in the Enterprise Governance, Risk and Compliance (eGRC) system and available throughout the year. Risk assessment is a continuous exercise in UNICEF and updates are done in the eGRC system any time changes to risks occur during the year. In the periodic reports and informal updates, UNICEF reports any risks related to specific donor-funded projects.

The office assesses the risks every year and develops an action plan to mitigate them. The risk register is monitored throughout the year and specially when there is a change in the country programme environment. During activity implementation, risk assessment and mitigation measures are put in place.

Audit: UNICEF applies a one-audit principle, managed by the Office of Internal Audit and Investigation (OIAI), which is independent, follows the international audit standards and is not involved in the operations management. which is done by the OIAI. Country offices are sampled and included for audit review as part of the annual audit exercise at HQ level. It follows a risk-based audit methodology, which utilizes a comprehensive process for selecting implementing partners to be audited taking into consideration financial

⁴² Can be shared upon request.

risks, the operating environment and prior audit results. The audit report is accessible to the public. The last audit was conducted in 2020.

For the last two years (2021 and 2022) the UNICEF Ethiopia country office met beyond and above the minimum requirements for HACT financial assurance activities spot check and HACT audit (of partners). Spot checks have been conducted by qualified third party service providers and trained and experienced staff members.

Ability to deliver: UNICEF has 8 offices and two satellite offices, with the capacity to deliver emergency, development, resilience building, recovery, climate change adaptation initiatives under child protection, education, nutrition, WASH, health and social protection sectors. PSEA, gender and adolescents development, social behavioural change, accountability for affected community and cluster coordination are embedded in the programmes that UNICEF is implementing to address the needs of children all over the country. UNICEF is currently managing more than 200 grants/projects using its 70+ years' experience in Ethiopia.

UNICEF conducts programme reviews with CSO partners following end of Programme Cooperation Agreements (PCAs). Annual reviews with Government implementing partners are conducted at the regional level, following the Ethiopian fiscal year, as part of the work plan preparation and validation meetings. Third party monitoring is also one of the tools that the office uses to strengthen monitoring data collection from households and service centers, mainly in emergency contexts and for woredas that are not accessible due to remoteness or security reasons.

UNICEF conducts needs assessment with sister UN agencies for persons in need. UNICEF undertakes situation analysis, evaluations, annual reviews and fund forecasting in collaboration with government. UNICEF seeks the community support, analyses of risks and mitigates the risk through the risk analysis systems and review the scalability and sustainability of the interventions.

UNICEF engages with government, international and local NGOs, other UN agencies, bilateral and multilateral organizations. These partnerships are based on resource availability, required coordinated advocacy and assessments.

In general, programme staff have technical expertise in their respective functional areas, management skills depending on their level within the office structure and project implementation experience.

Monitoring and evaluation: UNICEF follows the Result Based Management (RBM) principles to ensure regular monitoring and evaluation of its programmes. Developing a robust result framework with clear and measurable results and indicators is the foundation for all monitoring and evaluation activities of UNICEF. Monitoring takes place at different levels, focusing on the level of results (inputs, activities, and outputs). Implementation monitoring focuses on inputs and implementation of activities and their outputs. Results monitoring focuses on outputs, outcomes and the bottlenecks impeding progress and achievement of results. UNICEF also conducts situation monitoring at the level of outcomes and impacts to assess the situation of children in the wider context. Monitoring activities are mainly conducted by staff and partners. UNICEF also uses Third party monitors, as required, to extend the reach of its own human resource capacity, mainly in emergency contexts and in areas where access is limited due to remoteness or security reasons. Monitoring is further strengthened through increased focus on staff and partner capacity building on RBM.

Risk management at the operational level: UNICEF Ethiopia has 177 implementing partners. In addition to the due diligence verification, all UNICEF implementing partners are assessed against their financial management capacity and their capacities to prevent and respond to SEA. The results of the assessment determine the funding modalities and the frequency of assurances activities that UNICEF will conduct to the IP. UNICEF also conducts capacity building activities to its IPs to strengthen their capacities both for financial management and prevention of SEA.

Funds might be channelled to government for some specific government driven interventions. UNICEF uses a set of assurances activities (Programmatic visits, Spot-checks, audits) to oversight the utilisation of funds and get assurance or not, that the funds were utilized for the intended purposes.

UNICEF ensures that our programmes are in alignment with the CPD. UNICEF also systematically ensures the implementation of Accountability of Affected Populations (AAP). The organisation has a dedicated section of 5 staff in the donor relations team who oversee fundraising.

Financial stability: UNICEF receives considerable emergency funding and advocates for long term development funding with focus to climate adaptation, resilience building, and other core areas identified by the Ethiopian Government. UNICEF has internal mechanisms to provide temporary funding to withstand emergency shocks e.g., the Emergency Programme Fund, provided within 24 hours of request.

The finance section is responsible for managing, monitoring and overseeing the full range of financial services including financial planning, disbursements of funds and payments, treasury and accounting, ensuring compliance of all financial operations with organizational plans, policies, procedures, guidelines, standards of performance, ethics, and integrity. Finance section focuses on harmonized cash transfer activities which includes risk assurance activities and capacity building for partners.

The finance team has 18 staff members including international and national professionals based in Addis Ababa and finance staff based in the field. The Finance team ensures internal controls are in place and are complied with.

SEAH Safeguarding: UNICEF has a global Strategy on Preventing and Responding to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment. To implement this strategy, the country office has developed an action plan and all UNICEF staff have done the internal mandatory online training on PSEAH and signed the code of conduct. UNICEF also has a child safeguarding policy, and as the custodian of the Convention for the Rights of the Child (CRC), UNICEF abides by it.

Annex 3: Results framework

Project		Inclusive, gender- and climate-responsive education project for children in refugee, IDP and host communities in the Benishangul Gumuz region, Ethiopia, 2023-2026	
Objective		Improved access to inclusive, equitable quality education in the Benishangul-Gumuz region of Ethiopia, targeting refugee and internally displaced children, alongside children in host communities, for holistic learning outcomes and resilience.	
Impact Indicator		<p>SDG 4: Ensure equitable and inclusive quality education</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1.2: Completion rate (primary education and secondary education) 4.1.3. Percent of Grade 4 & Grade 8 students who achieve 50% and above (composite score) in National Learning Assessment 4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels <p>SDG 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower women and girls</p> <p><i>Indicator:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence <p>SDG 13: Combat Climate Change</p> <p><i>Indicator:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13.1.3 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies <p>SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p>	
Baseline		To be added during inception phase	
Outcome 1		Increased enrolment of children in refugee, internally displaced persons (IDP) and host community settings in Benishangul Gumuz region, in protective, gender- and climate-responsive primary and secondary education.	
Outcome indicator 1		(UNICEF Country Programme Outcome Indicator) Primary and secondary education completion rates, sex-disaggregated, in the region	
Baseline	Year	66 percent for girls and 76 percent for boys (for primary) TBD for secondary school (during inception phase)	2020/1
Target	Year	76 percent for girls / 80 percent for boys (for primary) TBD for secondary school (during inception phase)	2026/27
Outcome indicator 2		(UNICEF Country Programme Outcome Indicator) Gender Parity Index (GPI) for primary, lower secondary and secondary schools, in the region	
Baseline	Year	0.87 for primary school 0.84 for lower secondary school TBD for secondary school (during inception phase)	2020/21
Target	Year	0.91 for primary and 0.89 for lower secondary school TBD for secondary (during the inception phase)	2026/27
Outcome indicator 3		% of women (20-24 years) married before age 18, in the region	
Baseline	Year	40,3%	2023
Target	Year	31.3%	2026/27
Outcome indicator 4		Presence of local disaster risk reduction strategy in regional education bureau in line with national disaster risk reduction strategy	
Baseline	Year	0	2023
Target	Year	1	2026/27
Outcome indicator 5		Number of refugee children enrolled in national education system in the region	
Baseline	Year	13,956 Primary (6,000 girls) and 7,834 secondary (2,358 girls)	2023
Target	Year	TBD (during inception phase)	2026/27

Output 1	Strengthened protective community structures and systems leading to improved access and learning for out-of-school and in-school children, particularly girls	
Output indicator 1.1.	Number of social workers/Community Care Coalitions trained on the National Case Management Systems, and climate change -induced vulnerabilities.	
	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Year</i>
	0	2023
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 1</i>
	200	2024
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 2</i>
	400	2025
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 3</i>
	500	2026
Total Target: 1,100		
Output indicator 1.2	Number of vulnerable children at risk of separation and violence, abuse and harmful practices are identified and supported by a capacitated workforce through a case management approach.	
	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Year</i>
	0	2023
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 1</i>
	1,000	2024
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 2</i>
	3,000	2025
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 3</i>
	5,000	2026
Total Target: 9,000		
Output indicator 1.3	Number of parents and community leaders reached with structured community conversation and other SBC interventions to address VAC/gender norms and climate change.	
	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Year</i>
	TBC	2023
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 1</i>
	50% (N 10,000)	2024
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 2</i>
	60% (N 15,000)	2025
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 3</i>
80% (N 20,000)	2026	
Output Indicator 1.4	Number of children trained to build their agency, champion norms change and climate resilient practices	
	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Year</i>
	TBC	2023
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 1</i>
	5,000	2024
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 2</i>
	5,000	2025
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 3</i>
5,000	2026	
Output 2	Access to education in a safe, protective, gender- and climate responsive learning environment strengthened for refugees, IDPs and host community children	
Output indicator 2.1	Number of girls and boys enrolled in formal or non-formal education through UNICEF support (disaggregated by primary, secondary, gender and disability, refugee, IDP and host community)	

	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Year</i>
	0	2023
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 1</i>
	0 (the first year is dedicated to project preparation to enrol children)	2024
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 2</i>
	17,500 (10,500 girls)	2025
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 3</i>
	35,000 (21,000 girls)	2026
	Total Target: 35,000 (21,000 girls)	
<i>Output indicator 2.2</i>	Number of girls benefited from protection and other gender related services such as MHH and SRGBV reporting points through gender clubs	
	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Year</i>
	1,000	2023
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 1</i>
	2,000	2024
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 2</i>
	2,000	2025
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 3</i>
	3,000	2026
Total Target: 8,000		
<i>Output indicator 2.3</i>	Number of children (by sex) enrolled as a result of parents/ caregivers reached with social and behavior change communication messages	
	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Year</i>
	0	2023
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 1</i>
	5,000 (3,000 girls)	2024
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 2</i>
	15,00 (9,000 girls)	2025
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 3</i>
	15,000 (9,000 girls)	2026
Total Target: 35,000 (21,000 girls)		
<i>Output indicator 2.4</i>	Number of schools where children/child-clubs initiated environmental action, DRR/DRM and/or climate adaptation strategies/measures in their school/community.	
	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Year</i>
	0	2023
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 1</i>
	35	2024
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 2</i>
	35	2025
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 3</i>
	0	2026
Total Target: 70		
Output 3	Improved quality of education services for refugee, IPD and host community children	
<i>Output indicator 3.1</i>	Number of teachers trained in enhanced instructional techniques for improved teaching and learning methodologies, gender responsive pedagogy (GRP), inclusive practices, and Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL).	

	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Year</i>
	0	2023
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 1</i>
	200	2024
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 2</i>
	500	2025
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 3</i>
	300	2026
Total Target: 1,000		
<i>Output indicator 3.2</i>	Number of adolescent girls and boys enrolled and completed at least 20 sessions of curricular life skills education	
	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Year</i>
	0	2023
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 1</i>
	500 (375 girls)	2024
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 2</i>
	1,000 (750 girls)	2025
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 3</i>
	3,500 (2,625 girls)	2026
Total Target: 5,000 (3,750 girls)		
Output 4	Strengthened thought leadership and evidence generation on project effectiveness to foster scalability and sustainability	
<i>Output indicator 4.1</i>	Number of Integrated MEAL Frameworks	
	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Year</i>
	0	2023
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 1</i>
1	2024	
<i>Output indicator 4.2</i>	Number of evidence generation and research pieces developed	
	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Year</i>
	0	2023
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 1</i>
		2024
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 2</i>
		2025
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 3</i>
	2026	
<i>Output indicator 4.3</i>	Number of regional and global opportunities, platforms and advocacy/policy fora where evidence/lessons of the joint LF-MFA-GF-UNICEF initiative (or of selected focus area) is disseminated	
	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Year</i>
	0	2023
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 1</i>
	2	2024
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 2</i>
	2	2025
<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 3</i>	

	3	2026
	Total target: 7	
<i>Output indicator 4.4</i>	Number of joint monitoring/documentation/learning visits undertaken	
	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Year</i>
	0	2023
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 1</i>
	Biannual (2 times)	2024
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 2</i>
	Quarterly (4 times)	2025
	<i>Target</i>	<i>Year 3</i>
	Quarterly (4 times)	2026
	Total target: 10 times	

Annex 4: Risk framework

Contextual risks

Risk Factor	Likelihood	Impact	Risk response	Residual risk	Background to assessment
Political Political unrest due to recurrent conflict in the country, with a focus on the region.	Likely	Major	UNICEF will implement projects with a peace lens, ensuring micro conflicts are not perpetuated.	Volatility remains and the project will track protection reports and follow guidance from the UN Security surveillance reports.	After 2 years of War, in 2023, the situation in Benishangul Gumuz is returning to normal. IDPS have already started to go back to their communities. However, the War in Sudan, has resulted in an influx of refugees
Economic Ongoing inflation in the country poses a potential risk to the implementation of the project.	Likely	Major	Funds will be kept in USD and only converted to ETB at the point of implementation. This will help with value preservation. UNICEF will also conduct offshore procurement for all high value purchases.	Inflation is a macro factor and remains a reality in meeting day to day costs that cannot be managed through bulk procurement.	Conflicts in Ethiopia have resulted in poor economic performance, characterised with inflation.
Social Pressure on social services among host communities, IDPS and refugees	Likely	Significant	The project will help strengthen services for refugees, IDPS and host communities, ensuring that harmony is promoted. Community conversations will include discussion on peaceful co-existence.	Low	The high number of refugees and internally displaced people in comparison to the host population presents pressure on resources in host communities and potentially can lead to conflict.
Environment Unsustainable natural resource use, firewood etc	Likely	Medium	Incorporating eco-friendly practices, using sustainable materials, optimizing resource usage, and adopting environmentally responsible practices.	Availability of alternative sources of energy may be hard to get.	The project has an allied component funded by the Grundfos Foundation that will support WASH in schools. Through this activity, solar powered boreholes

					will be drilled. The availability of water in schools will also support greening initiatives including school gardens, and tree planting.
Security Increased vulnerabilities and poverty levels may lead to crime	Likely	Major	Community engagement will build consensus on the project rationale. This will promote a sense of ownership. Additionally, the security of project procured goods will be assessed before delivery.	Ongoing monitoring will be required.	The two-year conflict in Benishangul Gumuz affected livelihoods. Increasing poverty is linked to crime and aid diversion. UNICEF will therefore ensure that all project goods are secured.

Programmatic risks

Risk Factor	Likelihood	Impact	Risk response	Residual risk	Background to assessment
Security Situation regenerating back to open conflict.	Unlikely	Major	UNICEF will jointly plan with partners, ensuring plans are SMART. Also, UNICEF will quarterly disburse funds, and where possible use the reimbursement modality.	Low	The Region had a two-year conflict that ended in 2022. In 2023 there were no major incidence, creating a positive outlook for programme implementation.
Absence of strong partners	Likely	Major	In delivery of this project, UNICEF will use the localisation approach. Infusing local level systems and capacity building for lasting and sustainable service delivery.	Low	The Region is generally underfunded, and the partner presence is low in the region. UNICEF will therefore use this support to build partner capacity.
Weak accountability of the government counterparts to deliver services and supplies for the end users, i.e the learners	Likely	Major	UNICEF will undertake strong monitoring mechanism, deploying its staff and organizing a joint monitoring with the government itself.	Low	There is increasingly loose accountability in the government system across the board. The ongoing conflicts and associated political instability has contributed to the low accountability.

Institutional risks

Risk Factor	Likelihood	Impact	Risk response	Residual risk	Background to assessment
Operational Security	Unlikely	Major	UNICEF will be guided by an inhouse course on security in the field. The course provides guidance on how to keep safe in volatile situations. Further UNICEF and the UN have security teams whose job is to assess risk and advise on safety matters.	Residual risk is low.	Post conflict situations remain volatile and vigilance imperative.
Fiduciary risk	Unlikely	Major	UNICEF has robust financial management systems, including assurance measures designed to reduce fiduciary risk. Additionally, UNICEF has a Zero tolerance policy on fraud/corruption. From 2023, UNICEF, incorporated a mandatory clause on prevention of aid diversion in all contracts with implementing partners.	The risk will remain, and UNICEF control measures will remain in place.	This is standing risk in all UNICEF programming and mitigation measures, aligned to the fraud prevention are put in place.

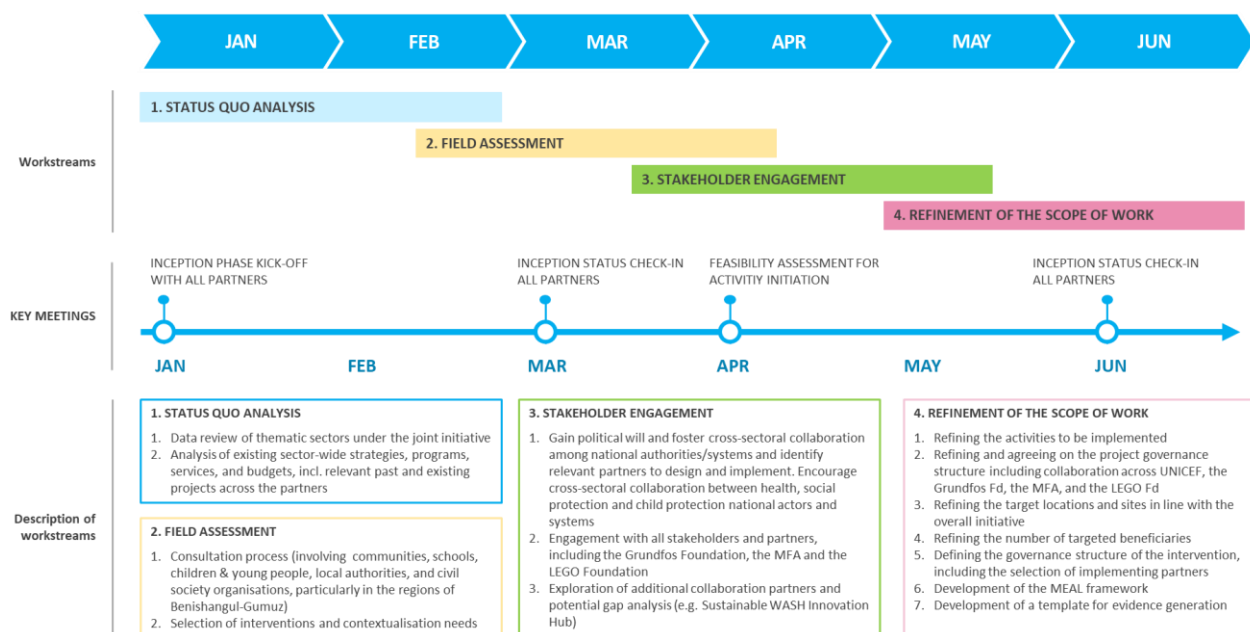
Annex 5: Budget

Budget line	dec-23	dec-23	Year 1	Year 1	Year 2	Year 2	Year 3	Year 3	Total cost	Total cost
	(Cost in USD)	(Cost in DKK)	(Cost in USD)	(Cost in DKK)	(Cost in USD)	(Cost in DKK)	(Cost in USD)	(Cost in DKK)	(Cost in USD)	(Cost in DKK)
Output 1: Strengthened protective community structures and systems leading to improved access and learning for out of school and in school children particularly of girls	460.209	3.147.829,86	55.857	382.060,89	479.750	3.281.490,00	132.750	908.010,00	1.128.566	7.719.390,76
Output 2: Access to education in a safe, protective and gender-sensitive learning environment strengthened for refugees, IDPs, host community children	105.362	720.674,71	793.695	5.428.874,48	804.477	5.502.623,36	302.364	2.068.169,76	2.005.898	13.720.342,32
Output 3: Improved quality of education services for refugee, IPD and host community children	249.390	1.705.827,60	-	DKK 0,00	108.380	741.319,20	92.300	631.332,00	450.070	3.078.478,80
Output 4: Strengthened leadership and evidence generation on programme effectiveness to foster scalability and sustainability	-	0,00	141.114	965.221,68	160.914	1.100.653,68	260.914	1.784.653,68	562.943	3.850.529,03
Programme effectiveness	87.924	601.398,04	10.672	72.993,36	98.595	674.391,40	98.595	674.391,40	295.786	2.023.174,19
Salary	16.433	112.398,57	180.758	1.236.384,23	197.190	1.348.782,79	197.190	1.348.782,79	591.571	4.046.348,38
Total Programmable cost	919.317,07	6.288.128,78	1.182.096	8.085.534,64	1.849.307	12.649.260,43	1.084.114	7.415.339,62	5.034.834	34.438.263,47
UNICEF Standard Recovery Cost (8%)		0,00	131.460	899.188,45	131.460	899.188,45	131.460	899.188,45	394.381	2.697.565,36
1% Levy cost	-	0,00	53.241	364.171,18	-	0,00	-	0,00	53.241	364.171,18
Grand Total	919.317	6.288.128,78	1.366.797	9.348.894,27	1.980.767	13.548.448,88	1.215.574	8.314.528,08	5.482.456	37.500.000,00

(exchange rate applied: 1 USD - DKK 6,84)

Annex 6: Process action plan (and activities) for inception phase

Overall joint initiative:



Danish MFA project specific activities as part of the inception phase:

Activities	Timeframe	Remarks
Identification and mapping of the actual targets (location, schools/refugee sites and beneficiaries)	Dec 2023 - Feb 2024	
Conduct a rapid assessment on capacity gaps (institutional and family levels) to protect and respond to the protection needs of refugee, and IDP Children	Dec 2023 – March 2024	
Consultative workshop with the REB, BoWSA, potential NGO partners and UNHCR	Jan - Feb 2024	
Map and train community network (5 from each kebele) to enhance back to learning	Feb – March 2024	
Rehabilitate damaged schools due to conflict and other natural disasters ensuring accessibility for CWD	Feb - March 2024	Damage assessment of schools to be rehabilitated will be done as part of the rapid assessment on capacity gaps during the inception phase
Provide student desks and blackboards for the rehabilitated schools and dignity kits for adolescent girls	Feb - March 2024	UNICEF will process the procurement of items in coordination with the plan for LEGO Foundation supplies
Enhance SRGBV prevention and response through training of schools (2 participants from each school)	April - May 2024	Adaptation and contextualization of the national SRGBV code will be done and training will follow in following months
Provision of mini-media materials for schools for messaging on climate resilience	Feb – March 2024	Procurement of the mini-media materials
Develop monitoring, evaluation and documentation plan	Feb- April 2024	
Revise the results framework and Theory of Change based on mappings and assessments, as well as adjustments to the ToC for the project and the overall initiative	April - June 2024	

Annex 7: Joint initiative – narrative and ToC

Inclusive Learning Opportunities for Refugees and IDPs in Benishangul-Gumuz, Ethiopia

A joint initiative between UNICEF, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, the LEGO Foundation, and the Grundfos Foundation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ethiopia is the third-largest refugee-hosting country in Africa, with close to 1 million refugees and asylum seekers, mainly from South Sudan, Somalia, Sudan, and Eritrea, and 4.2 million internally displaced people (IDP) and over 1.5 million IDP returnees, according to UNHCR. In Ethiopia, the Benishangul-Gumuz region has recently seen a large influx of these refugees and IDPs, and it is one of the underserved and neglected regions with many children deprived of basic development services and opportunities, such as access to quality education. In Benishangul-Gumuz, 21% of school-age children are out of school. Additionally, the region is severely impacted by climate change shocks, with frequent occurrences of drought and famine, resulting in increased vulnerabilities for the population, especially children.

Against the backdrop of the learning crisis, children, especially displaced children, children with disabilities, and girls, impacted by conflict and climate shocks in Benishangul-Gumuz often lack access to inclusive and equitable quality education, which directly diminishes their chance of holistic development and resilience, and thereby their chance to reach their full potential.

Despite the challenging circumstances, the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) continues to demonstrate a remarkable commitment to addressing the drivers of forced displacement, realising the human rights and needs of forcibly displaced persons and host communities. During the first Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in 2019, the GoE confirmed its ambitious commitment to enhance protection and solutions for refugees and host communities, including commitments to improve access to quality education and inclusion of refugees into the national education system.

To support the efforts of the GoE, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (MFA), the LEGO Foundation, and the Grundfos Foundation, together with UNICEF, aim to launch a 3.5-year initiative to **improve access to inclusive, equitable quality education for refugee, internally displaced, and host community children in the Benishangul-Gumuz region in Ethiopia, leading to holistic learning outcomes and resilience.**

The joint initiative, *Inclusive learning opportunities for refugees and IDPs in Benishangul-Gumuz, Ethiopia*, will consist of three interlinked projects targeting the same selected schools and surrounding communities in Benishangul-Gumuz: The MFA project will support interventions for primary and secondary-aged children with a focus on gender transformative interventions for refugee-, IDP-, and host community children in Benishangul-Gumuz. The LEGO Foundation will support learning through play, including the use of play boxes, tailored, context and age appropriate MHPSS interventions, and data evidence generation. The Grundfos Foundation project will support climate-sensitive water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities and interventions in targeted schools and communities in the targeted refugee, IDP, and host community areas.

To ensure synergies between the various projects, the initiative will jointly contribute to reaching three outcomes:

1. **Increased capacity of the education system to provide inclusive and equitable access to quality learning of refugee, internally displaced and host community children**
Activities under this outcome focus on the learning environment and the capacity of teachers to support enhanced learning.

2. **Improved ability of the enabling environment and community structures, to enhance resilience and wellbeing of refugee, internally displaced and host community children**
Activities under this outcome focus on the communities' abilities to support learning activities.
3. **Strengthened thought leadership and evidence on programme effectiveness to foster scalability and sustainability**

Activities under this outcome focus on fostering knowledge sharing for ongoing programme effectiveness and scaling of learnings, as well as providing the foundation for policy advocacy and increased government action.

The initiative is envisioned to run for three and a half years from January 2024 to June 2027, including an initial inception phase. During the implementation period, the partners commit to assessing opportunities for improvements based on learnings and identification of additional enabling programme components across other sectors, which might foster increased effectiveness toward an inclusive refugee response.

INTRODUCTION

An inclusive approach to children's holistic learning and well-being in the Benishangul-Gumuz region in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Denmark, the LEGO Foundation, and the Grundfos Foundation have approached UNICEF to present an initiative that responds to the ambition of the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) to improve access to quality education and inclusion of refugees into the national education system.

Under the umbrella of the Danish public-private alliance, the proposed initiative aims to support refugee, internally displaced, and host community children in all their diversity by enabling them to access quality and inclusive education as well as a range of school- and community-based services that cater to their holistic needs, including their mental health and wellbeing. The initiative includes play-based learning, accelerated- and catch up (foundational) learning, a focus on the development of essential socio-emotional skills, promoting mental health, fostering climate literacy and child-led action, access to WASH services, and building the capacities of caregivers and educators. The initiative is informed by the socio-ecological model, considering individual and societal factors that create vulnerability and impede girls' education. To address these vulnerabilities, the initiative will infuse protection and promotion of child rights for the most vulnerable (refugees, IDPs, girls, CWDs). Prevention and response to Gender Based Violence and Violence Against Children (VAC) will be part of both the school and community-based interventions. Throughout the initiative's lifecycle, UNICEF will lead multi-level learning and accountability exercises to ensure the interventions' quality, strengthen thought leadership, and generate evidence on programme effectiveness to foster scalability and sustainability.

The partners will pledge their support to inclusive learning opportunities for refugees and IDPs in Ethiopia together with the GoE at the GRF in December 2023 where UNICEF co-leads a multistakeholder pledge⁴³ for every refugee and host community child to be included in the national education systems, with a tailored approach to ensure and improve safety, quality, and learning.

⁴³ The Global Compact on Refugees UNHCR. (n.d.). Multistakeholder Pledge: Securing sustainable futures: Towards a shared responsibility to uphold the right to education and include refugee children in national education systems. <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/pledges-contributions/multistakeholder-pledges-2023/multistakeholder-pledge-securing-sustainable>

CONTEXT

The Refugee Response Context in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is a pioneer in the roll-out of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). The country continues to demonstrate a remarkable commitment to addressing the drivers of forced displacement, realising the human rights and needs of forcibly displaced communities and host communities – as evidenced by progress related to the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) in Ethiopia. Notwithstanding multiple and overlapping crises, which have an ever-worsening impact on Ethiopia’s development outcomes, the country continues to reiterate its firm commitment as demonstrated by the GoE through the inclusion of refugee education in its sixth Education Sector Development Programme. However, there are serious challenges to the achievement of these ambitions including a dire learning crisis marked by low enrolment and retention rates, and insufficient learning environments including a shortage of WASH facilities.

As of August 2023, Ethiopia was home to a significant population of forcibly displaced persons, including over 942,792 refugees and asylum seekers mostly from South Sudan, Somalia, Sudan, and Eritrea, making it the third-largest refugee-hosting country in Africa. Additionally, the country has a large population of IDPs, with a staggering 4.2 million IDPs and over 1.5 million IDP returnees (UNHCR, 2023).

The Region of Benishangul-Gumuz

Benishangul-Gumuz was selected as the region for intervention for equity reasons. Of the conflict affected and refugee hosting regions in Ethiopia, Benishangul-Gumuz is a region with high overlapping and redundant socioeconomic problems, with children and women being the most affected ones. Furthermore, Benishangul-Gumuz is one of the underserved and neglected regions with children deprived from basic development services. Humanitarian presence and response capacity in this area is limited and insufficient to meet children's needs. To add to this, Benishangul-Gumuz is prone to climate shocks. Climate variability and change induced hazards such as erratic rainfall, pests and disease, significant forest fires all negatively affect the agricultural production, livelihood, and environment. This multiplies the vulnerability of the population adding to existing crises, like the learning crisis.

Moreover, the recent conflict in Sudan has resulted in an influx of refugees to Benishangul-Gumuz adding up to 79,236 refugees living in three camps (Sherkole, Tsore, and Bambasi) ⁴⁴. Benishangul-Gumuz has also been internally impacted by a conflict between unidentified armed groups and government military forces, resulting in displacement of 103,026 IDPs and the infrastructural damage limiting access to basic social services including education for host communities.

Table 1: Benishangul-Gumuz Demographic data

Population data in Benishangul-Gumuz	Number
Total Population	1,218,000 ⁴⁵
School age population 4-18	375,054 ⁴⁶
IDPs (Total)	410,000 ⁴⁷
Internally displaced children	217,000

⁴⁴ UNHCR Ethiopia. (2023, October 16). Overview of Refugee camps and sites. UNHCR Operational Data Portal (ODP). <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/104087>

⁴⁵ Benishangul-Gumuz (Region, Ethiopia) - Population statistics, charts, map, and location. (n.d.). [Dataset]. https://www.citypopulation.de/en/ethiopia/admin/ET06__benishangul_gumuz

⁴⁶ Education Cluster & UNICEF. (2022). Ethiopia Education Cluster July 2022 Dashboard - Ethiopia [Dataset]. In ReliefWeb. <https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-education-cluster-july-2022-dashboard>

⁴⁷ Ibid

Refugee (Total)	79.236 ⁴⁸
Refugees (Children)	37,847 ⁴⁹

The Learning Challenges Faced by Children in the Benishangul-Gumuz

The current learning crisis in Ethiopia is dire, with 13 million children out of school nationwide. On average, 9 in 10 children are unable to read or understand a simple text by the age of 10⁵⁰, making it one of the highest rates of learning poverty in the Eastern and Southern Africa region.

In Benishangul-Gumuz 21% (78,761) of school-age children are out of school. More than half of these children are out of school due to conflict, making it a key driver impeding children's access to education. Impacted by multifaceted factors including negative social norms, unfriendly learning environments and climatic shocks that disproportionately affect them, children's particularly girls' enrolment, retention, learning, and completion rates are severely affected.

Foundational learning

Crisis-affected children that have their learning disrupted, face the loss of critical foundational learning which includes literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional skills. Foundational learning is the basis for all other learning and knowledge and higher-order skills that children and youth need to attain through education to succeed in life. New evidence shows that children affected by conflict may acquire foundational learning skills six times slower⁵¹. The human and economic costs of learning poverty are potentially catastrophic and worse for emergency affected children, with intergenerational consequences on poverty, health, and overall wellbeing. Moreover, the loss of socio-emotional learning includes the lack of development in skills such as self-awareness, self-regulation, and other skills that enable children to build resilience and manage emotions, establish, and maintain positive relationships with their peers and teachers and develop healthy behaviours.

MHPSS

It is important to consider the impact of adversity, displacement, and the refugee experience on children's mental health and psychosocial well-being. Exposure to life-threatening events can have a profound effect on their mental health, and studies have demonstrated that up to 22% of children affected by emergencies are likely to experience stress, depression, anxiety, and other conditions⁵². Without proper care and support, this can negatively affect a child's functioning in learning environments and their ability to develop socioemotional skills. Children with mental health issues are at greater risk of school failure, absenteeism, and disruptive classroom behaviour.

⁴⁸ UNHCR Ethiopia. (2023, October 16). Overview of Refugee camps and sites. UNHCR Operational Data Portal (ODP). <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/104087>

⁴⁹ Ministry of Education Ethiopia, Education Statistics Annual Abstract 2021/2022

⁵⁰ UNICEF. (n.d.). Learning and development! UNICEF Ethiopia. <https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/learning-and-development>

⁵¹ UNICEF & Education Cannot Wait. (2022, December 8). The climate crisis disrupts the education of 40 million children every year. Education Cannot Wait. <https://www.educationcannotwait.org/news-stories/press-releases/the-climate-crisis-disrupts-the-education-40-million-children-every>

⁵² Reed, R., Fazel, M., Jones, L., & Panter-Brick, C. (2011). Mental health of displaced and refugee children resettled in low-income and middle-income countries: risk and protective factors. *The Lancet*, 379(9812), 250–265. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(11\)60050-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(11)60050-0)

Learning Environment

New evidence points to the link between high quality WASH programmes and learning outcomes⁵³. Lack of adequate WASH services largely contributes to low enrolments in schools, high school dropout rate, and low student performance in schools, especially among girls and children with disabilities. In Ethiopia, approximately 20% of girls miss school to assist with water fetching, compared to just 5% of boys.⁵⁴ In addition, young girls of reproductive age who lack proper menstrual hygiene health kits and services in schools may have challenges attending school for a couple of days a month. Girls in Benishangul-Gumuz are no exception, as most children face low water and latrine coverage in schools and communities⁵⁵. The impact is reflected in low enrolment, high dropout, and low completion ratios.

More girls are forced to remain out of school as the age and grade level increases. While the net enrolment ratio at primary (grades 1 to 6) was 82%, the corresponding ratio at the lower secondary school (grades 7 and 8) and secondary (grades 9 to 12) education was less than 30%.⁵⁶ More than 13,000 girls in the region drop out of school every year due to multiple barriers including negative social norms, lack of girl friendly school environment and humanitarian shocks.

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

Problem Statement and Targeted Impact

Against the backdrop of the learning crises, children, especially displaced children, children with disabilities, and girls, impacted by conflict and climate shocks in Benishangul-Gumuz often lack access to inclusive and equitable quality education which directly diminishes their chance to holistic development and resilience, and thereby their chance to reach their full potential.

Therefore, proposed initiative aims to improve access to inclusive, equitable quality education in Benishangul-Gumuz, targeting refugee and internally displaced children, alongside children in host communities. Their holistic learning, wellbeing and resilience will be strengthened through investing in foundational learning, including socio-emotional learning, promoting gender equality as well as climate change resilience in and through education, and improving the learning environment, including through enhanced access to WASH services. The initiative works through the humanitarian-development nexus⁵⁷, focusing on the inclusion of children with refugee and IDP backgrounds in the national education system.

Pursued Project Outcomes

In sum, the initiative aims at reaching a collective impact: Improved holistic learning and resilience of refugee, internally displaced, and host community children in Benishangul-Gumuz region, improved access to inclusive, equitable quality education for refugee, internally displaced and host community children in the

⁵³ WHO & UNICEF. (2018). Drinking-water, sanitation, and hygiene in schools: Global baseline report 2018 (ISBN: 978-92-806-4981-9). <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/drinking-water-sanitation-and-hygiene-in-schools-global-baseline-report-2018>

⁵⁴ UNICEF. (2021). The climate crisis is a child rights crisis: introducing the children's climate risk index. ISBN: 978-92-806-5276-5

⁵⁵ The latrine coverage in Benishangul-Gumuz' schools only stand at 31%, and the water coverage at 37%. The water coverage for the host community in Benishangul-Gumuz stands at 26%, and 36% sanitation coverage, while access to sanitation in the refugee camps stands at 37%.

⁵⁶ Ministry of Education, Annual Education Abstract, 20220/2021

⁵⁷ UNICEF's approach to HDN places an emphasis on strengthening systems, developing risk-informed programmes, engaging community participation, planning and preparing for emergencies, fostering partnerships, and mobilising vital resources. Our approach also stems from the basis that programme should be designed and delivered in a more complementary manner to respond earlier and more effectively to immediate needs while, at the same time, addressing vulnerabilities and building resilience that ensure long-term progress and impact.

Benishangul-Gumuz region in Ethiopia, leading to holistic learning outcomes and resilience. Specifically, the initiative will provide inclusive learning opportunities to achieve three outcomes:

Outcome 1: Increased capacity of the education system to provide inclusive and equitable access to quality learning for refugee, internally displaced and host community children.

Outcome 2: Improved ability of the enabling environment and community structures, to enhance resilience and wellbeing of refugee, internally displaced and host community children.

Outcome 3: Strengthened thought leadership and evidence on project effectiveness to foster scalability and sustainability.

In pursuing the above, cross-cutting change strategies help achieve the impact and support the interventions. These include data and research-driven evaluation and knowledge management, gender transformative programming, risk-informed humanitarian and development nexus programming, and systems strengthening to leave no child behind.

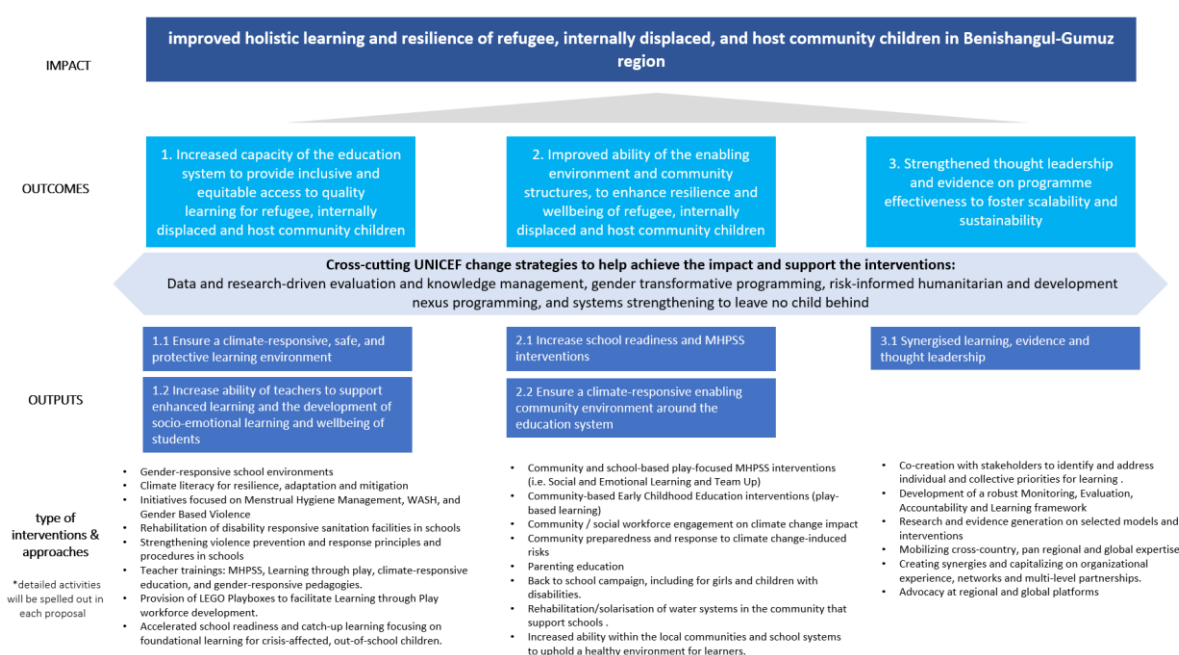


Figure 1: Theory of Change

THE APPROACH

To address the learning crisis, an inclusive and holistic approach to children's learning and well-being is crucial. The approach needs to be anchored in community and education systems and ensure that no child is left behind – in crises and beyond. Therefore, the intervention addresses the humanitarian-development nexus, with a focus on the inclusion of emergency-affected, internally displaced and refugee children into the national education system. This inclusion will be supported through integrated education and child protection services that build a support system around the learners. The system will be anchored in empowered communities and caregivers, safe, emergency and climate-responsive school environments and targeted interventions for out-of-school children and learners at risk of dropping out of education.

Interventions and Synergies

The initiative will consist of three separate but closely interlinked projects, targeting the same selected pre-primary and primary schools and surrounding communities in Benishangul-Gumuz. The interventions will

take place in host communities, refugee camps, and IDP settlements. As the target communities and schools overlap between the initiatives, beneficiaries will receive holistic and comprehensive support to improve their wellbeing and active participation in learning. The three projects are complementary and will contribute, in different ways, to achieving the overall initiative's objectives.

The LEGO Foundation project will support learning through play, including the use of play boxes, tailored, context and age appropriate MHPSS interventions and data evidence generation. The initiatives will target younger children (0-12), focusing on play-based interventions to enhance children's learning, including, but not limited to, mental health, and socio-emotional skills. The project will consider the needs of at-risk children in and 'out of school' and/or those who are experiencing or are vulnerable to protection risks. The interventions proposed will bridge the gap between educational settings and the communities they are in to address these vulnerabilities which risk not only mental wellbeing but also holistic learning attainment.

The MFA project will focus on gender transformative interventions for refugee, internally displaced and host community children in Benishangul-Gumuz in primary and secondary schools, with a focus on girls, improving their access to quality learning, building their resilience, empowering them, and giving them agency, including for climate adaptation and mitigation. Targeted girls and boys are given a chance to catch up on lost learning, including through accelerated learning programmes using gender-responsive approaches focused on learning recovery and foundational learning. The project will foster access and retention in primary schools, and the successful transition into secondary education. Children will learn in a safe, climate resilient and gender-sensitive school environment which offers an integrated package of complementary services critical to support learning and wellbeing, such as child protection services and MHPSS. Interventions will also strengthen climate literacy and child-led climate preparedness and action at school and in their communities.

The Grundfos Foundation project will support climate-sensitive WASH facilities and interventions in targeted schools and communities in the targeted refugee, IDP, and host community areas. The Grundfos Foundation will complement the interventions proposed under the LEGO Foundation and MFA projects with access to WASH infrastructure, menstrual hygiene management (MHM) and GBV prevention mechanisms, as access to safe WASH facilities contributes to school attendance and retention, especially for the most marginalised children.⁵⁸

INCEPTION PHASE

Recognising the iterative and collaborative nature of the process, the initiative will begin with a six-month inception phase, which will establish a detailed action plan and results framework. The foundational step for the initiative will include a rigorous consultation process, involving communities, schools, local authorities, and civil society organisations, particularly in Benishangul-Gumuz. An overarching assessment will inform detailed interventions for the three projects. A co-creation approach with partners will be employed during this phase to agree on evidence generation thematic and focus.

⁵⁸ UNICEF, UNESCO, & The World Bank. (2022). Where are we on education recovery (ISBN: 978-92-806-5337-3). <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/32546/file/Where-are-we-in-education-recovery.pdf>

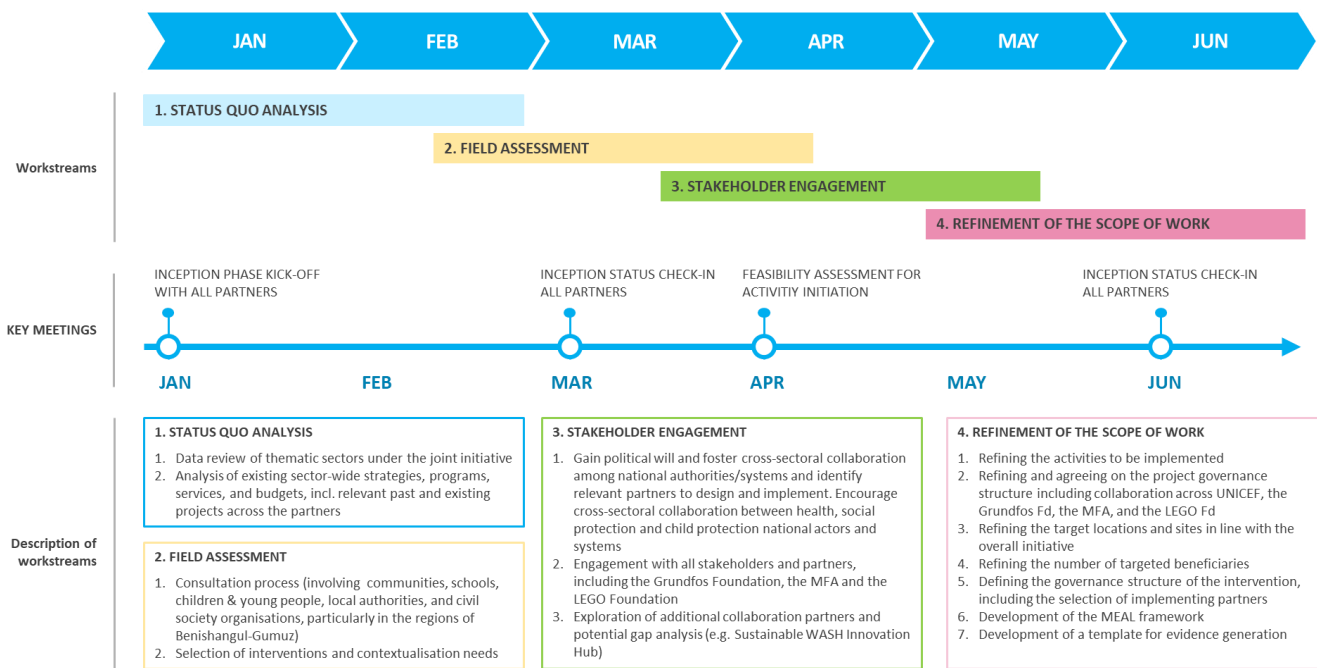


Figure 1: Inception phase from December 2023 – June 2024

LEARNING, EVIDENCE AND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Throughout the duration of this joint initiative, partners are committed to programme excellence, continuous, iterative learning, including through research and the development of data-driven approaches and models. The overall ambition is that the learning will generate further evidence and strategic recommendations that are essential for cross-programme fertilisation, advocacy, catalytic change, and scaling both regionally and globally.

Recognising the novelty of partnership model, the partners shall co-create the vision for learning needs and evidence within the inception. This includes the development of a robust Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) framework ensuring each partner’s individual and collective objectives are addressed. The iterative learning process is intended to create space to allow for identification of further elements of an enabling learning environment, adapt and refine the programmatic activities and to build in complementary elements as appropriate and agreed between the partners and as resources permit. Learnings are envisaged to be multi-level and will address the joint public-private partnership innovation, cross-sectoral programme approaches and selected interventions within the nexus context.

To achieve this, UNICEF⁵⁹ will mobilise local, regional, and global expertise from across countries, sectors, UNICEF HQ, and partner organisations and include children, adolescents and young people to engage throughout the lifecycle of the initiative. The intention is dual: Firstly, to provide comprehensive, technical support and quality assurance at all stages of the initiative. Secondly, to emerge with a set of deliverables, which galvanize lessons learnt on programme effectiveness, to inform scalability and sustainability. Outputs will include:

Strategic Partnership Blueprint: Emerge with a coherent strategic blueprint that encapsulates the public-private-UNICEF partnership. This blueprint will outline salient strategic components, emphasizing mutual priorities for future collaborations. This document will be a comprehensive report which focuses on the collective approach of the programme articulating the learning from the overall design and concept,

⁵⁹ Led by UNICEF’s Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO)

implementation, identifying success factors, enablers and lessons learnt. At the core will be recommendations related to the partnership model that could benefit other countries/ regions with similar contexts.

Unified Learning: Develop comprehensive multi-level learning report(s) and/or resource(s) reflecting lessons learnt on the specific programme *interventions, approaches* and system strengthening *models* applied. These documents will be nuanced to the partner priorities and available budget, the focus and selected subject matter of which will be co-created during the inception phase to capture specific learnings that can be used for further programming and evidence-based advocacy.

Evidenced -Based Advocacy: UNICEF (across all levels of the organisation) and partners will draw on their collective influence and networks and use the evidence generated to engage in regional and global opportunities, platforms and for advocacy on policy and to support programme scale up and sustainability.

SUSTAINABILITY

The initiative will be aligned with UNICEF Ethiopia's country programme which centres around enhancing the well-being of children through bringing different stakeholders – government, communities, caretakers, school communities, other service providers such as health institutions, WASH utilities, etc.- to support, undertake and own programme activities. The government system at all levels, from the national level to the community level, will be involved in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation to enhance ownership and sustainability. Furthermore, the initiative will work with refugee- and refugee-supporting structures and organisations for a coordinated effort to support children in refugee camps and in host communities.

In addition, the commitment of the GoE to integrating refugees into the national education system to enhance access to quality education is crucial to ensure sustainability. The integration of displaced children within the national curriculum is suggested to aid the integration, socialisation, and future employability within the host community and country.

Lastly, the project implementation will facilitate effective engagement with influential community members and religious leaders to ensure active community engagement and contributions to school development programmes. Apart from this, UNICEF, being the lead and co-lead of national and regional sector specific clusters, will use the different platforms including various actors in the sector for coordinated implementation, complementarity and scaling up of results elsewhere in the country and around the intervention areas.

Annex 8: Signed table of appraisal recommendations and follow-up actions taken

Title of Project	“Integrated gender and climate-responsive education and child protection project in refugee and IDP settings in the Benishangul Gumuz region of Ethiopia, 2023-2026”.	
File number/F2 reference	23/32684	
Appraisal report date	6 December 2023	
Council for Development Policy meeting date	N/A	
Summary of possible recommendations not followed		
n/a		
Overall conclusion of the appraisal		
<p>The overall conclusion of the appraisal is that <i>the proposed programme is recommended for approval</i> provided that the following recommendations are responded to. Due to the short period of preparation, some of the recommendations need to be addressed as a matter of priority. Hence, in the following the recommendations are made for either “before approval”, or “during inception phase” (until end-June 2024).</p>		
Recommendations by the appraisal team		Follow up by the responsible unit
Overall rationale and justification incl. preparation process		
<p>Recommendation 1: Anchor the MFA programme further in relevant policy contexts in Ethiopia. At this point, the ESDP IV seems most relevant, but other frameworks should also be considered.</p> <p>To be done by the MFA together with the Danish embassy, UNICEF and the Danish private sector partners during inception phase.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>More context has been added to the project document, before submission, regarding both the policy context and existing support provided by Denmark to other relevant interventions.</p> <p>As part of the inception phase and dialogue with relevant Ethiopian government partners, the overall programme and contributing projects will be linked more closely to national policy frameworks and objectives.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 2: Develop the theory of change further as to <u>how</u> the programme can achieve its objectives in BENISHANGUL GUMUZ region, e.g. how to increase girls’ enrolment in secondary education, or how to increase refugee and IDP children enrollment in the selected localities? Please also add assumptions to the theory of change section.</p>	<p>Done.</p> <p>The Theory of Change section has expanded on how the project will achieve its objectives in the target region. The assumptions are described as part of the ToC (the ‘because’ section), however it is recognized that the contextual assumptions will need to be</p>	

<p>To be done by MFA with UNICEF and programme partners before submission for approval (see also recommendation 5).</p>	<p>examined closer and elaborated on as part of the inception phase. At the same time, it is noted that the Theory of Change is expected to be revised, along with the Results Framework, during, and as a result of, the inception phase.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3: Finalise programme document with annexes for submission for approval:</p> <p>a) Programme document: Respond to comments in the appraisal report related to the sections on “budget”, “institutional and management arrangements” and “financial management” and insert table with key risks in “risk management”.</p> <p>b) Annexes: Draft annex 1 (partner assessment) and respond to comments in the appraisal report on annex 2 (results framework), and 4 (budget). Insert annex on “Context Analysis with information from the programme document, as relevant.</p> <p>To be done by MFA/UNICEF before submission for approval.</p>	<p>a) Done. The budget is revised in accordance with appraisal comments. The ‘institutional and management arrangements’ now include more detail on anticipated programme and project governance, to be further defined in the inception phase. The ‘financial management’ section refers to Danida guidelines. Key risks from the annexed risk matrix have been added as part of the main project document.</p> <p>b) Done. Partner assessment added in the annex; the results framework will be adjusted as part of the inception phase, including finalizing indicators; the budget have both been revised in accordance with appraisal comments. Context analysis is added as an annex, using contextual information also provided as part of main project document.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4: Identify previous relevant Danish programmes in Ethiopia in education, with UNICEF, in the BENISHANGUL GUMUZ region or other relevant thematic experiences and establish contacts with existing networks.</p> <p>To be done by MFA and programme partners during the inception phase.</p>	<p>Noted. This will be done during the inception phase.</p> <p>Have added previous and current Danish supported interventions, with relevance for the MFA project, to the project document.</p>
<p>Program</p>	
<p>Recommendation 5:</p> <p>Develop a process action plan (annex 5) for the inception phase with a focus on a) development of the programme’s management structure, b) further development of the results framework and update of the programme document, c) processes towards the anchoring of the</p>	<p>Done.</p> <p>A process action plan for the inception phase has been added, detailing steps to be taken and specific activities - as part of the overall initiative and for the MFA project specifically,</p>

<p>programme with local partners, and d) documentation of programme results, including key principles for an adaptive MEAL system. To be done by MFA and programme partners before submission for approval.</p> <p>Develop institutional, financial and political sustainability plans and a draft donor and funding strategy beyond the life-span of the programme later in the process. To be done during the inception phase and during the MTR.</p>	<p>including the specific elements pointed out in the appraisal.</p> <p>Noted that institutional, financial and political sustainability plans will need to be developed as part of the inception phase, and that a donor and funding strategy beyond the life-span of the overall programme later in the process (e.g. at the time of an MTR) must be developed.</p>
The management and organisation of the project including reporting and review mechanisms	
<p>Recommendation 6:</p> <p>Define programme management structures that ensure a balanced influence between UNICEF, the MFA and the foundations and align programme management to adaptive management and DDD principles. Programme management should also allow for programme adaptations following the MTR.</p> <p>To be done by MFA with programme partners during the inception phase, based on PAP developed under recommendation 5.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The process action plan for the inception phase includes the establishment of programme management structures and governance for the overall joint initiative, including all actors, and for the MFA project specifically. Noted and agree that this structure should be open to adaptations.</p>

I hereby confirm that the appraisal team has identified the above-mentioned issues and provided the corresponding recommendations as stated above to be addressed properly in the follow-up to the appraisal.

Signed in Copenhagen on the 8th December 2023

Appraisal Team leader, Martin Østergaard

I hereby confirm that the responsible unit has undertaken the follow-up activities as stated above. In cases where appraisal recommendations have not been accepted, reasons for this are given either in the table or in the notes enclosed.

Signed in.....on the....., Head of Unit (MNS)

Annex 9: Quality Assurance checklist

File number/F2 reference:	23/32684
Programme/Project name:	Integrated gender and climate-responsive education and child protection project in refugee and IDP settings in the Benishangul Gumuz region of Ethiopia
Programme/Project period:	2023-2026
Budget:	37,5 mio. DKK

This Quality Assurance Checklist should be used by the responsible MFA unit to document the quality assurance process of appropriations, where development specialists from either ELK or other units are not involved in the process; i.e.

- (i) *internal appraisals* of appropriations up to DKK 10 Million where this checklist constitutes the appraisal.
- (ii) *external appraisals* of appropriations between DKK 10 – 43 million and (iii) appraisal in exceptional cases. The checklist aims to help the responsible MFA unit ensure that key questions regarding the quality of the programme/project are asked and that the answers to these questions are properly documented and communicated to the approving authority.

Presentation of quality assurance process:

After assessing three relevant CV's for external consultants, a consultant was contracted through TANA to conduct an independent desk appraisal of the draft project document. There was an initial meeting with the consultant, prior to the appraisal taking place, another at the time of presentation of draft appraisal report. The meeting served to clarify the findings and proposed recommendations. There was a final meeting upon presentation of final appraisal report, to go through the final set of recommendations. The consultant assessed that it would not be necessary to conduct any interviews, as part of the appraisal, and sourced background material independently.

✓ The design of the programme/project has been appraised/appraisal checklist filled out, by someone independent who has not been involved in the development of the programme/project.
Comments: The appraisal consultant is independent and has not been involved in the development of the project.

✓ The recommendations of the appraisal/comments in the appraisal checklist have been reflected upon in the final design of the programme/project.
Comments: The recommendations have been addressed in the final version of the project document.

✓ The programme/project complies with Danida policies and Aid Management Guidelines, including the fundamental principles of Doing Development Differently.
Comments: It is explained how the project complies with and is aligned with relevant Danida policies and the financial management system and the risk assessment, as described, is assessed to be in line with AMG.

✓ The programme/project addresses relevant challenges and provides adequate responses.
Comments: Yes, the project proposes a relevant and adequate response to the contextual challenges and needs described.

✓ Issues related to HRBA, LNOB, Gender, Youth, Climate Change, Green Growth and Environment have been addressed sufficiently in relation to content of the project/programme.
Comments: HRBA, LNOB, Gender, Youth and Climate Change is particularly relevant for this project, and these issues are sufficiently addressed as part of the project document. Green Growth is not relevant. The context analysis in the annex provides a structured overview.

□ Comments from the Danida Programme Committee (if applicable) have been addressed
Comments: n/a

✓ The programme/project outcome(s) are found to be sustainable and in line with the partner's development policies and strategies. Implementation modalities are well described and justified.
Comments: The appraisal recognises that the project outcomes are logical and feasible, and in line with the partner and Government policies and strategies, although this will be further developed as part of the 6 months inception phase. Similarly, the implementation modalities are outlined but will be further developed as part of the inception phase.

✓ The theory of change (if applicable), results framework, indicators and monitoring framework of the programme/project provide an adequate basis for monitoring results and outcome.
Comments: The appraisal found that the ToC and RF provide a satisfactory basis but need adjustments, and the recommended adjustments have been followed and implemented in the final version of the project document. The appraisal also recognises that further work will be done on both ToC and RF as part of the inception phase, not least considering that the project will be complemented by projects supported by other donors, and that the inception phase will produce various analyses and mappings intended to inform the sharpening and finalisation of results frameworks across all three the projects.

✓ The programme/project is found sound budget-wise.
Comments: Yes, the Team Equal Opportunities –assigned CFO has reviewed and approved the budget. However, a more detailed budget will need to be developed as part of the inception phase.

✓ The agreed budget and financial reporting procedures provide an adequate basis for financial monitoring of funds.
Comments: Yes, the Team Equal Opportunities –assigned CFO has reviewed and approved the budget and financial reporting procedures as described.

✓ The programme/project is found realistic in its time-schedule.
Comments: The inception phase will establish more precisely what activities will be delivered to achieve the expected outputs and outcome.

✓ Other donors involved in the same programme/project have been consulted, and possible harmonised common procedures for funding and monitoring have been explored.

Comments: The other donors – LEGO and Grundfos Foundations – have been consulted, and during the inception phase common procedures for monitoring will be developed, as described in the project document.

✓ Key programme/project stakeholders have been identified, the choice of partner has been justified and criteria for selection have been documented.

Comments: UNICEF has been identified partner and the choice is justified. The stakeholder mapping will be done as part of the inception phase, including partners that UNICEF will be implementing through.

✓ The implementing partner(s) is/are found to have the capacity to properly manage, implement and report on the funds for the programme/project and lines of management responsibility are clear.

Comments: The appraisal recognises the capacity of the implementing partner, and a recent very thorough UK FCDO-led assessment of the partner's capacity, policy and practices has informed the partner assessment. At the same time, the implementing partner, at the HQ level, has for many consecutive years received core funding from Denmark, just as offices of the implementing partner in other contexts similarly receive Danish funding. The inception phase will establish and clarify the project management set-up across MFA and the Embassy vis a vis UNICEF Ethiopia, and similarly across the MFA/Embassy, LEGO Foundation and Grundfos Foundation with UNICEF Ethiopia and Denmark.

✓ Implementing partner(s) has/have been informed about Denmark's zero-tolerance policies towards (i) Anti-corruption; (ii) Child labour; (iii) Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH); and, (iv) Anti-terrorism.

Comments: UNICEF is aware of Denmark's policies in these areas, based on multiple other agreements between UNICEF and Denmark and longstanding partnership. The standard agreement will also include references to these.

✓ Risks involved have been considered and risk management integrated in the programme/project document.

Comments: The project document includes a risk management matrix.

In conclusion, the programme/project can be recommended for approval: YES

Date and signature of Desk Officer: _____

Date and signature of Management: _____