

POLICY BRIEF

Education in Emergencies (EiE)

Findings and recommendations from the situational analysis in Burkina Faso

March 2026

Project

« Advancing Education Solutions: Research for Scaling up Education Innovations in Emergency contexts affected by Fragility, Conflict and Violence (FCV) in Burkina Faso, Ghana, and Nigeria »

CONTEXT AND KEY CHALLENGES

Since 2015, Burkina Faso has faced a security crisis that has seriously affected its education system. Terrorist attacks and massive population displacement have led to structural fragility and a decline in education indicators, particularly in the Liptako, Koulou, and Goulmou regions.

5 319

schools closed for security reasons (March 2024), representing 20% of the national total

818 849

students affected, including 394,293 girls, and 24,281 displaced teachers.

432 181

internally displaced students re-enrolled in 2025, compared to 104,000 in 2020

78,7 %

Gross Enrolment Rate at primary level in 2024–2025, compared to **86,1 %** in 2020–2021

51,6 %

Primary level completion rate in 2024–2025, compared to **62,4 %** in 2020–2021

9,6 %

Completion rate in Liptako (high risk), the lowest in the country

KEY FINDINGS

① Out-of-school children and learners movement

Since 2015, the country has suffered terrorist attacks, resulting in the displacement of over 2 million people, 58.5% of whom are children ¹ (ACLED, 2024). The risk of children aged 6 to 11 being out of school is very high, as described above. There have been efforts to re-enroll children who had been in school once they settle in new areas, and the number of internally displaced children re-enrolled was 104,000 in 2020. This number is projected to rise to 432,181 in 2025 ².

The field survey reveals that 37.6% of the students interviewed are internally displaced persons (IDPs), with proportions reaching 70% in Liptako. The main causes of displacement are armed attacks (69.4%) and conflict or violence (66.2%). All the SSA/P centers visited in Liptako and Nakambé are hosting displaced children.

¹Burkina Faso: Internal displacements June 11, 2024 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs <https://data.humdata.org/dataset/idmc-idp-data-bfa>.

²Diagnostic report on preschool education, primary education, non-formal education and the promotion of national languages MEBAPLN, August 2025

② Teaching staff

Despite an increase in teachers from 70,823 in 2021 to 73,876 in 2025, a deficit of 3,248 posts persists, considering the 50-learners per teacher ratio. The pupil-to-teacher ratio reaches 70.2 in Liptako, against the required 50. It is worth noting that 55.7% of teachers are substitute teachers rather than permanent staff.

Given school closures and the teacher shortage in areas with major security challenges, appropriate solutions are needed. Among these are several educational innovations that have been assessed for their relevance to the security and humanitarian crisis context, as well as their results in ensuring continued educational provision.

③ Educational innovations

Accelerated Learning/Bridge Strategy (SSA/P)

The SSA/P is an initiative that began in Burkina Faso nearly two decades ago. It condenses the first 3 years of primary school (CP1, CP2, CE1) into 9 or 7 months of learning, targeting children aged 9 to 12 who are out of school or have dropped out. Learners sit a level test at the end of the 9 or 7 months, which allows them to transfer directly to CE2 or CE1 in mainstream schools according to their abilities. SSA/P centres are present in 87.5% of schools in Liptako and 66.7% in Nakambé. Across Burkina Faso, more than 61,000 children have been reintegrated into the formal system through the SSAP, with a transition rate of 89%. The number of centres has grown from 461 (2023–2024) to 686 (2024–2025), a substantial increase of 48.8%.

Radio education programs

The radio-based education program piloted by UNICEF and other NGOs (Educo, Plan International, ect.) reached more than 400,000 children in 2024–2025. However, it is weakly used in the schools visited (7%) across the three research areas. Moreover, the National Educational Radio and Television (RTE), launched in November 2025 and currently being operationalized, offers an opportunity to scale up the radio education program at the national level and even more through television.

④ Psychosocial support

In a context of security and humanitarian crisis marked by teacher and student absenteeism, it is essential to strengthen resilience through psychosocial support. The survey shows that only **28,1** % of schools in the project area have a teacher trained in child protection in the past 12 months. However, consultations with the authorities indicate that this figure is due to the fact that most trained teachers moved to other regions not covered by the research.

Moreover, 89,5 % of schools have no qualified counsellor. Violence reporting mechanisms are functional in approximately 2/5 of schools (36.8%). Only 16.9% of students in Liptako report that teachers address issues of stress or emotional difficulties.

⑤ Gender equity and inclusion: fragile progress

Since the early 2000s, Burkina Faso has pursued a strong drive for girls' schooling, enshrined in successive ten-year education development plans, and supported by partners such as the Bright program implemented by Plan International. Thus, girls' education is a clear and established reality in Burkina Faso, with a gender parity index of 0.99 in school enrollment in 2024–2025, and completion rates that are higher for girls than for boys. Nevertheless, efforts are still needed to facilitate access and increase the retention of girls in school, and this involves eliminating practices or the absence of mechanisms that are useful for strengthening girls' education. For example, 50% of school principals in the Liptako area believe that there are practices that can be considered discriminatory against girls in schools. In SSA/P centers, only 35.3% have menstrual hygiene management facilities. Regarding access for children with disabilities, 58,728 children with disabilities were enrolled (39.9% are girls) nationally.

⑥ School infrastructure: data on children's exposure to vulnerabilities

Indicator	Result
Schools without fencing	63,2 %
Classrooms considered unsafe	56,1 %
Schools without a marked emergency exit	52,6 %
Schools without an emergency plan	68,4 %
Schools without electricity (Liptako)	81,3 %

Schools without handwashing facilities	82,5 %
Separate toilets for girls/boys available	54.4%

⑦ Financing of Education in Emergencies (EiE)

Due to the security and humanitarian crisis, resources allocated to education have been significantly affected. The budget of the MEBAPLN decreased from 579.40 to 471.52 billion CFA francs (2021–2025), representing a drop of about 107.88 billion. Resources allocated to higher education (ESU) declined from 4.09 to 1.68 billion CFA francs (2022–2023), a decrease of 2.41 billion. The gap between the Ministry’s needs in 2026 (538.13 billion) and the allocated budget (392.69 billion) represents about 145.4 billion CFA francs.

OPERATIONAL AND STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are addressed to MEBAPLN, its technical and financial partners (GPE, IDRC, UNICEF, Strømme Foundation, EDUCO, etc.), and communities.

Pillar 1 – Strengthen the emergency response and coordination

- ▶ Strengthen the mechanisms of adaptation to the context of the rapid response system in EiE.

Pillar 2 – Sustainably support accelerated education programmes

- ▶ Increase the number of SSA/P centers by prioritizing regions with high rates of dropped-out-of-school children and in reconquered zones, while strengthening coverage in low-risk regions that serve as fallback areas hosting displaced children.
- ▶ Accelerate the mobilization of endogenous funding dedicated to SSA/P to guarantee the sustainability of the program without relying on external funding and to allow the reintegration of additional children per year into the formal education system.
- ▶ Strengthen the capacities of all SSA/P centre facilitators in gender-sensitive and inclusive pedagogy, building on existing modules, as only 76.5% of facilitators interviewed in Nakambé and 50% in Liptako report having benefited from this training;
- ▶ Accelerate the expansion of Educational Radio and Television (RTE – Radio-Télévision Éducative) to areas without physical access to schools.

Pillar 3 – Mainstream psychosocial support and child protection

- ▶ Train teachers in psychological first aid and socio-emotional learning by prioritizing high-risk areas.
- ▶ Create psychosocial listening units in all schools with hosting internally displaced learners, by assigning a teacher trained in the field and providing a confidential space for the reception and guidance of students in distress.
- ▶ Make a mechanism for reporting violence and abuse in schools mandatory and functional, by installing complaint boxes accessible to students, designating trained reference staff to deal with gender-based violence, and increasing the rate of schools with such a system.

Pillar 4 – Secure and adapt school infrastructure

- ▶ Build or rehabilitate school fences, starting with high-risk areas.
- ▶ Build or rehabilitate separate girls’ and boys’ latrine blocks in priority areas (reception zones, high-risk areas).
- ▶ Install or upgrade menstrual hygiene management cabins (CGHM) or girls’ toilets equipped with dignity kits.
- ▶ Provide schools without electricity with solar kits to enable the use of digital tools.
- ▶ Equip schools with a disaster and emergency preparedness plan, operational and known to everyone.

Pillar 5 – Improve teacher management and gender equity

- ▶ Dedicated a female staff member to monitor girls at risk of dropping out of school in each institution.
- ▶ Train primary school teachers on the SSA/P curriculum to support the opening and effective operation of bridging centers/classes in newly recovered areas, ensuring continuity of education.
- ▶ Deploy teachers to run these SSAP centers/classes in IDP relocation areas and recovered localities, providing older children (ages 9–12 and 13–14) with a second chance to attend school.

KEY MESSAGE FROM THIS ANALYSIS

Burkina Faso has proven educational innovations, most notably the SSA/P, which has contributed to reintegrating more than 61,000 children into the formal education system, with a transition rate of 89%. The challenge is scaling up such an innovation by mobilizing more funding from the government and its partners, as well as fostering the engagement and support of affected communities.

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