

# From Radio to Artificial Intelligence: Innovative Literacy Learning and Education for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons

## CALL FOR CASES

30 April – 29 May 2020

### Background

Increased mobility of people, both across and within borders, is generating new demands for literacy learning in terms of provision and its quality. According to the UNHCR, the worldwide number of people forced from their homes stood at almost 70.8 million in mid 2019. To put this figure into perspective, it is larger than the entire population of the UK or Thailand. Among these people, 41.3 million are internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 25.9 million are refugees, over half of whom are under 18 years old.<sup>1</sup> According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), these numbers are persistently growing, with 17.2 million new internal displacements recorded in 2018 alone due to environmental disasters, and another 10.8 million reported due to conflict and violence in 148 countries and territories.<sup>2</sup>

Refugees, migrants and IDPs, irrespective of whether they are displaced voluntarily or forcibly, face many challenges. Among these, access to meaningful opportunities for the acquisition of literacy skills and other knowledge, skills and competencies is vital for their survival, social integration, economic empowerment and personal well-being. Displaced girls and women are in particular more likely to miss out such opportunities for safety reasons and social norms<sup>3</sup>. There is an urgent need to identify solutions to provide flexible and personalized learning opportunities that meet the needs of the most marginalized population groups. According to a recent UNHCR survey,<sup>4</sup> the majority of the refugees in one of the largest camps in Jordan expressed a strong interest in attending skills training and said they would enrol in such programmes if these were offered. In reality, however, opportunities for adult refugees, migrants and IDPs are limited for varying reasons.<sup>5</sup>

Striving to leave no one behind, the United Nations Education 2030 Agenda seeks innovative and alternative ways of achieving the Agenda's ambitious 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to provide equal and inclusive access to lifelong learning opportunities for all. To put this into practice for disadvantaged individuals, families and communities, a range of technologies (both low-tech and high-tech) can be effective tools in a number of ways, as asserted in the *Incheon Declaration*<sup>6</sup> and the recently adopted *UNESCO Strategy for Youth and Adult Literacy 2020–2025*.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> UNHCR (United Nations Refugee Agency). 2018. *Figure at a glance: Forcibly displaced people worldwide* [dedicated webpage]. Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html> [Accessed 13 March 2020].

<sup>2</sup> IDMC (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre). 2019. *Global Report on Internal Displacement*. Geneva: IDMC. Available at: <https://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2019/> [Accessed 13 March 2020].

<sup>3</sup> UNESCO. 2019. *Global Education Monitoring Report: Gender Report – Building bridges for gender gaps*. Paris: UNESCO. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000368753/PDF/368753eng.pdf.multi>

<sup>4</sup> UNHCR. 2017. *Global trends: Forced displacement in 2017*. Geneva: UNHCR. Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/statistics/unhcrstats/5b27be547/unhcr-global-trends-2017.html> [accessed 13 March 2020].

<sup>5</sup> Hanemann, U. 2018. *Language and literacy programme for migrants and refugees: Challenges and ways forward*. Background paper prepared for the 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report. Paris: UNESCO. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000266077> [Accessed 13 March 2020].

<sup>6</sup> UNESCO (2016). *Education 2030. Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*. Paris: UNESCO. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000245656> [Accessed 13 March 2020].

<sup>7</sup> UNESCO. 2019. *UNESCO Strategy for youth and adult literacy 2020–2025*. Paris: UNESCO. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000371411> [Accessed 13 March 2020].

## UNESCO/SIDA global landscape study explores the potential of technology in meeting literacy learning needs of refugees, migrants and IDPs

It is against this backdrop that UNESCO, with the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), is conducting a global landscape study to review technology-enhanced literacy learning and education. The purpose of this study is to explore effective policies, measures and practices at the system, institutional and programme levels which facilitate the promotion of technology-enhanced learning. In the context of the study, this call for cases invites all stakeholders from around the globe to submit examples of promising cases of programmes which use various technologies – both low- and high-tech solutions – to provide learner-oriented, flexible, responsive, personalized and relevant learning experiences. Once the cases have been collected, they will be critically reviewed to examine their relevance (in terms of issues and solutions), scalability, efficiency, impact and sustainability. The selected cases will then be integrated into the landscape study, along with specific recommendations for improved policy, practice, provision and research.

This landscape study will take a human rights-based, holistic and interdisciplinary approach to explore the potential of technology in meeting literacy learning needs of refugees, migrants and IDPs, with particular attentions given to the most vulnerable of all, displaced girls and women. As explicitly indicated in the *UNESCO Youth and Adult Literacy Strategy 2020–2025*, this study adopts the broader concept of literacy as ‘a continuum of learning and proficiency’ and as an integral part of ‘a larger set of skills, including digital skills, media literacy, education for sustainable development and global citizenship as well as job-specific skills’, and is context-specific. The study’s findings and recommendations will inform further interventions, including the enhancement of an online knowledge database and the creation of guidelines to be used at the level of policies, institutions and programmes.

### About the call for cases

The current global call for cases is an invitation for all stakeholders at varying levels of involvement (policy, institution, or programme) in the planning, delivery or evaluation of literacy learning and educational opportunities for refugees, migrants and IDPs.

The collection and selection of cases will be conducted in two phases. This call for cases is for the first phase (30 April – 29 May 2020), during which promising cases will be selected from the entire pool of submissions based on the criteria (please see the section of “Criteria for case selection” in this Call). The participants whose cases are selected for the second phase will be contacted to further develop the documentation of the cases in depth (June - July 2020). Those selected cases will be included in the UNESCO/SIDA landscape study as well as in UNESCO’s *Effective Literacy and Numeracy Practices Database* (LitBase).<sup>8</sup> They will subsequently be featured in various regional and national seminars attended by country representatives and other key players.

To submit a case, an interested individual or organization is requested to fill in an online form which contains basic questions about their organization, their programme/project, the type and role of innovative low- and high-tech solutions, evidence of their impact in learning and education for refugees, migrants and IDPs, and policies and measures which facilitated the implementation.

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<sup>8</sup> UIL (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning). n.d. *Effective literacy and numeracy practices database* [online resource]. Available at: <https://uil.unesco.org/literacy/effective-practices-database-litbase> [Accessed 13 March 2020].

## Why participate?

Submission of cases offers the opportunity:

- to present successful stories of innovative use of technology in literacy learning and education of refugees, migrants and IDPs (particularly of girls and women);
- to promote different types of scalable innovation models (at both policy and practice levels) through UNESCO's *Effective Literacy and Numeracy Practices Database* and beyond;
- to learn from and engage with country representatives' and other key players' activities worldwide; and
- to contribute to generating and disseminating existing knowledge in improving and expanding technology-enhanced learning journeys (including the acquisition of literacy and other skills on a learning continuum) of migrants, refugees and IDPs.

## Who is eligible?

The call for cases addresses key players involved in the planning, delivery or evaluation of literacy learning and educational opportunities for refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in:

- national institutions, such as ministries of education and other public-sector organizations;
- development cooperation/aid agencies;
- non-governmental or non-profit organizations/foundations;
- private-sector organizations that pursue development programmes/projects relevant to the core issues of the study; as well as
- scholars and researchers.

## Criteria for case selection

The following criteria will be the basis for selecting proposals for inclusion in the study/the database:

- Projects demonstrating innovative use of technology in literacy learning and education, focusing on youth and adults who are refugees, migrants, and/or internally displaced persons (IDPs).
- Projects should already have been launched and implemented for at least six (6) months.
- Projects should be able to demonstrate:
  - evidence of success in terms of their relevance, scalability, efficiency, impact, and sustainability
  - evidence of sectoral or target-group improvements in the learning outcomes through verifiable means (i.e. research study, survey, evaluation reports, etc.)

## *Application and Selection Process*

Steps for the submission and selection of proposals are as follows:

1. Fill in and submit the Call for Cases form to the UNESCO project team **by 29 May 2020**.  
English Version: <https://survey.uil.unesco.org/index.php/219321?lang=en>  
French Version: <https://survey.uil.unesco.org/index.php/219321?lang=fr>  
Arabic version: <https://survey.uil.unesco.org/index.php/219321?lang=ar>
2. The UNESCO project team will review the proposals and notify participants about the

selected cases via e-mail within 15 days after the closing of the call with information about the next steps and the second phase.

**Contact Us**

Should you have any questions, please contact the UNESCO team for the project entitled 'From Radio to Artificial Intelligence: Innovative literacy learning and education for refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons'.

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