

# Childcare Programs in Refugee Contexts

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# Background

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Millions of children today are facing a confluence of crises arising from conflicts, rising hunger, outbreaks of infectious diseases, and climate change. As of 2022, 17.5 million children have been forcibly displaced as refugees and asylum seekers, and 29.6 million children have been displaced within their own country as a result of violence, conflict, and natural disasters ([UNICEF, 2023](#)).

Children under 5 have been heavily impacted as well, accounting for 16% of the forcibly displaced population ([UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report, 2019](#)). For young children and their families, the experiences of settling into a refugee camp, or integration within host communities can be challenging. It can likely result in them having limited access to health services; high risk for malnutrition; elevated levels of insecurity, violence, and stress; and other potential effects arising from socioeconomic adversity or extreme poverty ([Nurturing Care for Children Living in Humanitarian Settings, 2020](#)). Critically, research highlights that the first years of life are the most important for a child's development, laying the foundation for years to come ([Theirworld, 2016](#)). Therefore, the lack of access to childcare and education can harm the youngest learners and limit their long-term developmental potential.

Childcare services for refugee families are a win-win solution for both young children and their families, especially women. On one hand, it ensures the physical safety of young children, provides them with psychological support, and warrants cognitive development. Simultaneously, it allows parents to seek employment or essential services, fostering integration and stability in their new communities. Despite its importance, many families in crises continue to face the challenges of no or inadequate childcare ([UNICEF, 2022](#)).

This handout aims to summarise the childcare programs that are currently available for refugee families living in protracted crises, ie, contexts in which refugees have been living in exile for a prolonged period. We specifically look at childcare programs for children from the age of zero to when they formally enter primary school (between the ages of 6 and 8).

## The handout is divided into three sections

- **Part 1** offers an understanding of the importance of childcare in refugee settings and the key challenges faced by children and caregivers in accessing it.
- **Part 2** focuses on promising programming elements for childcare programs that merit further testing, and a typology of childcare programs for refugee crises.
- **Part 3** presents a mapping of childcare providers serving in refugee contexts.

For the purposes of this document, we define quality childcare as caring well for children in the absence of parents or caregivers and creating opportunities for children to engage in meaningful play with peers and adults ([Childcare in Humanitarian Crises, UNICEF, 2022](#)).

The handout is informed by literature and desk review, expert consultations, and discussions with over 25 early childhood education and development (ECED) providers serving in refugee settings.



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## Part 1

This section summarises key arguments regarding the necessity of childcare in refugee settings and the challenges encountered by families to participate in these programs.

### A: IMPORTANCE OF CHILDCARE IN REFUGEE SETTINGS

A childcare program can have many social and economic payoffs for refugee families. The critical ones are detailed below.

#### 1 The child gets benefitted through holistic development.

Childcare centres in refugee camps provide safe places where families can leave young children during the day ensuring the following:

- **Physical safety:** Childcare centres in refugee settings address the physical needs of young children in multiple ways. First, it makes the provision for health care, and supplementary nutrition to prevent poor development outcomes, such as stunting and malnutrition. Second, it reduces situations where young children can be exposed to direct physical harm and subjected to exploitation, like assault, abuse, trafficking, abduction etc. Lastly, it ensures children are not left unsupervised or in unsafe surroundings during the day.
- **Psycho-social support:** Childcare centres in refugee settings support young children to cope with trauma stemming from experiences like witnessing violence, undergoing family separation, losing home etc. Childcare centres are specifically important since refugee parents, who are themselves traumatized, are often unable to provide adequate psychological support for their children.
- **Social, emotional, and cognitive impact:** Childcare centres provide children opportunities to play, engage in communication with peers and caregivers, and get exposure to other cognitive activities. This prepares them better for primary school and reduces the opportunities to fall behind academically in the long term.

## 2 The well-being of the caregiver is addressed.

The well-being of the caregiver significantly influences the well-being of the child. Poor caregiver mental health may be associated with adverse childhood outcomes, such as low birth weight, prematurity, developmental delays, and various health problems later in life ([Moving Minds Alliance, 2023](#)). Childcare programs in refugee camps aid the well-being of caregivers in the following ways:

- **Psycho-social support:** Childcare centres alleviate the stress of caregivers by ensuring a safe environment for their children, granting them time for self-care, and cope with stress associated with crisis. Additionally, observing growth in their children can reinforce caregivers' sense of accomplishment and well-being. It also frees up time for caregivers to focus on other tasks like collecting food, and water in order to improve care for themselves and their children.
- **Community building:** Childcare centres can furnish a space for refugee parents and other caregivers to come together informally and build a community.
- **Responsive parenting:** Responsive caregiving includes activities like smiling at the children, comforting them when they cry, making eye contact, wiggling their hands and toes, encouraging them to try something new etc. Most parents easily respond to their children, however caregivers in crises who are coping with trauma of their own, often find it challenging to provide children with necessary support ([UNICEF, n.d.](#)). Responsive parenting is essential as it helps build a positive relationship between children and parents and helps mitigate the effects of stress and adversity (Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, n.d., as cited in [Moving Minds Alliance, 2023](#)). It can also reduce violence against children and increase positive development ([Humanitarian Practice Network, 2018](#)). Childcare centres act as safe spaces for parents to play with their children and get trained on how best to support their children's physical, mental, and psychological development.

## 3 The employment opportunities for caregivers are enhanced.

In refugee contexts, childcare centres open opportunities for parents or other primary caregivers to enhance their employment opportunities and foster economic stability, in the following ways:

- **Economic Empowerment of Families, especially women:** Childcare centres ensure that children are cared for in safe environments, which allows parents to pursue income-generating activities and boost family income. Childcare is particularly vital for women, given the increase in female-headed households during and after conflict ([UN Women](#)). As such, women often predominantly shoulder childcare responsibilities more than men, and benefit more from childcare.
- **Boosting long-term employment potential for adolescents, especially girls:** Many a times older siblings, especially girls, have to shoulder the responsibility of caring for younger children. This often leads to many girls having to drop out of school, harming their long-term earnings potential ([UNICEF, 2023](#)). Having childcare centres reduces the responsibility of older siblings for care, allowing them to focus on their own education. Childcare options for adolescent mothers also help them re-enter school so they can continue their education.

## B: COMMON CHALLENGES FACED BY REFUGEE FAMILIES IN USING CHILDCARE SERVICES

Despite its importance, refugee families face barriers which restricts their use of childcare centres. A few critical challenges are listed below.

### 1 Accessibility

Countries affected by emergencies are home to nearly a 1/4 of the world's pre-primary-age population, but only 1 in 3 children in those countries are enrolled in preschool ([Moving Minds Alliance, 2023](#)). Access to childcare settings is poor in refugee contexts due to:

- Poor prioritisation to restart education for young children:** Many times, when unexpected disruptions damage buildings, roads, or other infrastructure, school services are first to be shut down. Even when access is made available to schools, early learning is often deprioritised. This is illustrated by the fact that of the 26 humanitarian response plans active in April 2018, a mere 9% emphasised on early learning ([Jalbout and Bullard, 2021](#)).
- Poor infrastructure:** Centres in refugee contexts are often set up in make-shift arrangements. In the Palorinya settlement in Uganda, an estimated 70% of Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres use temporary structures ([Ministry of Education and Sports-Uganda, 2018](#)). Poor infrastructure is correlated with low attendance. A study ([Mapping Refugees, n.d.](#)) in encampments in East Africa, highlights that the lack of safeness and security of centre compounds, poor access to water, toilets, food and play materials dissuaded young children from attending schools, with attendance as low as 35% in some of the camps.
- Long distances:** High walking distances to schools, limit young children and their caregivers to easily access childcare centres. In large camps like Nakivale (Uganda) and Kakuma (Kenya), accessing centres involves walking distances often up to 6 km, facing road hazards including motorbikes and 4x4s traveling at high speeds, and uneven terrains ([Mapping Refugees, n.d.](#)).
- Lack of information:** Refugee families may not be aware of any childcare services near the area. More specifically, newly arrived families with diverse language backgrounds, face additional challenges in accessing information about childcare-related services ([Vandekerckhove & Aarssen, 2019](#)).
- High demand for services but limited supply at affordable prices:** Many centres have long waiting lists denying accessibility of childcare spaces to many children. The demand is often not matched with supply. A study in Uganda across 8 refugee hosting districts highlights that to ensure all refugee children ages 3-5 access quality ECD, 5,549 new classrooms would be needed in addition to current existing resources ([Ministry of Education and Sports-Uganda, 2018](#)).



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[Jalbout and Bullard, 2021](#)

In Chad, 'Little Ripples,' runs a refugee-led home-based early childhood education program. By 2018, despite reaching nearly 6,000 children, the program noted that one of its key challenges has been managing community expectations because of high and increased demand for preschool services ([GEMR, 2019](#)). Chad predominantly hosts Sudanese refugees who are displaced by violence and genocide.

- **Short operational hours:** Many centres are open only for a few hours a day, offering only a partial childcare solution. Childcare is needed for extended durations, including school holidays, so parents, especially single parents, can continue to work longer hours. In Turkey, less than 25% of childcare providers offer full day services ([World Bank, 2015](#)). While the data does not exist for a refugee set up, the situation is bound to be more challenging in such contexts.
- **Exclusion of refugees from basic services:** In Bangladesh, there is a national ECD policy for all citizens, however, the policy is not extended to Rohingya refugees. Refugees who live in camps are served by systems run by international agencies, separate and apart from national government systems ([RTI International, 2020](#)). Bangladesh also does not issue birth certificates for those born in the camps, making their legal status unclear ([Reuters, 2020](#)). The lack of paperwork has implications on the ability of children to be enrolled in formal schools, access health centres etc.



## 2 Quality

A study indicates that in the US, only 10% of childcare programs are considered high quality ([Forbes, 2022](#)). As pervasive as these challenges are in both high-income and many low-income countries, they are more complex in refugee settings within these countries, where resourcing (human and financial) and regulatory mechanisms are often limited ([Theirworld, n.d.](#)). Also, only about 0.5% of the total education aid is allocated to pre-primary schooling in conflict-affected countries ([Theirworld, 2019](#)). This constrained resource allocation has led to numerous compromises, impacting factors such as teacher qualifications, salaries, and pupil-teacher ratios. The following section provides an overview of these compromises in the quality of childcare services.

- **The curriculum does not focus on aspects of early learning:** As mentioned in the [Nurturing Care framework](#), high quality early childhood education necessitates a multi-sectoral approach, focusing on health, nutrition, security, early learning opportunities, and responsive parenting. Despite this, curriculum plans rarely include early learning activities including socio-emotional learning, opportunities for communication, creative development etc. for children ages 0 to 3. Mostly the target for children is towards nutrition and health ([Nurturing Care, 2020](#)). The lack of focus on learning until a child begins primary school can be harmful for many children, especially for those born into emergencies ([Theirworld, n.d.](#)).

**Only about 0.5% of the total education aid is allocated to pre-primary schooling in conflict-affected countries**

[Theirworld, 2019](#)

- **Shortage of trained workforce:** There is a severe shortage of well-qualified early childhood education service providers across low-and middle-income countries in times of conflict and displacement ([UNESCO, 2022](#)). This means, that in crisis settings, programmes are often delivered by caregivers, community members, or humanitarian actors who may not have professional training or qualifications to work with young children, especially those that require emotional and psycho-social support to deal with experiences of toxic stress. In the Palorinya settlement 7,937 children are enrolled in ECD centres, but only 42 caregivers are in place, and in West Nile, upto 62% of the caregivers in refugee settlements have not received the recommended training ([Ministry of Education and Sports-Uganda, 2018](#)).

Moreover, the compensation is notably inadequate for caregivers in refugee settlements/ camps. For instance, in Bidibidi Refugee Settlement in Yumbe District, northwestern Uganda, a caregiver reports receiving only 20,000 Ush or \$5.3 a month ([UNICEF, 2020](#)). The challenge of fair compensation is more pronounced for refugee teachers, who due to work restrictions, often find themselves in roles as volunteer facilitators, either without pay or a low stipend ([Theirworld, 2021](#)). Another challenge is the non-recognition of qualifications of refugee teachers. In countries, like South Sudan qualified refugee teachers' qualifications remain unrecognised. Many of the teachers act as classroom assistants, resulting in under-utilisation of their potential and expertise. There is a need for improved cross-border recognition of teacher qualifications or fast-track qualifications ([UNESCO, 2018](#)).

- **Overcrowding in the classrooms:** In Uganda, in 8 refugee hosting districts, the pupil teacher ratio was found to be 55:1 for ECD for children ages 3-5, when government standards are 25:1 ([Ministry of Education and Sports-Uganda, 2018](#)). In Kenya's Kakuma Refugee Camp, on average, there are 133 children per classroom in Early Childhood Programs ([UNICEF USA, 2018](#)). These large classroom sizes have implications on the quality of interactions between staff and children, staff, and parents, and between children themselves ([Theirworld, 2021](#)).
- **Poor regulation:** The regulation and provision of childcare do not fit neatly into one agency or ministry mandate, and the roles of different stakeholders are often unclear (World Bank, 2020). In the light of poorly defined roles and responsibilities, quality assurance is impacted. In Ethiopia, coordination for refugee education is handled outside of the structure of the Ministry of Education. Primary education for refugees is coordinated by the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA), whereas ECCE and secondary education are implemented by NGO partners under the supervision and coordination of Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) ([Wales, Khan and Nicolai 2020](#) as cited in [UNESCO, 2022](#)). In the refugee response in Bangladesh, the government does not permit the national ECD policy to be applied to the Rohingya population ([RTI, 2020](#)).



**In Kenya's Kakuma Refugee Camp, on average, there are 133 children per classroom in Early Childhood Programs**  
[UNICEF USA, 2018](#)



### 3 Affordability

Accessing a childcare centre often incurs various expenses, including transportation, meals, and sometimes, direct fees. Many ECD centres require parents to pay fees to retain caregivers. In Kasese (Uganda), 1293 caregivers have been trained leading to increased competition and demand for high salaries by caregivers. This means that to maintain quality, parents are often required to bear corresponding fees. Fees range from UGX25,000 (\$6) to UGX40,000 (\$10) a term ([UNICEF, 2015](#)).

To put this in context, the monthly median income for refugees is \$42 a month, which is earned irregularly through the year, and refugee families spend about 75% of their income on monthly expenditure. Moreover, in Uganda, refugee families have six members on an average ([BFA Global, n.d.](#)). This makes it challenging for them to afford ECD services, especially if they have more children or otherwise large families.

On a broader scale, only 30% of global economies offer parents some financial support, such as subsidies or care vouchers, for childcare. However, none of these supportive economies are in Sub-Saharan Africa or South Asia ([The World Bank Blog, 2022](#)). This is concerning given that nearly 80% of children lacking access to care reside in these low-income and lower-middle-income regions ([Economist Impact, 2023](#)).



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[The World Bank Blog, 2022](#)

### 4 Trust

For families that have faced traumatic experiences in their home countries or during transit, there are other concerns regarding:

- **Security of children and integration with local communities:** Parents may have concerns that childcare provisions are not secure (especially for girls) and may worry about how their children will be treated or how they will be integrated with local communities ([University of Oxford, 2022](#)).
- **Unfamiliarity with methods of teaching:** Refugee families may have different perspectives towards childcare which can impact the participation of parents in childcare programs. Concepts such as the value of physical activities or messy play may not be appreciated, and activities may not seem valuable to parents ([University of Oxford, 2022](#)).
- **Language barriers and lack of cultural acknowledgment:** Refugee families who don't speak the language of the hosting countries can further feel cultural dissonance with educators ([Busch et al., 2018](#)). Another concern raised is that programs for children can do better to acknowledge and respond to the culturally diverse backgrounds of the families they are serving. This can help with building greater trust among communities ([University of Oxford, 2022](#)).

## Part 2

This section articulates programming features as observed in various childcare programs and presents a typology of childcare programs as seen in refugee contexts.

### A: PROGRAMMING FEATURES OF A PROMISING CHILDCARE PROGRAM FOR REFUGEE CONTEXTS

An analysis of various promising childcare models in refugee contexts highlights the following programming features:

- **Many childcare programs rely on building the skills of local refugees from within the community as a medium to deliver childcare programs.**

Local refugees, especially women, are often trained as workforce for childcare programs. Programs using this approach not only provide community members with a sense of empowerment but also give children a sense of belongingness as they work with adults from their own community. Refugees are trained by service providers on aspects like play-based learning, positive behaviour management, socio-emotional learning, health and nutrition etc.

[LBE in Uganda](#) trains young facilitators from the local community to teach seven to twenty-eight children about healthy eating habits, hygiene, and basic reading and writing skills. Young facilitators are students with a passion for supporting their community. In the Dukwi Camp in Botswana, [Learn to Play](#) works with mothers from the community, and builds their skills on socio-emotional learning, early childhood development, and school readiness.

- **There is a focus on play-oriented learning, with emphasis on indigenous cultural practices.** Learning through play is critical for helping children who have been affected by conflict, disaster, or displacement. It helps children develop social, emotional, creative, physical and cognitive skills, strengthens the brain connections essential for future development, and most importantly gives children the opportunity to build resilience and imagine a future of their own design ([IRC, n.d](#)).

[BRAC](#) runs humanitarian play labs with a purpose to help children in refugee settings learn and heal through play. The model heavily emphasises the importance of indigenous cultural practices in healing and learning and also generates cost-effective, play-based material for classrooms by working closely with communities. [Right to Play](#), supports teachers working with young learners in refugee settings on play-based learning and positive learning environments, early literacy, and numeracy for young children, and how to make play materials and books from locally available material. [aeioTU](#) runs a program in Colombia centred on child-led play and exploration.

- **Psychosocial well-being of parents, children, and the education staff is at the core of many childcare programs.**

Many programs are prioritising psychosocial support in childcare programming to help communities overcome deeply distressing experiences associated with displacement. This entails direct training of childcare providers on how to provide better care, and protection for children. There is also a focus on structured parenting programs to help improve family-child relationship. Many programs are also making efforts to bring together parents with similar experiences to reflect on ways in which they can improve their own mental health. The overall wellbeing of the education staff is also a focus in many programs, and there are endeavours to build policies and tools to better support them.

[Children on the Edge](#) encourages parents to be more invested in their child's development by inviting them to attend the cluster groups on Wednesdays with their children. They also provide parents with simple, easy activities to practice with their children at home. [Early Starters International](#) hosts community activities for mothers – such as family visits and provides complementary services like legal advice and language studies.



**Many programs are prioritising psychosocial support in childcare programming to help communities overcome deeply distressing experiences associated with displacement**

- **There is an emphasis on mentorship to refugee families that own childcare centres on building entrepreneurship skills to help them generate livelihoods and improve self-reliance.**

Increasingly, there are initiatives that provide childcare providers with training to build entrepreneurship and management skills. The aim is two-fold: to help increase income for refugee families and simultaneously ensure the delivery of high-quality childcare services. Along with mentorship, childcare providers are also sometimes supported with capital, network, and technology-based platforms.

[Kidogo](#) is supporting “Mamapreneurs” in Kakuma and Kalobeyi in Kenya where they are building business and entrepreneurship skills of women to effectively run their own childcare while providing safe and quality childcare to young learners.

- **Many childcare programs are becoming crucial delivery points for health care and nutrition services.**

Programs like [The Little Ripples](#) provide health checks and nutritious food to children to prevent malnutrition. [Learn to Play](#) integrates health, nutrition, and protection as they all work together to promote healthy brain development.

- **There are networks to assist childcare providers, particularly those based at home, in enhancing their skills and increasing access to quality childcare.**

Support services are essential in developing quality childcare programs. This is particularly useful for home-based childcare programs where service providers are often fragmented. A few programs provide support aimed at enhancing the sense of belonging and social ties among peers. Other programs provide ongoing coaching and support moving beyond initial training to help support the childcare providers.

[Kidogo](#) runs a monthly Communities of Practice where Mamapreneurs meet in a given location to share best practices and their challenges. In [The Little Ripples](#) program, education directors lead weekly staff meetings to discuss any ongoing challenges and celebrate success. [Learn to Play](#) provides mothers a tablet with online teacher guides meant to provide targeted and ongoing remote assistance.

## B: TYPOLOGY OF CHILDCARE PROGRAMS IN REFUGEE SETTINGS

This section summarises childcare programs, predominantly from the contexts of protracted crises.

TYPE & LOCATION	DELIVERY MODALITY
<p><b>CENTRE-BASED</b> The program is delivered in either a pre-existing stand-alone centre or a newly constructed centre within the community</p>	<p>The program is implemented by Humanitarian/ Development/ Religious NGOs in one of two ways: (i) through a facilitator hired by the NGO. <i>or</i> (ii) through caregivers (like parents, older siblings, or grandparents) trained by the NGO to deliver the program</p> <p>The program is directly implemented by community-based organisations or refugee-led organisations</p> <p>A social enterprise trains entrepreneurs from local communities to start, upscale or expand childcare centres, usually as micro-businesses</p> <p>A co-operative establishes the childcare centres and hires community or co-operative members to help with day-to-day implementation</p>
<p><b>HOME-BASED</b> The program is provided to groups of children at either the home of the caregiver or the home of children</p>	<p>The program is implemented by Humanitarian/ Development/ Religious NGOs who train mothers, grandmothers, or teenagers living in refugee settings to deliver the program to children by providing them with technical support.</p> <p>The program is implemented by network-affiliated providers who support caregivers living in refugee settings to deliver the program to children by offering a menu of support services including technical assistance, communities of practice, ongoing coaching etc.</p>
<p><b>MOBILE/OUTDOOR MODELS</b> The programs run in communal spaces like churches, playgrounds, or other makeshift set-ups for children that are: (a) on the move across refugee settings (b) living in hard-to-reach places (c) unable to access centres due to other financial or social factors</p>	<p>The program is implemented by humanitarian/development/religious NGOs, where usually, caregivers from the community living in refugee settings are trained to deliver the program to children.</p>

## Part 3

In this section, we present an overview of childcare service providers operating within various refugee contexts and offer concise insights into their respective models and approaches. While not all programs are evaluated, they show promise to be successful in such contexts.

### **A: MAPPING OF PROMISING CHILDCARE PROGRAM FOR REFUGEE CONTEXTS**

Our research methodology predominantly leans on desk reviews, complemented by a select series of interviews with chosen childcare providers.

For the scope of our study, we've focused on childcare programs that serve children from birth up until their formal commencement into primary education. Conventionally, childcare services cater to children from birth to 3 years old. Children aged 4 and above typically enrol in preschool education, which persists until their transition into primary school. However, refugee settings lack the provision of preschool education. Where it does exist, preschool sessions often span only a few hours, underscoring the demand for after-school childcare solutions. As a result, our research delves deeper into a holistic understanding of childcare programs.

ORG: PROGRAM	GEOGRAPHY	AGE	DESCRIPTION
<b>CENTRE-BASED</b>			
<b>Provided by National, and International Humanitarian, Development or Religious NGOs</b>			
<b><u>ACEV:</u></b> <b>Adiyaman Child and Family Centre</b>	Turkey	3-6	<p>ACEV runs a Child and Family education centre. It offers play-based child-centred programs with semi-structured daily routines for 3-to-4-year-old and 5-to-6-year-old children. The goal is for preschool age children to make a healthy transition to primary school.</p> <p>To strengthen the integrated services for early childhood, they partner with parents and caregivers as well. The centre offers a structured parenting program to help parents meet their children's needs.</p> <p>In addition, the centre supports young women to improve their well-being and gives them the tools to shape their own future.</p>
<b><u>Early Starters International</u></b>	Ukraine, Moldova, Bangladesh, Greece, Ethiopia, Haiti	2-8	<p>The program establishes early childhood safe spaces – providing for the immediate needs of young children and their families, as well as continuing to support the long-term needs of refugees. The safe spaces also allow for sustained access to early childhood education. The staff is mostly refugee women who receive professional development and support in dealing with challenges that arise. They also organise community activities for mothers– such as family visits to museums, and complementary services like legal advice and language studies.</p>
<b><u>SGDD-ASAM: Leverage Box, Game 4 All</u></b>	Turkey	2-6	<p>The program aims to run well-being and development centres for children focusing on the play therapy.</p>
<b>Provided by community-based organisations or refugee-led organisations</b>			
<b><u>Kalobeyei Initiative 4 Better Life</u></b>	Kenya	4-6	<p>Kalobeyei Initiative 4 Better Life runs a program called 'The Light Academy' for children from refugee and host communities in Kalobeyei. The program aims to provide a conducive learning environment to children, strengthen teacher capacity, enable play-oriented learning, and integrate a health and nutrition program for both children and teachers.</p>
<b><u>Bondeko Refugee Livelihoods Centre</u></b>	Uganda	--	<p>Bondeko Refugee Livelihood Centre runs a kindergarten that offer refugee children access to early childhood education.</p>

ORG: PROGRAM	GEOGRAPHY	AGE	DESCRIPTION
<b>CENTRE-BASED</b>			
<b>Provided by community-based organisations or refugee-led organisations</b>			
<b><u>Youth Initiative for Development in Africa (YIDA)</u></b>	Uganda	--	YIDA works in close collaboration with refugee community youth to educate young ones and make them more ready to access primary schools.
<b>Initiated by social enterprises</b>			
<b><u>Kidogo</u></b>	Kakuma, Kalobeyei	0-6	<p>Kidogo identifies Kenyan female entrepreneurs [Mamapreneurs] and provides them with tools to create and expand their own childcare centres. Mamapreneurs receive training &amp; mentoring on responsive caregiving, parent engagement, play-based learning, health, and nutrition.</p> <p>Mamapreneurs are also provided with a Starter kit with key resources for running centres, along with ongoing quality assurance. The program leverages technology through a Mamapreneur App, a phone-based application that helps efficiently and easily track the attendance and payments of customers.</p> <p>Moreover, Kidogo runs 3 Centres of Excellence which act as best-practice models (hubs) for childcare and early learning as well as training facilities for Mamapreneurs.</p>
<b><u>aeioTU: Andar, crecer y jugar</u></b>	Colombia	Upto 5	<p>aeioTU trains migrant women from the local community on early childhood development, mobile pedagogical activities, and providing socio-emotional learning support to children focused on the whole family approach.</p> <p>The program also works with women leaders from communities to generate play-based materials based on indigenous customs and traditions.</p> <p>Currently, aeioTU is supporting migrant women who want to become formal caregivers in the community to start their own businesses.</p>



ORG PROGRAM	GEOGRAPHY	AGE	DESCRIPTION
<b>CENTRE-BASED</b>			
<b>Initiated by co-operatives</b>			
<b><u>Hope Kindergarten</u></b>	Morocco	-	Hope Kindergarten is operated by a group of Yemeni refugees for both refugee and local children. The program employs local refugees as teachers, nursery assistants, and administrative staff. The centre was opened in 2017 and currently enrolls about 70 children.
<b>HOME-BASED</b>			
<b>Provided by National, and International Humanitarian, Development or Religious NGOs</b>			
<b><u>iACT: Little Ripples</u></b>	Chad, Tanzania, Cameroon, Greece, Central African Republic	3-5	iACT trains refugee mothers to work with children in small groups at home. The training is conducted for refugee women on play-based learning, positive behavior management etc. The program also provides daily nutritious meals to children.
<b><u>BRAC: Home Based Day Care</u></b>	Bangladesh	0-6	BRAC works with women from the communities to run day-care centres in homes. The program trains women on aspects like play-based activities, building contextual and cost-effective toys etc., along with providing ongoing mentorship to explore ways to earn livelihoods from home-centres.
<b><u>VSO Bangladesh and Mukti Cox's Bazar: Education in Emergency</u></b>	Bangladesh	Above 3	Mothers and other female volunteers, also called as 'Big Sisters', are trained by local volunteers to open their homes in Jamtali Rohingya refugee camp to be used as temporary classrooms.
<b>Network Affiliated</b>			
<b><u>Kidogo</u></b>	Kakuma, Kalobeyei	0-6	<p>Kidogo works with home-based childcare providers and supports them with training, mentorship, resources, and ongoing quality assurance. Home-based providers undertake a six-month quality improvement program, which includes monthly training, bi-weekly coaching, and monthly peer-led Communities of Practice.</p> <p>Upon completion of childcare programs, home-based providers are invited to become franchisees. A \$10 monthly fee helps providers access the following services: basic center renovation, Kidogo branding, more advanced training, continued coaching, and quality assurance.</p>

ORG: PROGRAM	GEOGRAPHY	AGE	DESCRIPTION
<b>MOBILE/ OUTDOOR MODELS</b>			
<b>Provided by National, and International Humanitarian, Development or Religious NGOs</b>			
<b><u>LABE</u></b>	Uganda	3-5	LABE trains young facilitators from the local community to teach seven to twenty-eight children about healthy eating habits, hygiene, and basic reading and writing skills. LABE also provides technical assistance to partners to scale the program model.
<b><u>Learn to Play: Ithute Go Tshameka</u></b>	Dukwi Camp, Botswana	2-5	<p>Learn to Play trains mothers from the community to facilitate ECD learning for a group of children on a small stipend. The program runs in open communal learning spaces like playgrounds and churches. The mothers are provided with a curriculum that heavily emphasizes socio-emotional learning. Mothers are also allocated a tablet with daily online teacher guides. Tablets are also used for collecting real-time monitoring data and providing remote assistance to teachers.</p> <p>Learn To Play has recently released Mindful PlayDeck for children above age 4. Learn to Play has also developed a parent playbox, in partnership with Kids Collab. It was initially a pilot box but recently has been converted into a full box of 52 activities i.e., one play-based activity per week to conduct with the child at home. Parents receive training on why play-based learning is important and why connecting with the child for at least 10-15 minutes a day is critical.</p>
<b>Provided by National, and International Humanitarian, Development or Religious NGOs</b>			
<b><u>ISSA: PrimoHUBs</u></b>	Romania	0-6	PrimoHUBs provide counseling activities for children, and access to toy stores/toy libraries. The Hubs also provide guidance to parents for identifying educational, psychological, or legal counselling services they need, and providing training on various topics of interest. A local team is set up to support operations.
<b><u>Children On The Edge: Cluster group</u></b>	Uganda and Myanmar	0-6	Children on the Edge is piloting a Cluster learning model. This approach uses communal spaces to teach children with the support of local refugee teachers. The program also encourages parental engagement by providing them with simple, easy activities to practice with children at home.

ORG: PROGRAM	GEOGRAPHY	AGE	DESCRIPTION
<b>Provided by National, and International Humanitarian, Development or Religious NGOs</b>			
<b><u>BRAC:</u></b> <b><u>Humanitarian</u></b> <b><u>Play Lab</u></b>	Bangladesh, Uganda, Tanzania	0-6	<p>BRAC has developed a play-based solution called the Humanitarian Play Lab (HPL) model to help refugee children learn and recover from trauma.</p> <p>BRAC works with local adolescent girls and young women from the communities, also called as 'play leaders' to run play lab centres. The centres run in outdoor spaces like playgrounds, churches etc.</p> <p>In addition to supporting children, play leaders also support parents and caregivers in learning through play, responsive parenting, and gender equality. Additionally, the Play leaders work with the community to develop local, cost-effective, and contextually relevant play materials.</p>

# Acknowledgements

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## About Global Schools Forum

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**Global Schools Forum (GSF)** is a collaborative community of non-state organisations working to improve education at scale for underserved communities in low- and middle-income countries.

**Our network is currently 108 members strong**, each working in partnership with communities and governments in 60 countries. Our secretariat – spread across 4 continents – has expertise in school leadership, education innovation, and education financing. Our vision is that all children in low- and middle-income countries have equitable and safe access to quality education so they can realise their potential.

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### Questions?

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If you have any questions about this handbook, please contact [priyanka.upreti@globalschoolsforum.org](mailto:priyanka.upreti@globalschoolsforum.org)

