

School in the Dadaab Refugee Camps

Every Child has the right to education



Schools in Refugee Camps

Schools have been set up in the refugee camps to provide learning and safe child friendly spaces. These schools are really struggling to cope with the arrival of so many refugees. The Illeys School in the Dagahaley Camp is under pressure to find enough teachers and space to teach the children living there. The school has 4,036 students and just 25 classrooms. At the moment there is only one teacher for every 168 students.

Hundreds of students are being forced to work outside in the heat and dust because the classrooms are already overflowing. To help the children and teachers in this situation, UNICEF has provided tents and basic education materials to give these students a sheltered place to learn.

Thousands of children have travelled from Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia to the refugee camps of Dabaab. They have travelled long distances on foot to escape violent conflict, famine and thirst. The journey is long and hard, and many children have lost family members too weak to survive along the way.

There are now around 156,000 Children of school going age living in the Dadaab refugee camps. Only one third of those children are receiving any kind of education. Many of the children, especially those from Somalia, have never experienced formal education; they have never seen a school and do not know what a teacher is.



To help these children attend school, UNICEF and Care International have set up an accelerated learning programme. This programme helps children understand the basics of how schools work. They have a teacher, materials and sit down with other children to learn. By completing this programme the children will be ready to attend regular school.

Why is school important?

When so many children living in refugee camps no longer have a home, or have lost their parents, or have almost nothing to eat, there may seem little point in going to school. Hassad a teacher at the Illeys School, sums up the importance of education for refugee children, "Many of the children are lost, distressed, traumatised and discriminated against. With education these children can learn about a new kind of life, and have hope in such desolate circumstances. They can learn that along with their peers they are the future of Somali society."

Schools in refugee camps play a vital role in educating children about health and hygiene. The purpose of these messages is to help prevent the spread of diseases such as cholera in the camps. Another benefit for children attending school is they receive one meal a day provided by the World Food Programme. Children's health, nutrition and education are all being improved, thanks to the schools in the Dadaab refugee camps.



Caption Activity

The pictures in this article are from UNICEF video ©. Use information from the article to write appropriate captions for each of the images.

Activities

- 1 In your own words provide meanings for the following words:
Famine traumatised accelerated conflict desolate discriminated
- 2 Describe how the schools in the Dadaab refugee camps help children.
- 3 Draw a pie graph to show how many children are of school age in the camps, compared to the actual number attending school.
- 4 Name two partner organisations that UNICEF is working with in this article.