



**EDUCATION
CANNOT
WAIT**

INVESTING IN FUTURES

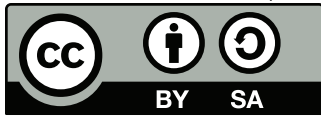
2024 ANNUAL RESULTS REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This is the Executive Summary of Education Cannot Wait (ECW)'s Investing in Futures: 2024 Annual Results Report. The report was elaborated under the direction of the ECW Secretariat, with contributions from the ECW Executive Committee, grant recipients, and constituents of the ECW High-Level Steering Group. The report covers the period from January 2023 to December 2024. The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations, including donor agencies or United Nations Member States. The boundaries, names and designations used in the maps in this publication do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations, ECW, or partner countries. All figures in this report are presented in United States dollars, except where indicated.

Education Cannot Wait, September 2025



ABOUT EDUCATION CANNOT WAIT

Education Cannot Wait (ECW) is the global fund for education in emergencies and protracted crises within the United Nations. We support quality education outcomes for refugee, internally displaced and other crisis-affected girls and boys, so no one is left behind. ECW works through the multilateral system to both increase the speed of responses in crises and connect immediate relief and longer-term interventions through multi-year programming. ECW works in close partnership with governments, public and private donors, United Nations agencies, civil society organizations, and other humanitarian and development aid actors to increase efficiencies and end siloed responses. ECW urgently appeals to public- and private-sector donors for expanded support to reach even more vulnerable children and youth.

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Additional information is available at www.educationcannotwait.org

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Marufa, Rebeka and Sadia attend an ECW-funded learning facility in the Rohingya refugee camps of Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. With no prior education, the centres give them a chance to gain basic literacy and numeracy skills. Now, they are becoming changemakers in their community and shaping a more equal future.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2024, Education Cannot Wait (ECW) and its partners continued to meet the challenges of delivering inclusive, quality education for crisis-affected girls and boys worldwide, despite deepening conflicts, climate-driven emergencies and declining aid financing. Building on the first year of implementation of its 2023–2026 Strategic Plan, ECW accelerated progress across its strategic objectives and goal: increasing and improving financing for education in emergencies and protracted crises (EiEPC), strengthening education systems and coordination, and delivering results for children and adolescents.

Despite mounting global pressures, ECW reached more children, enhanced the quality and equity of learning, and mobilized critical resources in some of the world's most complex crises. This year's report highlights the scale and quality of ECW's impact while identifying key gaps requiring urgent collective action.

 **Advocacy highlight**

234 MILLION REASONS TO ACT

On the International Day of Education, ECW launched its new *Global Estimates Study*, revealing that 234 million school-aged children in crises now require urgent education support. The Report sounds the alarm on growing needs that are outpacing education aid funding – as compounding conflicts, coupled with more frequent and severe extreme weather and climate events, jeopardize the present and future of this rapidly growing number of children. Increased financing from public donors, the private sector and high-net-worth individuals is urgently needed to reach those left furthest behind. The launch of the report generated top-tier media coverage in 18 languages – reaching a potential aggregate audience of 1.9 billion¹ and raising awareness on the urgency to scale up education support for children in crisis settings.



EXPLORE:



1.9 BILLION
POTENTIAL AGGREGATE
AUDIENCE

¹ Potential aggregate audience is the measurement of viewership and listenership across various platforms, such as TV, online content, blogs, radio, podcasts and social media networks. Measurement is based on third-party analytics.



Students work on their exams in a classroom in Sudan. Their school was reconstructed thanks to an ECW-funded initiative in the country, enabling them to continue their education.

1 Expanding access and advancing learning for crisis-affected children

In the first two years of the 2023–2026 Strategic Plan, ECW-supported programmes reached 8.3 million children and adolescents across 33 countries – 51% of them girls. This represents 78% of the proportionate target based on funds raised.²

These results, a marked increase from the 5.6 million children reached in 2023, reflect steady progress towards the 2026 goal of reaching 10.7 million children with the available funding envelope. Of those reached during the first two years of the strategic period, 5.9 million were supported through Multi-Year Resilience Programmes (MYRPs) and 2.4 million through First Emergency Responses (FERs), including in some of the world’s most challenging settings: Sudan, Syria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the State of Palestine (including Gaza), Afghanistan and Ukraine. Forty-three percent of all children reached in 2024 were forcibly displaced – up from 39% in 2023. This brings the total number of children reached by ECW-supported programmes since inception to 14 million (50% girls).



Of those reached during the first two years of the strategic period, 5.9 million were supported through MYRPs and 2.4 million through FERs.”

Overall, ECW has achieved or is on track to meet six of the eight Strategic Plan outcome indicators related to education participation, holistic learning and gender equality, with progress improving across all indicators compared to previous years (*see next page*).

Despite this progress, several persistent challenges continue to hinder equitable access and learning for crisis-affected children. Early childhood education and disability inclusion remain significantly under-represented across ECW’s portfolio, requiring more deliberate and targeted interventions. Dropout and non-completion rates are still high in many contexts and, while girls are increasingly enrolling, sustained investment is needed to ensure their retention, particularly at the secondary level. In addition, the growing reliance on non-formal education – although essential in reaching the most marginalized – highlights the urgent need for stronger integration with formal education systems to ensure continuity, certification and durable learning pathways for all learners.

² ECW’s 2023–2026 Strategic Plan aimed to reach 19.5 million children—7.6 million through MYRPs and 11.9 million through FERs—based on the assumption that US\$1.5 billion in funding would be fully mobilized. By the end of 2024, ECW had mobilized US\$934 million, of which US\$821 million has been confirmed—approximately 55% of the total resource mobilization target. Given this, the Secretariat assessed progress relative to the level of funding confirmed by the end of 2024, on the assumption that any unconfirmed funding would likely not be secured and disbursed in time for programming within the current Strategic Plan period. This “proportionate target” reflects the number of children ECW aims to reach based on confirmed resources at the midpoint of the Strategic Plan. Applying this approach, 55% of the original 19.5 million target yields a proportionate target of 10.7 million children by 2026 (FERs: approximately 6.5 million; MYRPs: approximately 4.2 million).

Teacher Rodayfah with her students in Syria. ECW investments have supported teachers like her to receive critical training on class management and interactive teaching methods to bring learning to life for crisis-affected children.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



96% OF PROGRAMMES reported increased participation in education, with 74% demonstrating gender-equitable improvements.



91% of ECW-supported non-formal programmes that provided evidence reported transition rates to formal education above **60%**, maintaining last year's results.



88% OF MYRPS that provided evidence reported improvements in literacy and/or numeracy, and 78% showed gains in social and emotional learning (SEL) – 6 and 8 percentage points higher, respectively, than in 2023.



Programmes in Afghanistan, South Sudan and Niger demonstrated progress in overcoming gender barriers through targeted, context-sensitive approaches. Learners and teachers also showed positive shifts in gender norms supporting more equitable access and participation, where data was available.

2 Strengthening systems, coordination and local ownership

In 2024, ECW investments helped reinforce the architecture and capacity of national and global systems to better serve crisis-affected children. Programmes demonstrated stronger cross-sector collaboration, improved data use and greater localization – all essential for effective, equitable and sustainable education in emergencies.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



TWELVE

ECW-supported MYRPs reported evidence of improved coordination across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus – double the number that did so in 2023.



THE NEW MYRP CONSORTIUM MODEL

introduced in 2024 formalized roles and funding allocations for LNAs and women-led organizations, anchoring ECW's commitment to the Grand Bargain and shifting power to local levels.



OVER 30% OF MYRPS AND 24% OF FERS

presented evidence of improved engagement with local and national actors (LNAs).



71% OF MYRPS

reported learning outcomes on time, with 58% of these datasets sex-disaggregated – an improvement from 64% and 39%, respectively, in 2023.

In addition, ECW expanded its production of global public goods, data tools and guidance materials in 2024. A key challenge remains ensuring the systematic use and uptake of evidence across programmes to drive adaptive learning.

Programmes also began embedding climate resilience within systems-strengthening efforts. Climate-adaptive education was integrated into MYRP design in at least 21 countries, and 11 FERS responded to climate-induced events – demonstrating ECW's commitment to building future-ready education systems.

3 Mobilizing and targeting EiEPC financing more effectively

In 2024, ECW received US\$243.7 million in new contributions, bringing the total raised for the current strategic period to US\$934 million and to US\$1.66 billion since its inception. As of 2024, as a result of having secured its first commitment from Italy, ECW is now supported by all G7 donors, underscoring growing global recognition of the Fund’s role in delivering education in crises.

Yet systemic funding gaps deepened. For the first time in over a decade, global humanitarian funding for education declined. Sharp aid cuts led to education targets being slashed in 21 countries, with reductions averaging over 40% – and exceeding 80% in Chad and Sudan – exposing the fragility of education financing in crisis response.

With 62% of its US\$1.5 billion Strategic Plan target mobilized to date (including US\$113 million in uncommitted pledges), urgent and sustained action is needed from donors and partners to bridge the widening funding gap while protecting and building on the progress achieved.



School Auntie Josephine and her mentees in their classroom in Burundi. ECW investments support education continuity for girls and boys affected by crises in the country – including displacement caused by reoccurring climate-induced disasters.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



CONTINUED DIVERSIFICATION OF ECW'S DONOR BASE,

securing new contributions from both public and private partners. This included the first-ever contribution from the **Government of Japan** of US\$3 million and a formalized partnership with the **Swiss Cantonal Banks**, which launched an innovative return-oriented investment fund for ECW with CHF 10 million in seed capital and an expected CHF 7 million in annual contributions.



ADDITIONAL TOP-UP CONTRIBUTIONS

included US\$7 million from the **US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM)**, US\$37 million pledged by the **Government of Switzerland**, and dedicated support from the **European Commission** and the **Government of the United Kingdom** for ECW's regional response to the Sudan crisis.



39%

of the total US\$202 million in disbursements were directed to forgotten and underfunded crises,³ reaffirming the Fund's commitment to equity and reaching those left furthest behind.



ADVOCACY SUSTAINED

ECW also sustained its advocacy for multi-year, flexible contributions while exploring innovative financing mechanisms to unlock additional resources – including climate finance, philanthropic capital and private sector investments.



ECW LAUNCHED KEY INITIATIVES

In collaboration with UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report team, ECW launched key initiatives under the EiEPC Financing Observatory, consolidating and analyzing IATI and FTS datasets to enhance transparency and support evidence-based advocacy.

³ See Section 3.3.1 for further detail.



Looking Ahead

As ECW enters the second half of its 2023–2026 strategic period, the path forward is clear: accelerate efforts to reach at least 10.7 million children by 2026, deepen investment in data-driven and gender-transformative programming, and work across the humanitarian-development nexus to expand and align financing.

Closing the persistent financing gap will require leveraging all available funding streams – from traditional development aid to climate finance, philanthropic capital and innovative mechanisms such as results-based financing, match-funding and blended finance.

The cost of inaction is too high. Every missed year of school exacerbates inequality, perpetuates poverty and deprives crisis-affected children of the opportunity to rebuild their futures.

With a proven model, strong results and a broad and growing coalition of partners, ECW is well-positioned to scale its impact. What is needed now is bold, coordinated political leadership to ensure that education remains an accessible lifeline for every child, no matter the crisis.

Mariya holds up her drawing in her school in Nigeria. When she grows up, she dreams of becoming a teacher.



Map of children reached by ECW-supported programmes active in 2023 and/or 2024:

Cumulative results across years 1 and 2 of the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan

The geographical map shows the total number of children reached by country for programmes active in 2023 and/or 2024.⁴ This includes 40 FERs and MYRPs in 28 countries.⁵

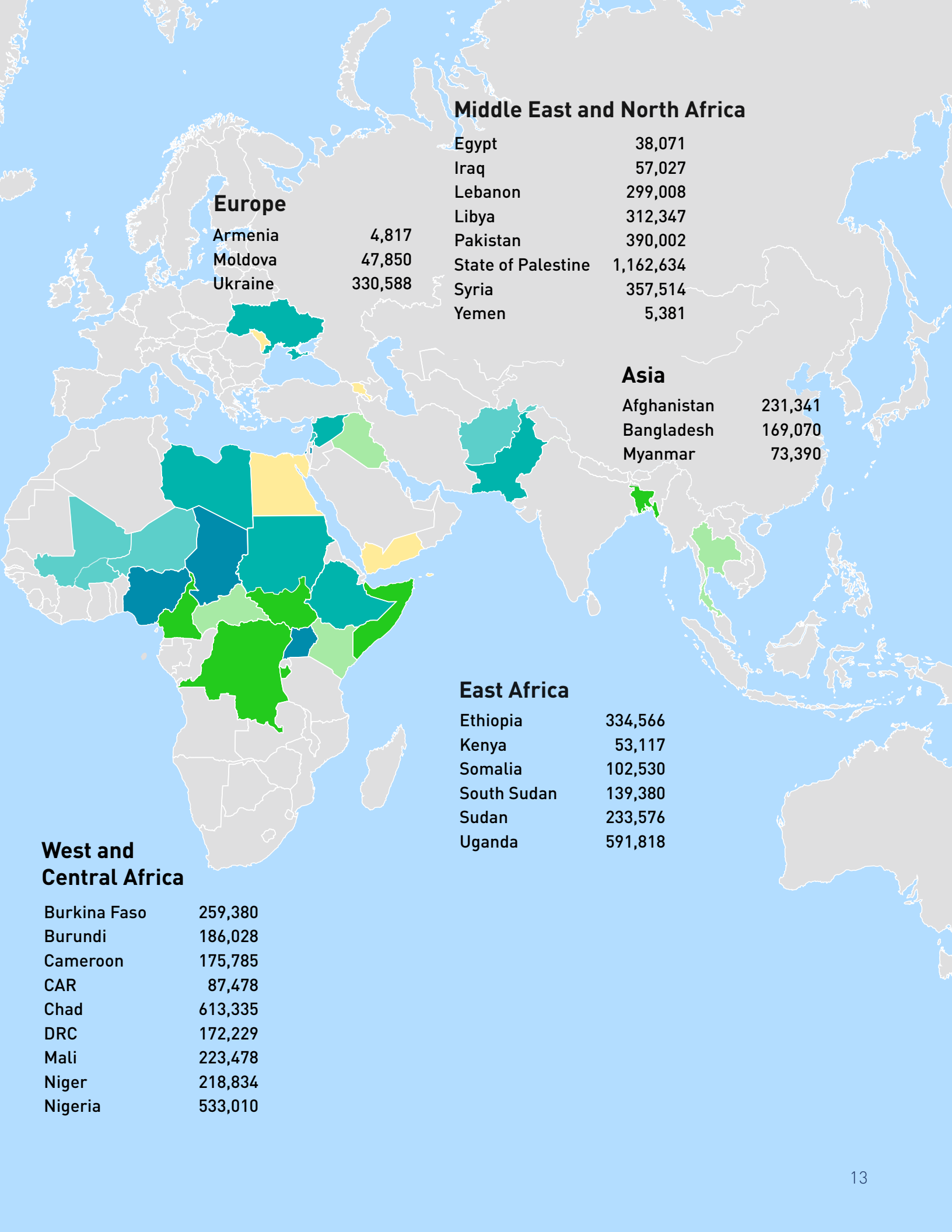


South America and the Caribbean

Colombia	98,236
Ecuador	218,740
Peru	35,476
Haiti	523,354

⁴ The number of children reached is cumulative, thus the country figures shown on the map represent the total number of children reached by all programmes active in 2023 and/or 2024 in that country.

⁵ A programme can consist of multiple grants. 'Active' refers to a programme implemented during a given year (i.e., 2023), whether for the entire year or during part of the year.



Middle East and North Africa

Egypt	38,071
Iraq	57,027
Lebanon	299,008
Libya	312,347
Pakistan	390,002
State of Palestine	1,162,634
Syria	357,514
Yemen	5,381

Europe

Armenia	4,817
Moldova	47,850
Ukraine	330,588

Asia

Afghanistan	231,341
Bangladesh	169,070
Myanmar	73,390

East Africa





Ethiopia	334,566
Kenya	53,117
Somalia	102,530
South Sudan	139,380
Sudan	233,576
Uganda	591,818

West and Central Africa

Burkina Faso	259,380
Burundi	186,028
Cameroon	175,785
CAR	87,478
Chad	613,335
DRC	172,229
Mali	223,478
Niger	218,834
Nigeria	533,010

SCORECARD METHODOLOGY

In reporting on indicators across all three chapters, ECW uses a scorecard methodology to classify progress towards indicator targets as follows:

	Indicator target achieved
	On track to meet the target by the end of 2026, based on current projections
	At risk of missing the target by the end of 2026, based on current projections
	Off track to meet the target by the end of 2026, based on current projections

Scorecard status as of the end of 2024

Scorecard categorizations for 2024 were determined through a qualitative assessment conducted by the ECW Secretariat’s Monitoring, Evaluation and Global Reporting (M&E) team. This assessment factored in the heightened uncertainty introduced by major aid sector cuts in early 2025, which are likely to affect the pace of progress towards Strategic Plan targets and increase variability in results over time.

The majority of indicators in ECW’s Results Framework are cumulative in nature, meaning they track aggregate progress across the full duration of the Strategic Plan rather than capturing annual snapshots. Accordingly, scorecard categorizations are presented for both 2023 and 2024 to visualize directional change and identify areas of improvement or decline.



Scan the QR code to access the full report, including additional details on the data and indicator methodology.

ANNUAL RESULTS REPORT SCORECARD: Progress towards 2026 targets

Cumulative results across years 1 and 2 of the 2023–2026 Strategic Plan⁶

HOW TO READ THE RESULTS

All results are reported cumulatively for the first 2 years of the Strategic Plan (2023–2024) except where otherwise noted.

Indicator # from the Strategic Plan

2

5.9 MILLION

3–18-year-old children and adolescents reached through the MYRP funding window



Target proportional to resources mobilized (Indicators 1 and 2 only)

2026 target

KEY

	Target achieved
	On track
	At risk
	Off track

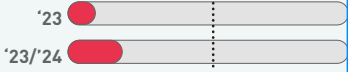
ECW has reached 8.3 million children (51% girls) halfway into its 2023–2026 Strategic Plan



Country-level results for children and adolescents

1 2.38 MILLION

3–18-year-old children and adolescents reached through the FER funding window*



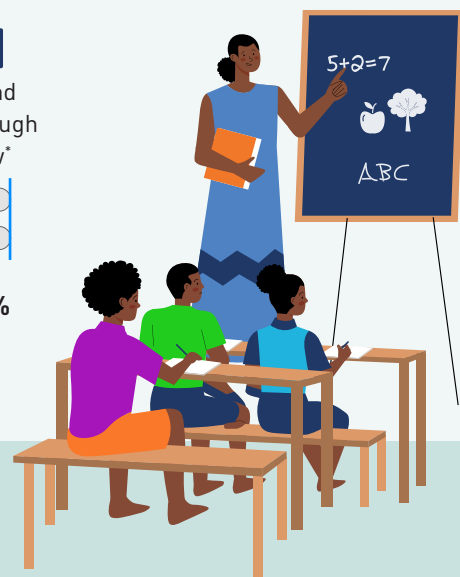
54% 39% 1.5%

2 5.9 MILLION

3–18-year-old children and adolescents reached through the MYRP funding window*



50% 22% 2%



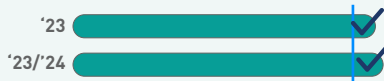
⁶ All results are reported cumulatively for the first 2 years of the Strategic Plan (2023–2024) except for annual indicators marked with an *.



ECW-supported programmes have maintained improvements in children’s access to education...

...and are increasingly ensuring that children remain in, transition through, and complete formal and non-formal education opportunities.

3 96% of FERs/MYRPs had increased education participation in ECW-supported communities*



4 64% of FERs/MYRPs providing evidence had retention or completion rates above 75% in ECW-supported learning spaces*

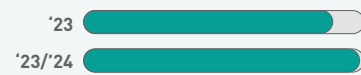


5 91% of FERs/MYRPs providing evidence had transition rates from non-formal to formal education above 60% in ECW-supported communities*



More programmes are providing evidence that children are improving their academic and SEL skills – and that they are shifting the gender norms that facilitate equitable access and learning.

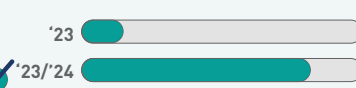
6 88% of MYRPs providing evidence reported improved learning outcomes in literacy and/or numeracy in ECW-supported learning spaces*



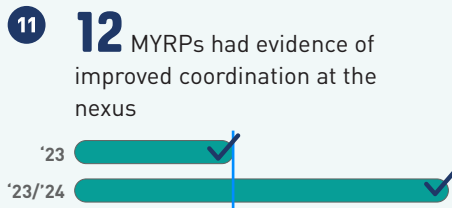
7 78% of MYRPs providing evidence reported improved children’s SEL/well-being in ECW-supported learning spaces*



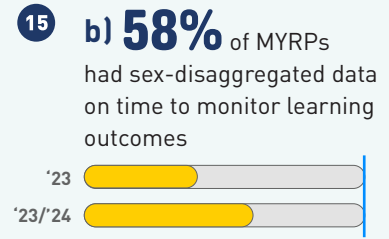
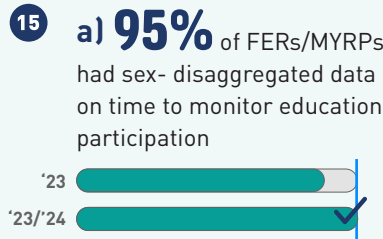
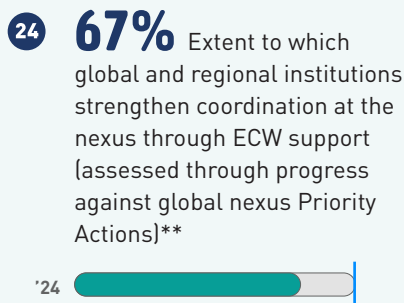
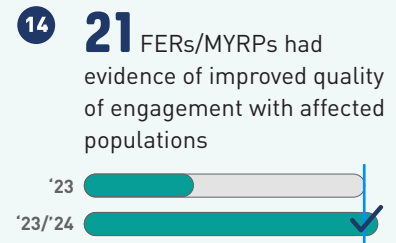
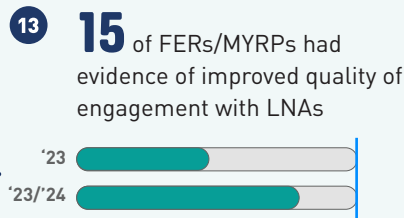
8 5 MYRPs had evidence of change in social norms and attitudes towards gender equality



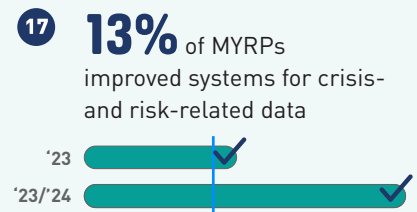
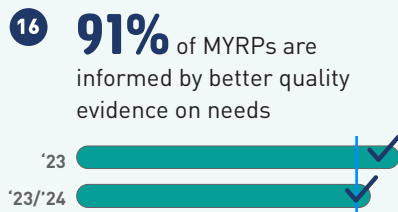
Anchored in the principles of aid effectiveness, ECW is improving coordination among partners at country and global levels...



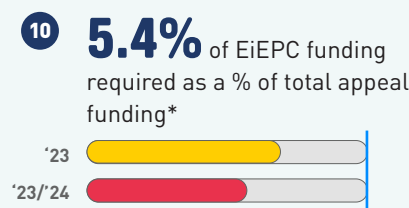
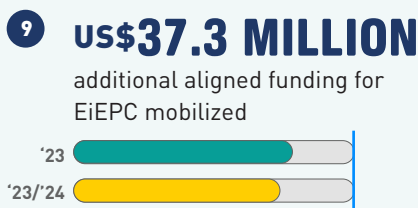
...enhancing ownership and engagement among local and national actors (LNAs) and affected communities ...



...and ensuring accountability through data and evidence – including progress in ensuring ECW programmes have data on time.



ECW and partners have reached their target for mobilizing aligned funding – but the extent to which EiEPC funding is prioritized is at risk at country levels.



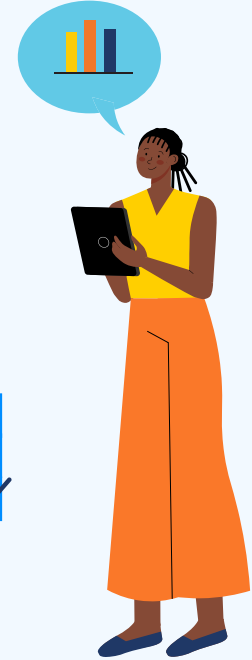
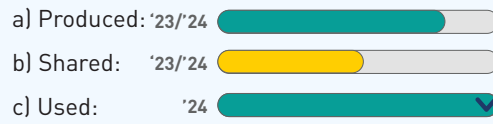
Adoption of ECW-supported technical guidance and tools remains limited, highlighting the need for stronger dissemination and integration into practice.



23 Extent to which global and regional institutions adopt policies, approaches and standards supported by ECW**:

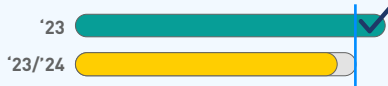


25 Extent to which knowledge products supported by ECW are***:

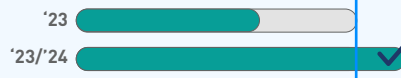


Globally, education is losing ground in humanitarian response. Despite reduced appeals, funding remains stagnant and far below needs.

18 a) US\$1.11 BILLION
total annual EiEPC funding*



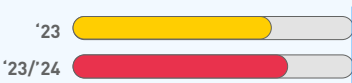
18 b) US\$232 MILLION
total annual EiEPC funding to forgotten crises*



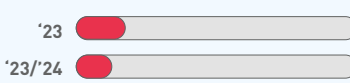
19 4% EiEPC funding (out of sector-specific humanitarian funding)*



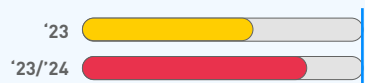
20 30% EiEPC funding against required EiEPC appeal funding*



21 10% FERs disbursed up to 12 weeks after the appeal date*



22 us\$934 MILLION
mobilized for ECW Trust Fund



**2024 result only reported

***2024 result only shown here - see report for more detail.

About Education Cannot Wait (ECW)

Education Cannot Wait is the global fund for education in emergencies and protracted crises within the United Nations. We support quality education outcomes for refugee, internally displaced and other crisis-affected girls and boys, so no one is left behind. ECW works through the multilateral system to both increase the speed of responses in crises and connect immediate relief and longer-term interventions through multi-year programming. ECW works in close partnership with governments, public and private donors, United Nations agencies, civil society organizations, and other humanitarian and development aid actors to increase efficiencies and end siloed responses. ECW urgently appeals to public- and private-sector donors for expanded support to reach even more vulnerable children and youth.

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