

**UNITED NATIONS
EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND
CULTURAL
ORGANIZATION**



Dear Delegates,

My name is Chloe Cantú, and I am glad to welcome you to the UNESCO committee at CancunMUN 2026. I am a 15 year old 10th grade student, and outside of school I love horse riding, playing volleyball, and spending quality time with my friends and family, which keeps me active and motivated.

In the future, I plan to study Business Administration. I am very interested in leadership, teamwork, and how good management can help create organized and successful communities. Even though I have only participated in one Model United Nations conference, CancunMUN, that experience encouraged me to continue developing my skills in MUN and to attend more conferences. UNESCO is dedicated to strengthening international cooperation through education, science, and culture, which are fundamental for building peaceful and inclusive societies. I believe this committee will be an excellent opportunity for discussion, cooperation, and learning from one another.

I expect every delegate to show respect, responsibility, and preparation throughout the conference. I encourage you to research beyond the background guide so you can share strong, well informed ideas during our sessions. I am sure this will be a meaningful and enjoyable experience for everyone. I wish you the best of luck and I am excited to work with you at CancunMUN 2026.

Chloe Cantú, Chair

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Dear Delegates,

My name is Alexandra Ortega, and it is a pleasure to welcome you to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) committee at CancunMUN 2026. I am currently a 10th-grade student at IAS, and outside of school I enjoy playing golf, going to the gym, running, and spending time with my friends, activities that help me stay active and balanced.

Looking ahead, I plan to study Law, as I aspire to become a judge. I am strongly interested in justice, leadership, and the role of legal systems in building fair societies. Although I have only participated in one Model United Nations conference so far, CancunMUN, this experience has motivated me to continue growing within the MUN community, and I am eager to find and attend more conferences in the future. UNESCO focuses on promoting international cooperation through education, science, and culture key areas for the development of peaceful and inclusive societies. I believe this committee offers an excellent opportunity for thoughtful debate, collaboration, and learning.

I expect all delegates to be respectful, responsible, and well-prepared throughout the conference. I strongly encourage you to research beyond the background guide in order to contribute meaningful and well-supported ideas during committee sessions. I am confident that this committee will be a rewarding experience for everyone involved. I wish you the best of luck and look forward to working with all of you at CancunMUN 2026.

Alexandra Ortega ,Co-chair

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



COMMITTEE MISSION

UNESCO is a specialized agency of the United Nations dedicated to promoting education, science, culture, and communication around the world. It works closely with governments to establish international standards and legal frameworks that address some of the biggest challenges of our time. These include protecting biodiversity, advancing quality education for all, responding to the development of artificial intelligence, safeguarding cultural heritage, and ensuring access to reliable information.

UNESCO also develops tools for cooperation among countries and implements large-scale programs that have a meaningful impact on communities. Known as the “Laboratory of Ideas” of the United Nations, it provides a global forum where experts, creators, and leaders share ideas that influence public policy worldwide. Through research, publications, and global networks, UNESCO promotes equality, peace, and sustainable development to help build a better future for everyone.

Topic A: Ensuring Access To Quality Education for Refugees and Displaced People

Introduction:

Access to education is a fundamental human right, yet millions of refugee children are still unable to attend school. Despite international recognition of this right through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, refugee children remain far more likely to be out of school than their non-refugee peers. Millions of school-aged refugees worldwide lack access to consistent and quality education, making this a serious global issue.

The problem is especially significant in countries such as Turkey, Uganda, and Pakistan, which host large refugee populations but face limited resources. Enrollment rates for refugees drop sharply at the secondary and tertiary levels, and girls and children with disabilities face even greater barriers. These gaps show that, although education is recognized as a universal right, many refugees are still excluded. Therefore, this paper will examine the challenges refugees face in accessing education and the actions needed to ensure equal educational opportunities for all.

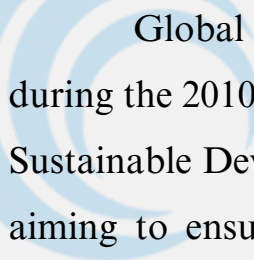




History:

The right to education has long been recognized as a fundamental human right in international law. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights established that everyone has the right to education and that education is essential for the full development of the human personality. Later international treaties reinforced this principle, including the Convention against Discrimination in Education, which requires states to guarantee equality of opportunity in education and to ensure that foreign nationals, including refugees, receive the same access to education as citizens. Other international legal instruments such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees also reinforce the obligation of states to provide education without discrimination.

Over time, international organizations and humanitarian actors began to focus more specifically on the educational needs of refugees and displaced populations. Agencies such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the United Nations Children's Fund have played a major role in advocating for inclusive education systems and supporting host countries. NGOs and international partners have worked to provide emergency education programs in refugee camps and urban settlements. Historically, international donor support for refugee education was often delivered through UNHCR and humanitarian organizations, focusing primarily on temporary education systems in refugee camps rather than integrating refugees into national education systems.

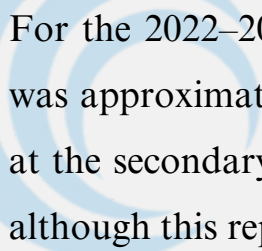


Global political commitment to refugee education strengthened significantly during the 2010s. In 2015, the international community adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) aiming to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. In 2016, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants reaffirmed states' commitments to protect refugee rights and introduced the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework to improve international cooperation. These initiatives were complemented by the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, which promoted a “New Way of Working” between humanitarian and development actors to better respond to long-term displacement.

Despite these efforts, progress has been uneven. Some successful initiatives include regional agreements such as the Djibouti Declaration on Refugee Education and the Nairobi Declaration on Durable Solutions for Somali Refugees, which committed several African countries to integrate refugees into national education systems and improve recognition of qualifications across borders. However, many measures have faced challenges due to limited funding, lack of educational infrastructure, administrative barriers, and discrimination. In many cases, host countries struggle to expand education systems quickly enough to accommodate large refugee populations. As a result, millions of refugee children continue to face barriers to accessing quality education.

Current Situation:

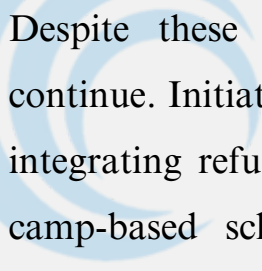
Today, access to education for refugees remains a major global challenge. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, there are more than 31.6 million refugees worldwide, and approximately 14.8 million of them are of school age. However, nearly half of refugee children do not attend school. While global primary school enrollment is significantly higher, refugee children remain far more likely to be excluded from education. Enrollment levels decrease significantly at higher levels of education.



For the 2022–2023 academic year, the average enrollment rate for refugee children was approximately 37% at the pre-primary level, 65% at the primary level, and 42% at the secondary level. At the tertiary level, the enrollment rate was only about 7%, although this represents an improvement compared to previous years.

The global context of conflict and displacement continues to worsen the situation. In 2022, forced displacement reached a record high of around 100 million people worldwide, more than half of whom were children and youth. These crises have disrupted education systems across many regions, leaving approximately 222 million school-aged children affected by emergencies such as armed conflict, climate-related disasters, and political instability. In addition, between 2020 and 2021 alone, over 5,000 attacks on schools were reported in 85 countries, resulting in thousands of students and teachers being abducted, injured, or killed. These attacks, combined with school closures and displacement, threaten the education of entire generations.

Several barriers continue to limit refugee access to education. Financial constraints remain one of the most significant challenges, as even when primary education is officially free. Refugee families often cannot afford transportation, uniforms, or exam fees. Administrative barriers such as lack of documentation or recognition of academic certificates also prevent many refugees from enrolling in schools or universities. In addition, linguistic differences, discrimination, long distances to schools, and psychological trauma experienced during displacement further complicate access to education. Host countries, particularly those with limited resources, often face overcrowded classrooms and shortages of trained teachers, which negatively affect the quality of education provided.



Despite these challenges, international efforts to improve refugee education continue. Initiatives led by UNESCO, UNHCR, and other global partners focus on integrating refugees into national education systems rather than relying solely on camp-based schooling. Programs such as the Global Compact on Refugees encourage cooperation between governments, international organizations, NGOs, and donors to expand education infrastructure, train teachers, and improve recognition of qualifications. Furthermore, the international community has launched initiatives such as “Education in Crisis Situations: A Commitment to Action,” which aims to transform education systems so they can respond more effectively to emergencies and ensure continuous access to quality education for displaced populations.

Although progress has been made, significant gaps remain. Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 by 2030 will require stronger international cooperation, increased funding for education in humanitarian contexts, and long-term policies that prioritize inclusive and equitable education for refugees and other vulnerable populations. Ensuring access to quality education for refugees is not only a humanitarian obligation but also an essential investment in global stability, development, and peace.

Points to Consider:

- How can governments and international organizations ensure that refugee and displaced children have equal access to quality education in host countries?
- What policies can be implemented to integrate refugee students into national education systems while avoiding overcrowding and resource shortages?
- How can the international community increase funding and support for education in humanitarian and conflict-affected contexts?
- What measures can be taken to address barriers such as language differences, lack of documentation, discrimination, and psychological trauma that prevent refugees from accessing education?
- How can global cooperation help ensure that refugee qualifications and academic certificates are recognized across borders?

Useful Links:

[United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees – Refugee Education Overview](#)

<https://www.unhcr.org/education>

<https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2025-08/dina-abu-ghaida-and-karishma-silva-educating-the-forcibly-displaced-key-challenges-and-opportunities.pdf>

https://unesdoc.unesco.org/in/documentViewer.xhtml?v=2.1.196&id=p::usmarcdef_0000366839&file=/in/rest/annotationSVC/DownloadWatermarkedAttachment/attach_import_0dd13b21-5dbf-4681-868e-350bfe5a1832%3F_%3D366839eng.pdf&locale=es&multi=true&ark=/ark:/48223/pf0000366839/PDF/366839eng.pdf#%5B%7B%22num%22%3A11%2C%22gen%22%3A0%7D%2C%7B%22name%22%3A%22XYZ%22%7D%2Cnull%2Cnull%2C0%5D

<https://globalcompactrefugees.org/good-practices/refugee-education-integration-policy-reip>

<https://www.un.org/en/transforming-education-summit/education-crisis-situations#:~:text=Improving%20the%20recruitment%2C%20retention%20and,c./www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/building-inclusive-education-systems-for-refugees.pdf>

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Country Box

Australia

Brazil

Canada

China

Colombia

Ethiopia

France

Germany

India

Italy

Japan

Jordan

Kenya

Lebanon

Mexico

Netherlands

Pakistan

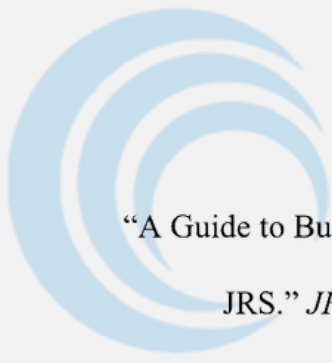
South Africa

Sweden

Turkey

Uganda

United States



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Topic B: Promoting Ethical Standards in Artificial Intelligence and Scientific Research

Introduction:

Artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming scientific research across the world. AI tools are increasingly used to analyze data, design experiments, and even draft research papers. This growing use is significant because scientific research influences public health, environmental protection, technological development, and economic growth in regions across North America, Europe, Asia, and beyond.

Despite its many advantages, the use of AI in research presents serious ethical challenges. While AI can increase efficiency, improve accuracy, and process massive amounts of data quickly, ethical guidance has not kept pace with these developments. For example, the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity and the National Institutes of Health have provided limited recommendations, mainly focusing on transparency in writing and reporting. Broader AI frameworks, such as UNESCO's Ethics of Artificial Intelligence and the draft AI Bill of Rights from the Office for Science and Technology Policy, offer general ethical principles but do not specifically address the unique challenges that AI poses to scientific research. This gap is concerning, as AI raises important questions about objectivity, accountability, reproducibility, and trust in science.

As AI becomes more deeply integrated into research practices worldwide, the scientific community must respond to these emerging concerns. Although the use of AI in scientific research does not require abandoning traditional ethical norms, it does require the development of clear and updated guidelines to ensure transparency, responsibility, and integrity. Therefore, while artificial intelligence offers important benefits for science and society, the global scientific community must establish specific ethical guidance to ensure its appropriate and responsible use in research.

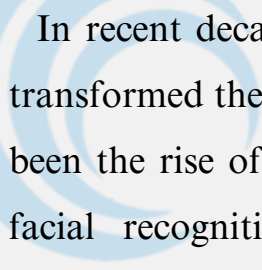


History:

The topic of ethics in scientific research has evolved alongside the development of modern science. As scientific knowledge and technology have advanced, new questions have emerged regarding responsibility, human rights, and the broader social impact of innovation. During the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, governments, international organizations, and research institutions increasingly recognized the need to establish ethical frameworks that guide scientific activity. These frameworks aim to ensure that research advances knowledge while also protecting individuals and promoting the well-being of society.

During the twentieth century, scientific research expanded significantly as new technologies made it possible to conduct more complex experiments and large-scale studies. This rapid growth brought greater attention to the importance of protecting human participants and ensuring responsible research practices. Universities, laboratories, and research institutions began developing formal oversight systems to review research proposals before they were carried out. These systems were designed to ensure that studies followed ethical guidelines, minimized potential risks, and respected the rights and safety of participants. Over time, these review mechanisms became a central component of modern scientific governance.

The development of ethical standards also reflected growing public awareness of the potential consequences of scientific research. As scientific discoveries began to influence areas such as medicine, public health, and technology, it became increasingly important to consider the broader societal implications of research. Ethical guidelines were therefore developed to promote transparency, accountability, and responsible decision-making within the scientific community. These principles continue to guide researchers in balancing scientific progress with the protection of human dignity and social responsibility.

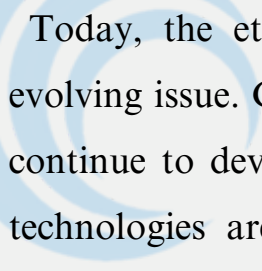


In recent decades, the rapid development of digital technologies has significantly transformed the research environment. One of the most influential developments has been the rise of artificial intelligence (AI). AI systems, including machine learning, facial recognition, and data-analysis technologies, are capable of processing extremely large amounts of information and identifying patterns within extensive datasets. These capabilities have accelerated scientific productivity and enabled researchers to address complex questions that were previously difficult or impossible to investigate.

Artificial intelligence has contributed to several important advances in scientific research. For example, AI systems are able to analyze large collections of academic literature, organize vast databases of knowledge, and generate summaries of scientific findings. Researchers also use AI tools to assist with tasks such as data analysis, modeling, and drafting sections of academic publications. In large scientific projects that require the examination of massive datasets, AI technologies allow scientists to detect patterns and relationships that might otherwise remain unnoticed.

However, the increasing use of artificial intelligence in research has also introduced new ethical challenges. Many AI systems depend on large quantities of data, which may include personal or sensitive information. This reliance on extensive datasets raises concerns regarding privacy, consent, and the protection of personal data. The collection and use of such information can blur the boundaries between public and private data, creating potential risks if individuals' information is used without sufficient transparency or authorization.

The growing reliance on automated systems has also raised important questions about accountability in scientific research. When research outcomes or decisions are influenced by complex algorithms, it may become difficult to determine who is responsible for potential errors, unintended consequences, or misuse of technology. These concerns have encouraged policymakers, research institutions, and experts to consider new forms of ethical oversight and regulation for artificial intelligence in scientific contexts.



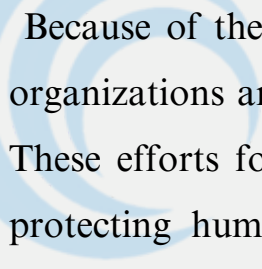
Today, the ethical governance of artificial intelligence in research remains an evolving issue. Governments, academic institutions, and international organizations continue to develop guidelines and policy frameworks intended to ensure that AI technologies are used responsibly. These efforts seek to balance the significant benefits of technological innovation with the need to protect human rights, maintain transparency, and preserve public trust in scientific research.

Current Situation:

Today, artificial intelligence (AI) plays an important role in scientific research and many areas of society. It is used in fields such as healthcare, engineering, economics, and social sciences. AI allows researchers to analyze large amounts of data much faster than before, helping improve efficiency and making it possible to study complex problems that would otherwise take much longer to understand.

AI has already contributed to several major scientific achievements. For example, AI helped scientists produce the first image of a black hole by analyzing enormous amounts of telescope data. Researchers also use AI to analyze historical documents, generate scientific summaries, and study large digital archives. In fields like archaeology, art history, and engineering, AI can detect patterns and connections that humans might miss, allowing scientists to make new discoveries and develop innovative solutions.

However, the growing use of AI also raises important ethical concerns. Many AI systems rely on large datasets that may include personal information, creating questions about privacy, consent, and data ownership. There are also concerns about bias in some algorithms, which can produce unfair or discriminatory outcomes in areas such as hiring, healthcare, or law enforcement. In addition, when decisions are made by complex algorithms, it can be difficult to determine who is responsible for the results.



Because of these challenges, governments, research institutions, and international organizations are working to create ethical guidelines for the responsible use of AI. These efforts focus on promoting transparency, fairness, and accountability while protecting human rights. As AI continues to develop, stronger regulations and international cooperation will likely be necessary to ensure that technological progress benefits society while reducing potential risks.

Points To Consider:

- How can governments and international organizations ensure that artificial intelligence systems are developed and used ethically in scientific research?
- What measures can be taken to prevent algorithmic bias and discrimination in AI systems?
- How should responsibility be assigned when decisions made by AI systems cause harm or violate human rights?
- What regulations should exist to protect personal data and ensure informed consent in large data-driven research projects?
- How can technological innovation continue while still protecting vulnerable populations from potential risks?

Useful links:

<https://www.unesco.org/en/artificial-intelligence/recommendation-ethics>

<https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/recommendation-ethics-artificial-intelligence>

<https://arxiv.org/abs/2206.11922>

<https://arxiv.org/abs/2207.01493>

<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/european-approach-artificial-intelligence>

<https://globalpolicy.ai/en/unesco/>



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"Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed."

