

Special Session: Education in emergencies - Safeguarding Children's Right to Education in times of Crisis

March 23rd 2017 – 11:15-12:45

Run of show (as of March 17, 2017)

Each speaker is expected to speak between 8-10 minutes

Chair: H.E. Dr. Tariq Al Gurg, CEO Dubai Cares

H.R.H Princess Sarah Zeid, Co-Chair “Every Woman Every Child Everywhere”

Mr. Manuel Fontaine, Director of Emergency Programmes, UNICEF

- Requested to set the scene – why education in emergencies matters.

Mr. Justin Van Fleet, Chief of Staff, Office of the UN Special Envoy for Global Education

- What are the best mechanisms? Cover Education Cannot Wait and the findings of the Education Commission report

Mr. Dean Brooks, Director, Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)

- What are some of the key challenges? Will cover issues of coordination, data and evidence.

Q&A – 30 minutes.

Talking points:

- Let me start with numbers
- 1 in 4 children aged 3-18 – totalling an estimated 462 million children - are growing up in places affected by conflict and emergencies, with their education disrupted for indefinite periods of time.
- For conflict-affected countries alone, we estimate that 75 million children – across 35 countries - are either out of school, or have had their education disrupted. 17 million of these children are refugees.
- Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon and Niger account for 14 million primary school age children who are out of school across the four countries, 10.5 of which account for Nigerian out-of-school children of primary age.
- More than 1.7 million children inside Syria are out of school. Over 2.3 million Syrian children are now living as refugees in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq and over half a million of these children are out of school.
- In South Sudan, 59 per cent of children are missing out on their right to a primary education and 1 in 3 schools is closed due to conflict.
- As an average, a refugee child will remain a refugee child for 17 years. Crises seem increasingly protracted.
- Every one of these numbers is why UNICEF exists - keeping children alive is our utmost priority but making sure they achieve their potential is equally crucial.
- **We must invest in education and “turn the tide” to break that cycle of poverty, violence and inequality that fuels so many crises.**
- Without doing so, we'll return to communities, generation after generation, to help the ‘children of the children’ we failed to help in the first place. We'll also perpetuate cycles of inequality within societies. If education is unequal, then growth is uneven — and thus, not as sustainable.

- Lack of access to education is also a sign of horizontal inequalities, so key to conflicts. The likelihood of experiencing violent conflict doubles in countries with high education inequality. And once there is violent conflict, education inequalities increase.
- Education mitigates the costly long term psychosocial impact of conflict and disasters. It provides a sense of stability and normality and a safe space to learn and play. For many, it also provides dignity.
- Without education, children and youth face an increased risk of violence and exploitation from extremists, traffickers and criminals. It is important that the attacks on education by groups as Boko Haram is not a coincidences. They understood the power of education.
- **We must invest in education because children are our investments in a better world.**
- For any child, anywhere, education is not a luxury, it's a necessity. A fundamental right and a crucial opportunity.
- Education holds the key to a better life for millions of children and adolescents worldwide: a life with less poverty, better health and an increased ability to take their future into their own hands.
- Education, particularly girls' education, is also one of the most powerful tools for creating economic growth, decreasing the likelihood of conflict, increasing resilience and impacting future generations with wide-reaching economic and social benefits.
- **We must invest in education because others don't...**
- Education receives less than 2 per cent of humanitarian aid.
- In 2016, the Global Humanitarian Assistance report noted that despite a 126% increase in requirements for education, over an 11 year period, funding increased by just 4%.
- In a time of global funding shortfalls for education in emergencies, the largest portion of UNICEF's Humanitarian Action for Children 2016 appeal – 25 per cent – went for the first time ever towards educating children in emergencies.
- Failing to invest in education in emergencies is short-sighted. It risks holding back not just this generation, but the next.
- **And it is possible to reach children with education, even in the most difficult situations.**
- In 2016, with UNICEF support, 8.2 million children in crises were given access to education, compared to 4.9 in 2015. This year, we hope to increase that number again significantly.
- In Cameroon, UNICEF provided access to temporary learning spaces in camps and host community schools for close to 95,000 children, including early childhood education services.
- In Libya, close to 9,000 children in Benghazi accessed catch-up and remedial classes, continuing to learn despite the ongoing conflict.
- In Sudan, War Child Holland, UNICEF, the government, academics, community facilitators have teamed up together to give children who had never attended school access to the official Sudanese

Alternative Learning Program's math curriculum for grades one to three through a self-guided game on solar-powered tablets. The initial results show promising academic outcomes, with children improving their mathematical scores **and** psychosocial research indicating positive effects on the self-esteem of both boys and girls.

- In Europe, we are working with the Governments in Romania, Greece, Slovenia and Germany to provide non-formal education, language support and recreational activities.
- **We invest in education because as we deliver education, we deliver something more:** an opportunity for children to gain the tools they need to not only improve their own futures, but the futures of their families, communities and economies.
- And there again, the people we are working with during crises get it right: two examples of Lake Chad (Chad tribal leader and parents in Borno). Crises are, interestingly, sometime also the opportunity to make progress in educating children.