

**Speech by the Chief Executive Officer
of the King Abdullah Foundation
His Royal Highness Prince Turki bin Abdullah bin Abdullaziz Al-Saud
Delivered during the event of
Dubai International Humanitarian Aid & Development Conference**

*“The role of private foundations in promoting
Education for Children during crises and disasters”*

Dubai, March 21st, 2017

Your Highness,

Excellencies,

**Distinguished Representatives of international and non-governmental
organizations,**

Distinguished invited guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me first to express my gratitude to H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum for hosting this special event. I take pride to be among your guest speakers today.

I would like to share with you some thoughts on the role of the private foundations in promoting Education for children during crises and

Disasters. In particular let me tell you more about what the King Abdullah Foundation does globally.

The King Abdullah Foundation is an international private foundation that promotes a culture of cooperation for inclusive development worldwide. Our mission is to perpetuate King Abdullah's legacy by promoting Peace and Prosperity.

We provide solutions to concrete problems affecting people's lives; we support innovative approaches, and we focus on concrete and sustainable change.

We believe in Humanity, Responsibility, Coexistence, Knowledge and Partnership.

The King Abdullah Foundation works in 17 countries; in Asia, Africa and in the Middle East. Our sectors of intervention are very diverse and include Education, health care, economic development, social relief, and Peace and Security. Over the past two years, more than 4.4 million people benefited from our programs. We partner with international institutions such as UNDP, and the Islamic Development Bank, as well as with local partners, who have excellent credibility among affected communities.

We have a rich history in promoting Education, in times of natural disasters of crisis, and as a key tool for sustainable development.

When a Tsunami hit South-East Asia in 2004, the late King Abdullah launched a far-reaching assistance program for the support of children orphaned by the disaster. The sponsorship of 2,000 orphans in Aceh, Indonesia, developed into a model example of other benefactors, prompting a total sponsorship of 5,310 orphans in this province.

This initiative funds living assistance and access to education, job training, entertainment, and health care, with the objectives that the orphans will see a bright future when they can enrol in universities and obtain respectable careers. Twelve years later, whilst most external assistance has ceased for the people of Aceh, the King Abdullah foundation carries on with our commitment to their education. Today, 2,000 orphans still benefit from our support to their education and we aim to continue for their access to universities.

When Bangladesh was hit with Cyclone Sidr, hundreds of thousands of people lost their homes and their livelihoods. Schools were totally destroyed and children had no access to education anymore. Thanks to a donation of US\$ 130 million by King Abdullah, we have built more than 170 multi-purposes buildings for use as schools and shelters. 1.4 million people have benefited from this program. Designed to last for over a century and resist wind speed over 160 miles per hour, the eco-friendly school buildings also come equipped with solar power and rainwater collection systems.

As a result of this initiative, more children go to schools in those very remote areas, students' success rate is up, whilst teachers' absenteeism is down. The management of each school is at the hand of the community, that is empowered to maintain properly the premises, whilst maintaining a strong emphasis on both boys' and girls' education.

King Abdullah Foundation aims to pursue this legacy on education in those challenging contexts. Our approach and strategy are centered around three strategic objectives:

- Supporting **access to Education for children affected by man-made crises and natural disasters**. In 2015, 75 million children had their education disrupted by conflict and emergencies, with nearly half of them (37m) out of school. However, education forms only 2% of humanitarian aid, resulting in a financial gap of US\$ 8.5 billion / year.
- Addressing the challenge of education gap in a comprehensive and sustainable manner, hence **addressing the root causes behind the lack of access of education**. In Bangladesh, we are supporting families' livelihoods to prevent child labor and promote boys' and girls' education.
- Our third strategic objective is to ensure that boys and girls truly benefit from **quality education**. Today, only 2% of Education's Official Development Assistance is devoted to quality. Education is not only about infrastructure, it is as importantly about teachers' training, parents' coaching, community's involvement, children's health care and well-being.

Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed guests,

As a private foundation with a clear mandate and legacy, we will continue supporting education for children in times of crises and disasters. We are particularly attentive to various challenging contexts around the globe affecting children's education; and we aim to launch further initiatives with partners in the near future to address them. I am confident that our favored multi-sectoral and inclusive approach with a strong emphasis on linking education in crisis and long-term development will continue bearing fruits.

Thank you very much for your attention.