UNGA78 Side Event

Education: A catalytic investment for development
Providing youth with the freedom to build their future

UN HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK (CR 7) | 19 SEPTEMBER 2023, 1:15PM–2:30PM

Event Details

**Duration:** 75 min.

**Languages:** Session will be in English, Italian, and French

**Co-sponsor:** The Permanent Mission of Italy to the UN; The Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the UN; UNESCO; The Global Partnership for Education; AVSI Foundation and the UN Group of Friends for Education and Lifelong Learning.

**Format:** By invitation only; in-person moderated discussion with prepared questions.

Proposed Agenda

**Welcoming remarks**

**H.E. Antonio Tajani,** Italian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

**H.E. Audrey Azoulay,** UNESCO Director General

**Opening Segment**

H.E. the Minister of Education / Humanitarian Affairs of Nigeria (TBC)

**H.E. Birhanu Nega,** Minister of Education, Ethiopia

**Hon. Awut Deng Acuil,** Minister of General Education and Instruction, South Sudan

**H.E. Conrad Sackey,** Minister of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE), Sierra Leone

**Video projection**

“Experience from the field. A video-story from South Sudan”

**Panel Discussion:** “Investing in education: towards a coordinated and comprehensive approach by the international community”

**Ms. Temilade Salami,** GPE Youth leader, Nigeria

**Ms. Laura Frigenti,** CEO, Global Partnership for Education
**H.E. Hanchi Ketab**, Director of Bilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mauritania (TBC)

**Mr. Giampaolo Silvestri**, Secretary General, AVSI Foundation

**H.E. Gabriele Caccia**, the Apostolic Nuncio and Permanent Observer of the Holy See

High Level representative of the GoF on education and life-long learning (TBC)

Moderator: **Ms. Stefania Spatti**, CNBC

Interventions from the floor

Concluding remarks

**H.E. Edmondo Cirielli**, Italian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

**Context**

Children are disproportionately impacted by the challenges of conflict, political instability, poverty, and climate change. When crises hit or remain protracted, children’s education is disrupted, with girls often being left furthest behind. **It is essential for the international community to take a coordinated, comprehensive approach to investing in education systems to ensure girls and boys can continue to access quality education.** Strong learning outcomes are not only linked with better career and earning prospects, they’re also a crucial determinant of communities’ health and wellbeing, and climate resilience. Education contributes to supporting peace, equity, security and stability, promoting human rights. It offers youth the possibility to develop the necessary skills that make them free to build their future, in their country or abroad.

**Event Framing**

The international community continues to face complex challenges, including poverty, climate change, and persistent conflict and instability in many parts of the world. The 2030 Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) agenda is intended to bring countries together to tackle these and other shared challenges to sustainable development. However, we will not achieve the SDGs, nor address the root causes of ongoing crises, unless we invest in education.

Education is a key driver to realizing the SDGs. A quality and inclusive education is the foundation for peaceful societies. Investing in education reduces poverty and leads to better earnings and productivity, contributing to economic growth. Equitable access to education can contribute to social cohesion and political stability. Education can promote the mutual respect, tolerance, and critical thinking needed for reconciliation. Education has a multiplier effect, with the potential to reduce global inequities, drive economic progress and build a more peaceful and stable world. This is why we must
ensure all children have access to quality education, and that education continues during conflict and crises.

One important approach to ensuring access to quality education is to employ the use of technology in an equitable and child-centered way. Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic showed that the use of technology can be critical to the continuity of learning during a crisis. In all contexts, multimodal approaches - a combination of high-, low- and no-tech options that do not rely on connectivity - can help reach every learner and provide them with the skills they need to thrive in the 21st century. Education that provides learners with relevant skills can be a powerful tool to bridge global inequities, to offer youth the possibility to become protagonists of their future and to empower their communities.

In a world shaped by rapid technological advances like AI, the climate crisis and deepening political divisions, education plays a particularly vital role in grounding global stability. How can we ensure that partnerships and financial investments in education support inclusion, so that all children stay in school and learn better? How can we ensure that socio-emotional learning and human-centered development are a focus of educational dialogue and interventions to build more peaceful societies?

On the margins of the UN General Assembly’s 2023 High-Level Week, the Permanent Mission of Italy to the UN, the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the UN, UNESCO, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), AVSI Foundation and Group of Friends for Education and Lifelong Learning are convening a discussion on the value of investing in education to build a safer, more prosperous future for all, especially children at risk of being left behind in situations of crisis. Special attention will be given to AVSI’s work in Africa as well as GPE’s mission to strengthen educational systems in partner countries in the regions of Sahel and Horn of Africa.

The discussion will contribute to ensuring that education is a critical part of the Summit of the Future process, which seeks to address gaps in the SDGs and chart a path beyond 2030 to create a more peaceful and equitable society for all.

To register please click here RSVP.