Ensuring Education Continuity:
The Roles of Education in Emergencies, Protracted Crises, and Building Peace
HLPF side-event
14 July 2023, 13:15pm-14:30pm
Conference Room 5, UN Headquarters

Background

The world is witnessing an alarming increase in the number of people affected by emergencies such as armed conflicts (including attacks on schools and educational facilities), forced displacement, climate-induced disasters, violence, and epidemic diseases. Globally, of the world’s 257 million primary and secondary school-aged children, nearly half of them — 127 million — live in countries affected by crisis. In addition, COVID-19 disrupted education across the world and undermined progress previously made.

Education is a life-saving and life-sustaining intervention in an emergency. Out-of-school children and young people are at greater risk of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence and child marriage, recruitment into armed forces and armed groups, and other life-threatening activities. Education provides girls and boys with information regarding self-protection from abuse, landmine awareness, health and hygiene, and provides them with stability, which supports their mental health, in the most unstable of environments. Education facilities can also support the provision of integrated services, including health and nutrition and psychosocial support. Over the long run, quality education can also counter the underlying causes of violence and can foster inclusion, tolerance, human rights awareness, and conflict resolution – supporting the long-term processes of rebuilding, peacebuilding, and conflict prevention.

The education sector still faces decades of underfunding and under-prioritization. However, there is a growing shift in global policy towards prioritizing education in crisis-affected
countries underpinned by strong global networks, robust technical tools, international frameworks, and high-level awareness, such as through the Transforming Education Summit convened by the United Nations Secretary-General. Also, there are increasingly coordinated approaches and activities through the Humanitarian-Peace-Development Nexus to sustain the continuity of education while meeting human needs more effectively and coherently, mitigating vulnerability, promoting peace, and building resilience.

Held on the margins of the ECOSOC High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), this side-event will enable a constructive dialogue among a diverse range of policy-makers and practitioners who are actively engaged in the field to ensure the protection of quality, inclusive education for children and young people in crisis affected settings.

**Objectives**

The side-event will bring together Member States, UN agencies, the private sector, and civil society representatives around the following objectives:

- Emphasize the role and power of education as a cross-cutting instrument to empower learners at all levels to engage with humanitarian, development, and peace activities in crisis-affected situations, by promoting a more profound and holistic understanding of the importance of ensuring continuity of education in the triple nexus.

- Showcase the evidence-based roles and benefits of ensuring education opportunities in crisis-affected countries, so that all individuals are provided with lifelong education opportunities to fully develop their human potential as well as equip them with the skills to contribute to development, peace, and security in their countries.

- Strengthen and accelerate existing global frameworks, networks, and initiatives for education in crisis-affected situations at local, national, regional, and global levels, with a view to sharing good practices (including TES follow-up).

**Organizers**

Co-organized by the Permanent Mission of Japan, the Permanent Mission of Switzerland, the Permanent Mission of Italy, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), Education Cannot Wait (ECW), UNESCO, UNICEF, JICA, Save the Children and Japan NGO Network for Education (JNNE).
Supporter

The Group of Friends for Education and Lifelong Learning

Speakers (Tentative)

Welcome Remarks

- H.E. Ambassador Kimihiro Ishikane, Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations, Co-Chair of the Group of Friends for Education and Lifelong Learning
- Ms. Stefania Giannini, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO (Video Message)

Panel Discussion

Setting the Stage

Dr. Yoichi Mine, Executive Director, JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development

Panel Speakers

- H. E. Awut Deng Acuil Minister of General Education and Instruction, South Sudan
- Ms. Somaya Faruqi, student and captain of the Afghan Girls Robotic Team (Youth Representative)
- Ms. Yasmine Sherif, Executive Director, Education Cannot Wait (ECW)
- Mr. Charles North, Deputy CEO, Global Partnership for Education (GPE)
- H.E. Mr. Tijjani Muhammad Bande, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Permanent Representative, Permanent mission for Nigeria
- Ms. Yayoi Segi-Vltchek, Chief, Section for Migration, Displacement, Emergencies, and Education, UNESCO
- Mr. Rotimy Djossaya, Executive Director for Policy, Advocacy, and Campaigns, Save the Children
- Mr. Frank van Cappelle, Senior Adviser, Education, UNICEF

Moderator: Professor Yuto Kitamura, Graduate School of Education, University of Tokyo

Closing Remarks

Ambassador María del Carmen Squeff, Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Co-Chair of the Group of Friends for Education and Lifelong Learning