



2013 EDUCATION CANNOT WAIT CALL TO ACTION: PLAN, PRIORITIZE, PROTECT EDUCATION IN CRISIS-AFFECTED CONTEXTS

"They will not stop me. I will get my education if it is in home, school or any place." (Malala Yousafzai)

In September 2012, over 20 government and global humanitarian, development and education leaders representing Ministries of Education, UN agencies, key funding partners, the private sector and NGOsⁱ came together to validate the *Education Cannot Wait: Call to Action*.ⁱⁱ They called for urgent action on three fronts to ensure children and youth in situations of conflict and humanitarian emergencies do not forfeit their right to a quality education:

1. **Plan** for emergency prevention, preparedness and response in education sector plans and budgets;
2. **Prioritize** education in emergencies by increasing the education share of humanitarian funding from 2% to 4%;
3. **Protect** children, teachers and education facilities from attacks.

On 23 September 2013 global leaders will gather again in the context of the UN General Assembly, to assess progress and identify shortfalls on the Call to Action in the preceding year. We will discuss opportunities for collaboration with a focus on adopting commitments to accelerate the realization of Education Cannot Wait objectives, in particular to take action to reverse negative trends affecting the provision and protection of education in situations of conflict and emergency.

Education in crisis-affected countries: One Year On

Progress has been made against several Call to Action objectives; in conflict- and disaster-sensitive education sector planning, financial support for sector plans in a number of fragile states, new initiatives and/or funding for education in conflict and emergency-affected countries, and high-level advocacy efforts to protect education from attack (see Annex I for details).

However, despite these positive developments and momentum generated by the Education Cannot Wait Call to Action, the past year shows a sobering reality. New analysis by the Education for All Global Monitoring Report shows that the proportion of primary-aged out-of-school children in conflict-affected countries has increased from 42 percent of the global total in 2008 to 50 percent in 2011. Whereas the global number of children out of school has fallen during this period, the number has gone up in conflict-affected countries; from 28 to 28.5 million¹. In addition, an estimated 175 million children annually are affected by natural disasters². Marginalized groups, including refugees, internally displaced populations, girls, ethnic minorities and children and youth with disabilities face additional challenges. Of the 28.5 million out of school children in conflict situations, girls make up 55 percent and are the worst affected due to rape and other forms of sexual violence and exploitation³.

New high-intensity conflicts, fighting and displacement in countries such as Syria, the Central African Republic, Mali, and in the Democratic Republic of Congo deny children and youth access to education and expose them to grave human rights violations. Millions of others affected by ongoing, protracted conflicts or disasters continue to be at high risk of never going to school, dropping out permanently, or even when in school learning little due to poor education quality. Girls are at increased risk of drop out due to insecurity posed by sexual violence, pregnancy related to rape and other forms of sexual exploitation and abuse including forced marriage.

¹ Education for All Global Monitoring Report, Policy Paper 10, July 2013

² Save the Children 2007

³ Education For All Global Monitoring Report, Policy Paper 10, July 2013

The danger of attacks at school, and on the way to school, by parties to conflict, further impedes access to education. According to the UN Secretary General's 2013 report on Children and Armed Conflict,⁴ attacks on education, including against schools, students, teachers and other education personnel, are happening in over 17 countries listed by the UN Security Council, with particular concerns for the increase in reports of the use of schools for military purposes in most countries reported upon.

Disturbingly, the share of humanitarian aid to education has continued to decline, despite an increase in humanitarian needs. While aid to education amounted to 2.3 percent of global humanitarian funding in 2010, it was down to only 1.4 percent in 2012. Also, and despite being one of the sectors with the lowest funding requests, education requirements were only 24 percent covered in 2012, leaving a funding gap of USD \$221 million. This downward-trend seriously hampers the ability to provide education in emergencies; according to analysis by the Education Cluster, an estimated 13 million beneficiaries—namely children, youth and teachers—could not be reached with education programmes in 2012 due to underfunding of education in humanitarian appeals, including in Consolidated Appeals Process and Flash Appeals.

Education Cannot Wait: Our Commitment to Action

Ensuring that all children and youth affected by conflicts and the impact of natural hazard have access to safe, quality, relevant education is possible. As personified by Malala, the dreams and ambitions of millions of children and youth for a good education and hope for their future are at stake. Education cannot wait; the future of the world's children and youth cannot wait.

Children's and youth's right to education must be upheld and protected at all times, in situations of conflict or when emergencies strike. Given that 50 per cent of out-of-school children are in conflict situations, and that an estimated 175 million children per year are impacted by situations of natural disaster during the current decade¹, this is the most important group to target to reach the Millennium Development Goals.

Guided by our fundamental commitment to guarantee that children and youth have access to safe, quality relevant education in all situations, we need to recommit to the Education Cannot Wait Call to Action, and to taking immediate action in order to plan, prioritize and protect education in humanitarian emergencies and conflict situations. We commit to reviewing progress made towards the following commitments at the September 2014 UN General Assembly.

Overall:

We commit to ensuring that the post-2015 development agenda includes provision to ensure that all children and youth, regardless of circumstance and particularly those impacted by conflict and crisis, have access to, and learn in safe, quality, relevant education situations.

Plan: Integrate emergency prevention, preparedness, response and recovery in education sector plans and budgets

We commit to ensuring emergency preparedness, response and recovery are integrated into national education sector plans.

We commit to ensuring that education is included as a central component of governments' humanitarian policies and funding allocations.

Prioritize: Increase levels of humanitarian aid to education and improve its delivery mechanisms

We commit to increasing humanitarian funding allocations to meet education needs, to contribute towards reaching 4 percent of global humanitarian aid to education.

We commit to ensuring that education is included in all Humanitarian Action Plans and national strategies to respond holistically to children and youths needs in emergencies.

⁴ United Nations General Assembly Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General A/67/845*-S/2013/245*

Protect: Keep education safe from attacks

We commit to ensuring schools remain safe spaces for learning by taking action to stop schools and universities being used for military purposes, including by promoting implementation of the Draft Lucens Guidelines on Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict.

We commit to increasing support and resourcing to the UN Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict, including to country task forces, to enhance information gathering, accountability and evidence base to inform advocacy, response and prevention of attacks on schools and school personnel, and military use of schools.

Participants are also encouraged to add their own individual commitment to ensuring that children are able to realize their right to quality education and with this adding even further support to underscore the important message that Education Cannot Wait.

ⁱ Represented at the event included Her Highness Sheikha Moza bin Nasser of Qatar, the UN Special Envoy for Education, UNESCO, UNICEF, UN-OCHA, World Bank; UK-Department for International Development (DFID), the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), the governments of Norway, Denmark, Liberia, Rwanda, Cote d'Ivoire; Inter-Agency Network on Education in Emergencies; Save the Children, Plan International, Education International, Global Campaign for Education, and Comic Relief.

ⁱⁱ http://www.ineesite.org/uploads/files/resources/201209_GPE-UNGA_call-to-action_EN.pdf

Annex I

SNAPSHOT: PROGRESS SINCE 2012

In order to sustain momentum, an international, multi-agency working groupⁱⁱ hosted by the Inter-Agency Network on Education in Emergencies (INEE) has been created to share information and collaborate on advocacy efforts to advance the objectives of Education Cannot Wait.

This Annex provides a snapshot of progress since the 2012 Education Cannot Wait event and Call to Action, with a focus on new initiatives and examples of positive change; however, it does not aim to provide a comprehensive overview of the ongoing work of Governments, donors, UN agencies and NGOs to support education provision in crisis-affected situations. We encourage governments and agencies to submit inputs on their contributions towards the implementation of the Call to Action.

PLAN: INTEGRATE EMERGENCY PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND RECOVERY IN EDUCATION SECTOR PLANS AND BUDGETS

- Development of transitional or interim education sector plans for nine fragile states: Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Somalia (Puntland, Somaliland, & South Central), and Zimbabwe. 439.5 million USD in Global Partnership for Education-approved grants to support the implementation of transitional or full education sector plans in Chad, Comoros, DRC, Guinea Bissau, Madagascar, Mali, Somalia (Puntland and Somaliland), Yemen and Zimbabwe.
- The governments of Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia (South Central), South Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe have integrated conflict sensitivity in their Education Sector Plans and Strategic Plans. New methodologies for conducting conflict and vulnerability analysis as part of the sector planning process are being explored by various agencies.
- Adoption of a comprehensive fragile states framework, including through a donor and partner-led thematic Group on Fragile States to take forward GPE and partner commitments.
- Launch of INEE's Declaration on Conflict Sensitive Education and release of the Conflict Sensitive Education Pack. including Guiding Principles on Conflict Sensitive Education

PRIORITIZE: INCREASE LEVELS OF HUMANITARIAN AID TO EDUCATION AND IMPROVE ITS DELIVERY MECHANISMS

- Adoption of flexible funding arrangements for education in emergencies in (partner) fragile states by the GPE. First disbursement of USD 10 million using this funding arrangement in Yemen (via UNICEF as Managing Entity).
- Launch of the EU Children of Peace Initiative – 2 million EUR, through Nobel Peace Prize funds, for education interventions in four conflict-affected countries in 2013, with multi-annual contributions for new crisis contexts. By the end of 2013, the European Commission’s Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) will have contributed to providing initial access to education for 28,000 conflict-affected children in Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Iraq and Pakistan.
- Launch of *Educate a Child*, an education funding initiative out of Qatar, to secure primary school enrolment of out-of-school children, with a focus on education in areas affected by conflict and emergencies --including education of refugees and IDPs. The initiative secured the access to education of 600,000 children in its first six months, targeting 34 countries that represent 70 percent of the out-of-school population worldwide.
- Significant leadership and support for education in ongoing crises within UN-OCHA, including greater official endorsement of the value of education for affected populations, in particular in the Sahel emergency response and the Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan, both of which include a stronger operational and response focus on children’s education needs. In 2012, a total of 20 out of 25 Consolidated Appeals Process (CAPs) included education. In 2013, education was included in 17 out of 20 CAPs.
- Inclusion of education in humanitarian pledges in ongoing crises in South Sudan, Syria, Sahel and Central African Republic, from UK-DFID, amounting to approximately GBP 6 million in the first eight months of 2013.
- Increased financial support to education in emergencies and in fragile situations by Norway, as committed during the Education Cannot Wait event in 2012. An additional 88 million NOK has been allocated to civil society organizations for the provision of education to children and young people in conflict affected areas during 2013. Education in conflict and crisis is also prioritized in Norway’s support through multilateral channels and networks.

PROTECT: KEEP EDUCATION SAFE FROM ATTACKS

- In February 2013, the UN Security Council’s President issued a statement following the open debate on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, expressing, *“deep concern about the severity and frequency of attacks against schools, threats and attacks against teachers and other protected persons in relation to schools, and the use of schools for military purposes, and significant implications of such attacks on the safety of students and their access to education.”*
- At the Security Council Public Debate on Children and Armed Conflict 15 states and the European Union expressed wide condemnation of attacks on education and military use of schools. Canada, in its written statement on behalf of the Friends of Children and Armed Conflict, which represents some 38 states, noted *“The Friends Group condemns the widespread intentional targeting of schools, teachers and students as a tactic of war and further condemns the practice of using schools for military purposes during armed conflict.”*
- The Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict has been signed by eight non-state armed groups, operating in Myanmar and Iran, committing parties to end the use of schools for military purposes.
- Treaty monitoring bodies are increasingly calling on member states to protect education from attack and restrict military use of schools. In March 2013, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), for the first time, made special

mention of attacks on education in its concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Pakistan.

- Release of the draft Lucens Guidelines on Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Conflict, prepared through an extensive consultation with humanitarian and military experts, as well as observing states, non-governmental organizations, and UN agencies.
- The Special Representative to the Secretary General for children and armed conflict called for Member States to endorse and incorporate the Lucens Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict into their legislation, military doctrine and manuals, in her speech at the Human Rights Council and in her report to the General Assembly this year.