

AL FAKHOORA, UNDP, UNICEF AND UNRWA TO LAUNCH US\$40 MILLION PROJECT ON EDUCATION, RECONSTRUCTION AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT IN GAZA

[برنامج الفخورة يطلق مع برنامج الأمم المتحدة الإنمائي واليونيسف والأونروا مشروع بقيمة 40 مليون دولار لدعم التعليم وإعادة الإعمار وتقديم الدعم النفسي والاجتماعي في قطاع غزة](#)

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During a press conference which took place Sunday at Al Shaqab in Doha, Education Above All's Al Fakhoora programme signed agreements with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for reconstruction, rehabilitation and psychosocial support projects in the education sector, with a focus on damages occurred in Gaza during last summer's hostilities.

With the support of Al Fakhoora, the UN agencies will ensure primary, secondary and post secondary students have the right to a quality education and will strengthen child protection systems to provide psycho-social support to children. Speaking at today's press conference and discussing the projects were: Farooq Burney, Director of Al Fakhoora, Frode Mauring, UNDP Special Representative, Scott Anderson, UNRWA Representative, and June Kunugi, UNICEF Representatives.

In November 2014, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar (MOFA) signed an agreement to donate USD 40 million from the Qatar Development Fund to support Education Above All's Al Fakhoora programme. Subsequent to this donation in November 2014 Al Fakhoora met with the UN agencies to review project proposals for rebuilding and re-equipping damaged schools and university buildings along with the provision of psychosocial support in Gaza.

The UNDP project, entitled 'Right to Education in the Gaza Strip', will allow over 600,000 Palestinian children and youth to regain equitable access to quality education and its completion in an inclusive child-friendly learning environment by 2016.

The UNICEF project, entitled 'Investing in Education and Building Resilience in Gaza', will use a "build back better" approach to ensure that child-friendly schools are safe places for children, and will support innovative education for 113,885 students and teachers in 840 schools across Gaza. The project will also strengthen child protection systems to provide psychosocial support to children, and will enhance adolescents' social entrepreneurship skills, so that they can become active agents of change in their communities.

The UNRWA project will work towards restoring a safe and effective learning environment for the 242,000 children enrolled in UNRWA schools in Gaza.

Commenting on the agreements signed with the UN agencies today, Farooq Burney, Director of Al Fakhoora, said: "The agreements we have signed today with the UN agencies are an important milestone towards the achievement of Al Fakhoora's current mission of reconstructing and rehabilitating educational facilities in Gaza. EAA continues to be grateful for the donation made by the Qatar Development Fund in November. We are delighted to be moving forward with these significant projects proposed by our partners in Gaza".

Commenting on the UNRWA agreement, Mr. Anderson said: "School should be a place where children feel safe, secure and free to explore their potential. However, last summer's conflict means that too many schools in Gaza no longer represent that haven. I thank Al Fakhoora for their timely support – support that will help restore the learning environment that the children of Gaza deserve."

Frode Mauring, UNDP Special Representative of the Administrator highlighted that education is the way out of poverty, and also the way forward to build nations. "The needs in Gaza are immense. More than half of the population is under the age of 18. This partnership will allow the youth in Gaza to take a deeper view of their civic commitment to society and contribute to their right to shape the future. The project will enhance educational attainment and economic viability by rebuilding schools and educational facilities damaged during the recent conflict in Gaza."

"At a time when so many Palestinian children in Gaza still struggle to return to a normal life, we welcome this important project which takes concrete steps to help girls and boys study in a safe, stimulating and uplifting environment, where entrepreneurial learning and innovation are also nurtured", June Kunugi, Special Representative of UNICEF in the State of Palestine, said.

"Palestinian children and adolescents will not only be beneficiaries, but also active participants in the change the Al Fakhoora project will bring in their communities. It is a chance not only for the children and their family, but for all of Palestine."

ABOUT THE AL FAKHOORA PROGRAMME

Al Fakhoora is a programme of Education Above All that works to provide young people in Gaza an education during conflict and post-conflict. Working in partnership with NGOs in Gaza, Al Fakhoora focuses on scholarship and empowerment programmes, reconstruction and rehabilitation of education facilities and providing psychosocial support.

ABOUT EDUCATION ABOVE ALL

Education Above All (EAA) is a global initiative founded in 2012 by Her Highness Sheikhha Moza bint Nasser of Qatar. EAA's aim is to build a global movement that contributes to human, social and economic development through quality education and other welfare programmes and initiatives. With a particular focus on areas affected by poverty, conflict and disaster, EAA champions the needs of children and youth and empower them to be active members of their communities. By meeting the demand for education, EAA equips them to support sustainable development and to nurture environments of peace, security, justice and prosperity. EAA is the umbrella organisation overseeing three core programmes: Educate A Child, Al Fakhoora and Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict (PEIC), as well as one special project, the Kakuma Project.

ABOUT UNDP

UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in more than 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.

ABOUT UNICEF

UNICEF promotes the rights and wellbeing of every child, in everything we do. Together with our partners, we work in 190 countries and territories to translate that commitment into practical action, focusing special effort on reaching the most vulnerable and excluded children, to the benefit of all children, everywhere. For more information about UNICEF and its work visit: www.unicef.org or www.facebook.com/unicefstateofpalestine

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and is mandated to provide assistance and protection to a population of some 5 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip to achieve their full potential in human development, pending a just solution to their plight. UNRWA's services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, and microfinance.

Financial support to UNRWA has not kept pace with an increased demand for services caused by growing numbers of registered refugees, expanding need, and deepening poverty. As a result, the Agency's General Fund (GF), supporting UNRWA's core activities and 97 per cent reliant on voluntary contributions, has begun each year with a large projected deficit. Currently the deficit stands at US\$ 81 million.

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<http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/al-fakhroa-undo-unicef-and-unrwa-launch-us40-million-project-education>