Press Release
2 May 2015


Doha - During a series of meetings which took place in Doha this week, Education Above All’s Al Fakhoora programme, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) have agreed on the implementation of joint education, reconstruction and psychosocial support projects in Gaza, with a focus on damages occurred in Gaza during last summer’s hostilities.

UNDP and UNICEF have come to Doha to present their work packages to Al Fakhoora, after which the implementation of the projects will take place. The purpose of the meetings and workshops this week has been to determine in detail the milestones of the projects’ implementation and agree on the monitoring and evaluation processes. These projects in Gaza represent a unique collaboration between Al Fakhoora, UNDP and UNICEF, where their technical and implementation teams will be working closely together in an unprecedented way, and with a high level of engagement between the organisations.

UNDP will respond to the current deficit of classrooms in Gaza, focusing on the reconstruction of educational facilities working closely with UNICEF, who will provide guidance on ensuring that the facilities are inclusive, child-friendly learning environments. The projects 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 projects will create employment opportunities for the people of Gaza, with Al Fakhoora students and young people partaking in the implementation of the projects.

In November 2014, the Qatar Development Fund donated USD 40 million from to support Education Above All’s Al Fakhoora programme. Subsequent to this donation Al Fakhoora signed agreements with UNDP, UNICEF and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA) in February 2015 in Doha. Separate meetings between Al Fakhoora and UNWRA to discuss the detail of the implementation will take place in the near future.
Commenting on this week’s meetings with the UN agencies, Farooq Burney, Director of Al Fakhoora, said: “Moving forward with the implementation of these joint projects is testament to our commitment to ensure that the funds received from the Qatar Development Fund are put to the best use in Gaza. The direct involvement of Al Fakhoora alumni in the implementation process, therefore providing a form of employment and empowerment, is an important part of the legacy of Al Fakhoora projects in Gaza.”

“Education is an essential part of the development equation,” said Narjess Saidane, UNDP Deputy Special Representative. “The needs in Gaza are immense, with more than two thirds of the youth population unemployed. Through this strategic project with Al Fakhoora, and UNICEF, UNDP will improve access to education for children and adolescents in Gaza, including children with disabilities, by building or reconstructing more than 200 new classrooms, thus providing safe spaces for learning. The project will also enable the rehabilitation of university premises, providing new options for training and employment for Gaza youth, empowering them to shape their future and access opportunities for a resilient and successful life,” she added.

Anne-Claire Dufay, UNICEF - State of Palestine Deputy Special Representative added: “This joint programme supported by Al-Fakhoora helps provide children and adolescents with safer inclusive child-friendly schools. The students themselves will decorate their schools with creative and uplifting designs. They will also engage in innovative entrepreneurial learning, to become active agents of positive change in society. All these efforts will contribute to a more positive learning environment, and will give children hope in a better future”.

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 Sheikha Moza bint Nasser. 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. For more information on UNDP’s work, visit www.undp.org.

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