

Title of Side Event:

Learning in Emergencies- best practices in improving foundational learning in emergencies

Sponsors and Organizers:

UNICEF and Save the Children

(possible co-sponsor member state to be added)

Date and Time:

Wednesday 22nd June 3-4.30pm EST

This is one of the virtual side events to be convened on the margins of the 2022 ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment (HAS), which builds on this year's HAS theme: *“Strengthening humanitarian assistance: good practices and mobilizing action in the application of international humanitarian law, the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and in response to the climate crisis.”*

Background and objectives of event:

UNICEF and Save the Children launched a strategic partnership 'Accelerating Foundational Learning' to tackle the global learning crisis in education which has been exacerbated by COVID-19. Even before the pandemic, 258 million children were out of school, including 130 million girls. This reached a peak of 1.6 billion children in April 2020. The learning crisis is evidenced by the fact that 7 of every 10 children cannot read by age 10, With 2 trillion hours loss of in-person learning, 80% of countries experienced learning loss. The most recent report “Where are we on Education Recovery?” demonstrates that the most marginalized children living in humanitarian situations are falling furthest behind and this is where we must focus collective efforts.

We need to act quickly to address this crisis by helping children back to learning. Less than half of countries are implementing learning recovery strategies at scale to help children catch up. The recent report showed that only half of low-income countries have a plan in place to assess where those who have returned are at in their learning. We must offer children and their families education solutions that are effective not just in getting children back into the classrooms but to radically improve foundational learning and wellbeing. The partnership is focusing on the most marginalized children who stand to gain the most.

As the two largest child rights organisations in the world, and with our leadership in the Global Education Cluster, UNICEF and Save are combining resources, expertise and partnerships to build the evidence-base and demonstrate how we can accelerate foundational learning in emergency contexts.

The Objective of this session is to apply lessons learnt and best practices in COVID-19 for catch up learning and resuming education (addressing the learning crisis) in humanitarian situations.

Through education, we not only transform children's lives. We transform families, communities, and nations. We are working together to advocate and increase the focus within programming and practice on foundational learning, especially following the impact of school closures during the pandemic and resulting learning losses. We will hear from some countries/initiatives who are paving the way to address this agenda and piloting the latest tools and approaches in proven foundation learning interventions.

Seizing this opportunity requires working with governments, donors, civil society, UN agencies, and academia to **follow the evidence on what works to improve learning**, and jointly advocate for the **prioritization and increase of education funding in national budgets, and in aid budgets.**

Without ambitious action to address the learning crisis, with a focus on the most marginalized children, such as those living in fragile and conflict affected settings, **will never reach their potential.**

Discussion points or guiding questions:

- 1) Discuss issues around challenges in addressing the learning crisis in fragile contexts and what we need to do to address them
- 2) Provide an opportunity to present best practices and solutions to scale up proven interventions in emergencies that are improving foundational learning for marginalized children

Key concrete action points and recommendations/take away messages:

This will be a call for urgent action to invest in education recovery in humanitarian countries, specifically for governments to take RAPID action to avert a learning catastrophe:

- **Reach** and retain every child in school
- **Assess** learning levels
- **Prioritize** teaching the fundamentals
- **Increase** catch-up learning and progress beyond what was lost
- **Develop** psychosocial health and well-being so every child is ready to learn

It is possible for children in crisis to learn and it's our duty (member states, supported by international actors) to fulfil their right to learn during a crisis. It's not just about providing a safe space and socio-emotional learning, we also need to ensure children can catch up effectively on lost learning. Some of the possible solutions include:

- Fund integrated approaches – academic learning, combined with additional support e.g cash transfers, MHPSS/child protection



- Scale up proven interventions like Teaching at the Right level
- Better data – collected, evaluated and shared regularly.
- Better assessment of learning outcomes
- Support for teachers/facilitators – training, wellbeing, working conditions
- Appropriate use of EdTech

Format of the side event:

The event will open with introductory messages and welcomes from a member state, donor and a youth advocate (**due to the timing of the event, some of these interventions will have to be pre-recorded**).

The second part will be more technical on the tools and approaches that are being implemented and using a café style whereby participants can drop into different break-out rooms to hear more.

Some key take-aways will be shared in the plenary with closing remarks.

The event will be in English with translation available in Arabic, French and Spanish

Chair and moderator:

Ms Linda Jones, Senior Education Advisor (EiE) UNICEF

Panel composition:

First session – plenary panel – more general intro into the topic (35mins)

- UNICEF
- Member States
- Youth advocate

Second session – breakouts to rotating simultaneous quick learning café presentations on technical aspects of learning in emergencies (25mins)

- Save the Children's REAL Assessment Tool
- UNICEF's assessment of mobile phone for learning in emergencies
- IRC Intervention on Social Emotional Learning
- Teaching at the Right Level Partner

Third session – plenary moderated by Tim Murray, Senior Director, Learning Outcomes Save the Children (30 mins)

- Interventions from the floor Q&A
- Closing Remarks on actions to be taken



Background Material (feel free to share links to relevant documents):

Where are we on education recovery?

[Build Forward Better: How the global community must act now to secure children's learning in crises](#)

[Catch Up Clubs: A pioneering approach to getting children safely back to school](#)

[The FLN Hub](#)

Connection details to join the event

[Please find registration details here](#)

Contact(s):

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Please indicate the technical focal point(s) (for technical assistance participants may require before/during the side event) in the table below (maximum 1)

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