

UNICEF South Sudan signs Project Co-Funding Agreement with Qatar's Educate A Child initiative to bring quality primary education to over 25,000 children in South Sudan

Friday 16 November 2012

Doha, Qatar- UNICEF South Sudan today signed a three-year agreement with Educate A Child, a new initiative from Qatar's Sheikha Moza bint Nasser aimed at triggering progress towards the goal of quality primary education for all the world's children.

The US \$12 million co-funding from Global Partnership for Education and Educate a Child, with UNICEF South Sudan as the implementing partner will be used to support the Ministry of General Education and Instruction and other partners to implement activities that will increase the quality and access to education to over 25,000 children throughout South Sudan, the newest nation in the world.

With 61 million children worldwide still missing out on their fundamental right to education, Educate a Child today announced partnerships with a range of organisations to catalyse innovative learning solutions for the world's hardest-to-reach children - those affected by extreme poverty, conflict, natural disaster and prejudice.

Education remains a major priority for children in South Sudan. Despite education indicators being among the worst in the world, demand for education is high which is demonstrated through the increase in school enrolment over the past few years. The completion rate in primary schools is less than 10 per cent, one of the lowest in the world coupled with gender equality - only 33 per cent of girls are in schools.

"Qatar Foundation's generous contribution will go a long way in improving the lives of children in this new nation. The support will increase access to quality primary education, build the much needed capacity of teachers and continue to deliver emergency education interventions to the most vulnerable." said Dr. Yasmin Ali Haque, Representative, UNICEF South Sudan.

Mohammed Al Naimi from the Qatar Foundation said: "Our partners have broad global reach and deep local roots. We are delighted to be partnering with UNICEF South Sudan because of the rich wealth of experience they bring to the area of education.

Poor infrastructure, shortage of classrooms, deep rooted social norms, recurrent emergencies and few trained teachers are just a few barriers to children in accessing the quality learning they deserve in South Sudan.

But there is great desire and eagerness among children to learn. 12 year old Radwan Al Fahil, a refugee in Maban county, Upper Nile State says, "School is the best thing about being here. Education is even more important than shoes. I would rather be in class with bare feet than have shoes."

Together, we can make a real difference to the lives of over 25,000 children in the newest nation of the world.

Educate A Child is a new global initiative launched by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser of Qatar. It aims to significantly reduce the number of children worldwide missing out on their fundamental right to education.

Educate A Child is working with partner organisations to support innovative methods of bringing education to the hardest-to-reach children, especially those affected by poverty, conflict, natural disaster and prejudice.

Educate A Child is an extension of Sheikha Moza's mandate as UNESCO Special Envoy on Basic and Higher Education, as a United Nations Millennium Development Goal Advocate, and Steering Committee member of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Education First Initiative.

For more information please visit www.educateachild.org.qa.