

Education Above All Foundation Empowers Students in Cambodia and Vietnam to Tackle Climate Change

DOHA, QATAR, September 16, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Education Above All \(EAA\) Foundation](#), a global education foundation, is addressing the impact of climate change in Southeast Asia, supporting students in Cambodia and Vietnam to stay in school, learn climate resilience skills, and safeguard their futures.

Ten-year-old Ren Naren lives on Cambodia's Tonle Sap Lake. Each morning, instead of taking a bus or walking to school, she boards a small wooden boat. The lake has long supported her community, but inconsistent water levels now make her daily trip to school more dangerous and uncertain.

Her older sister, Rin Nary, was forced to drop out after contracting meningitis. Her situation highlights where poverty, access to education, and health dynamics intersect, and how climate change exacerbates these challenges.

"Climate change has significantly impacted children's ability to attend school, particularly due to prolonged rainfall and extreme heat," said Roeum Phalla, Park Ranger Officer in Cambodia's Tonle Sap region. "These conditions increase the risk of illnesses and accidents, making education



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Climate change is a classroom crisis

increasingly fragile.”

In Southeast Asia, climate change is no longer a looming threat, it is affecting the region with intensifying typhoons, floods, droughts, and heatwaves.

Climate Disasters Disrupting Education □ The past year has underscored the vulnerability of students in Southeast Asia:

- Super Typhoon Yagi struck Viet Nam in September 2024, killing over 300 people and injuring nearly 2,000. Over 1,600 schools were damaged, leaving nearly 960,000 children facing learning disruptions due to school closures and loss of educational supplies.

- Each year, floods alone disrupt the education of some 30,000 Cambodian children.

- A record heatwave forced shorter school days and triggered blackouts, leaving classrooms unbearably hot. Scientists also warned that record-low Himalayan snowfall is shrinking the Mekong River and threatening the Mekong Delta region, a lifeline for food and livelihoods for millions in Vietnam and Cambodia.

“These overlapping crises show that climate change is not just an environmental issue, it is a classroom crisis, a health crisis, and a family crisis,” said George Tavola, Engagement Manager at Education Above All Foundation.

Back to the Classroom for Out of School Children

□ In response, the EAA Foundation, in partnership with Aide et Action, has implemented a range of initiatives:

- Providing scholarships, school materials, and nutritious meals, among other measures, to ease financial burdens on families in Cambodia.

- Supplying rowboats to ensure safe commutes for students in floating villages of Tonle Sap.

“Through our partnership with Aide et Action, we have more than 144,000 out of school children in Cambodia who were once out of school are now back in classrooms,” said Derek Langford, EAA Foundation Senior Engagement Specialist “It shows that when partners and communities come together, even families facing poverty, health, and climate pressures can keep their children in education and looking toward a better future.”



In 2024 alone, extreme weather disrupted the education of at least 242 million children

Building Resilience Through Climate Education

□ In Vietnam's Bac Lieu province, students like Thanh Binh learnt to farm shrimp under mangrove canopies, an approach that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and shields aquaculture from climate shocks. Adapted livelihoods help families maintain stable incomes, which in turn supports children staying in school.

"About 10 years ago, production in my hometown was favourable because of good environmental conditions," said Binh. "But in recent years, climate change, heavy rain, and waste discharge have made farming shrimp and crabs unstable."

"In Dong Hai district, we see obvious impact of climate change -- heavy rain, salinity, unstable sea levels. Tree planting motivates us to stay with aquaculture under the forest canopy. Training and capacity building are equally important. It aligns with sustainable development and supports our future," said Binh.

The project by Education Above All Foundation and Action Aid Vietnam, helped Vietnamese youth to learn and develop solutions to global warming, climate change, sustainable lifestyles, just energy transition, and green enterprise.

"The climate crisis is a child rights crisis," UNICEF has warned. "We urgently need increased financing and innovation to change and strengthen our health services, schools, water systems and food supplies. For children to be protected from climate change, we need to make changes," the report asserts.

"Between January 2022 and June 2024, climate-related disasters closed schools in 81 countries, affecting over 400 million students. In 2024 alone, extreme weather disrupted the education of at least 242 million children. But education is not only a casualty, it's a crucial part of the solution. Educated communities are more resilient, better prepared to adapt, and more likely to advocate for sustainable policies. Schools, therefore, must be reimagined: as hubs of learning and resilience. That means integrating climate action into every curriculum and transforming school infrastructure, elevated buildings, green roofs, rainwater harvesting, and renewable energy systems," said Langford.

A Hopeful Path Forward

Back on Tonle Sap, Naren continues attending school, while her family works to secure safer commutes. "If I had the means, I would send her back for as long as she wants," her father said.

Even in the face of climate extremes, children can stay in school when the right support is in place. Education is the constant that helps families withstand shocks, build resilience, and create opportunities for the next generation.

By tackling the barriers that keep children out of the classroom, including climate change, EAA Foundation remains committed to ensuring every child has the chance to learn and thrive.

Education Above All (EAA) Foundation, with the support of Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), has been working across Asia to promote quality primary education to out of school children (OOSC) and provide economic opportunities for young people. Working in 26 Asian countries, impacting more than 8.6 million children and youth, EAA Foundation tackles some of the region's most pressing barriers to education, including poverty, unemployment, infrastructure gaps, conflict, displacement, gender inequality, and climate vulnerability.

Ryan Chittenden
Education Above All Foundation
[email us here](#)

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