Education Above All Foundation advances protection of education in crisis and innovative financing at UNGA81

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, September 27, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Education Above All (EAA) Foundation, a global education foundation, placed the protection and continuity of education in crisis situations and the advancement of innovative approaches to mobilise additional financing for education at the centre of its engagement at the 81st United Nations General Assembly (UNGA81).



EAA Foundation's CEO Mohammed Al-Kubaisi joined humanitarian leaders, policymakers, foundations and technology partners at the UN Goals Lounge session



Education Above All Foundation CEO Mohammed Al-Kubaisi at the CAF–UNICEF high-level event on child-lens investing in Latin America and the Caribbean

Across nine high-level engagements from 21 to 24 September, EAA Foundation joined governments, United Nations agencies, development finance institutions, philanthropies, businesses and humanitarian organisations to address two interconnected challenges: protecting education when children and young people are affected by conflict, displacement and other crises, and mobilising the resources needed to ensure they can access and remain in education.

The discussions came against a worsening global financing environment: UNESCO's 2026 Global Education Monitoring Report estimated an annual US$97 billion financing gap for low- and lower-middle-income countries to reach their education targets by 2030, while aid to education fell by 8% between 2023 and 2024 and aid to basic education fell

by 16%. UNESCO has also projected that aid to education could decline by up to 30% between 2023 and 2027.

At the same time, attacks on education continue to threaten children's access to learning. The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack recorded 9,259 attacks on education in 2024 and 2025, more than 50% higher than in the previous two-year period, with at least 10,600 students, teachers, professors and education personnel harmed.



At the OECD's high-level session, EAA Foundation's CEO Mohammed Al-Kubaisi delivered opening remarks on philanthropy's role in addressing the education financing gap

Protecting education and learning through crisis

Protecting education in crisis was the defining strand of EAA Foundation's UNGA81 engagement. At the UN Goals Lounge session, Protecting Futures in Crisis: Building Resilience through Education and Mental Health in Humanitarian Settings, CEO Mohammed Al-Kubaisi joined humanitarian leaders, policymakers, foundations and technology partners to examine how education, mental health and psychosocial support can be integrated more effectively into humanitarian response.

EAA Foundation emphasised that education must be protected and funded as an essential component of humanitarian action, not treated as a secondary need. The discussion highlighted the need to connect learning with psychosocial well-being, child protection and support for teachers, caregivers and humanitarian workers, while ensuring that emergency education creates pathways back into recognised education, further learning and economic opportunity.

Drawing on EAA Foundation's experience in crisis settings, including its partnership with War Child in Yemen and support for learning continuity in Gaza, the Foundation highlighted the importance of ensuring that children affected by conflict and displacement can continue learning despite disruption.

The discussion reinforced EAA Foundation's broader advocacy for protecting schools, students and educators and for ensuring that education responses in emergencies address both immediate learning continuity and longer-term recovery and opportunity.

Mobilising new finance for education

The EAA Foundation also used UNGA81 to advance discussion on how innovative finance can

help address the persistent shortfall in education funding.

At the CAF–UNICEF high-level event on child-lens investing in Latin America and the Caribbean, Education Above All Foundation CEO Mohammed Saad Al-Kubaisi joined senior representatives from CAF, UNICEF, governments and development partners to examine how blended finance, catalytic capital and other mechanisms could mobilise greater investment in children and adolescents.

Al Kubaisi also participated in a UNHCR and Bain & Company CEO-level roundtable, Investing in Potential: Business as a Driver of Refugee Opportunity, exploring how businesses can contribute to education, skills development, employment, entrepreneurship and investment opportunities for refugees.

The discussion drew on the EAA Foundation's longstanding partnership with UNHCR, through which more than 1,6 million out of school refugee, internally displaced and host-community children across 16 countries have been supported in accessing education since 2012.

At the OECD's high-level session, Unlocking Philanthropy's Catalytic Role in Financing Education, EAA Foundation's CEO Mohammed Al-Kubaisi delivered opening remarks on philanthropy's role in addressing the education financing gap. EAA Foundation highlighted its experience with education investment swaps and blended finance, including approaches that combine philanthropic and concessional development finance to mobilise additional resources and support scalable education solutions. The discussion also examined debt-for-education approaches and stronger collaboration between foundations and development finance institutions.

Al-Kubaisi also participated in two sessions at the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) Annual Meeting 2026, contributing to the EAA Foundation's broader engagement during UNGA81.

EAA Foundation's Educate A Child Executive Director, Dr Said Yasin, also joined Opportunity International's "Why Non-Grant Capital is Important" session, examining how non-grant capital could complement traditional development funding and unlock additional investment for underserved learners.

Turning financing discussions into practical solutions

The financing agenda continued through a technical discussion convened with SEEK Development, bringing together bilateral donors, philanthropic foundations and multilateral education and development finance institutions.

EAA Foundation's Partnerships Senior Manager, Dr Ali Ansari, contributed to discussions examining the evidence behind blended finance facilities, guarantees, education bonds, outcome-based financing and debt-related mechanisms, with participants considering which

approaches demonstrated sufficient financial viability, educational impact, sustainability and scalability to merit further investment and testing.

Dr Ali Ansari also participated in the session Beyond Grants: Unlocking Philanthropy's Capital for Education, co-hosted by the International Finance Facility for Education (IFFEd) and Jacobs Foundation. The discussion examined how philanthropic capital could complement traditional grant-making through a broader range of financing instruments to help mobilise additional resources for education and skills at scale.

Together, these engagements moved the conversation beyond the size of the education financing gap towards how capital can be structured, combined and deployed more effectively, including through catalytic and concessional finance, guarantees, investment swaps, non-grant capital and stronger public-private-philanthropic partnerships.

From protecting education to financing its future

Mohammed Saad Al-Kubaisi, CEO, Education Above All Foundation said: "UNGA81 has provided an important platform to reinforce the urgency of protecting education when children are most vulnerable, while also addressing the financing constraints that prevent millions from accessing and remaining in school. Protecting education in crisis and financing its future are deeply connected. We must strengthen partnerships, mobilise innovative forms of capital and ensure that children affected by conflict, displacement and poverty are not denied their right to learn."

The breadth of discussions, from development banks and OECD partners to UN agencies, humanitarian organisations, philanthropies, businesses and technical experts, reflected the growing need for cross-sector collaboration.

Through its UNGA81 engagement, EAA Foundation advanced practical approaches to protecting education in crisis, strengthening humanitarian responses, mobilising new sources of finance and developing investment models that can reach children and young people facing the greatest barriers to education.

For more information, please visit www.educationaboveall.org

For media inquiries, please contact:

Patience Rusare

Senior Media Specialist

parusare@eaa.org.qa

Mohamed Al-Amri

Senior Media Relations Specialist

msalih@eaa.org.qa

ABOUT EDUCATION ABOVE ALL FOUNDATION

Education Above All (EAA) Foundation is a global foundation established in 2012 by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser. EAA Foundation aims to transform lives through education and employment opportunities. We believe that education is the single most effective means of reducing poverty, creating peaceful and just societies, unlocking the full potential of every child and youth, and creating the right conditions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Through our multi-sectoral approach, unique financing models, focus on innovation as a tool for social good, and partnerships, we aim to bring hope and real opportunities to the lives of marginalised children and youth.

The Education Above All Foundation comprises the following programmes: Educate A Child (EAC), Al Fakhoora, Reach Out To All (ROTA), Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict (PEIC), Silatech, Innovation Development and Together Project.

Education Above All
Education Above All Foundation
email us here

This press release can be viewed online at: https://www.einpresswire.com/article/945600804

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.
© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.