fakhoora.org
take action: defend education.
A programme of education above all™

صندوق قطر للتنمية
Qatar Development Fund

UNDP 50 YEARS
Empowered lives. Resilient nations.

Press Release

Gaza Visit Showcases Significant Progress on Al Fakhoora Projects Financed by Qatar Development Fund

Gaza – Doha, 03 February 2016 – Less than 18 months after a donation of USD 40 million to support the people of Gaza via Education Above All's Al Fakhoora programme, the Qatar Development Fund (QDF) visited a number of projects to witness first-hand the impact and progress. The QDF delegation was composed of Ali Abdulla Al-Dabbagh, QDF Executive Director, and Sultan Ahmed Al-Asseri, QDF Third Secretary, who were accompanied by representatives of Al Fakhoora and EAA.

During the visit, QDF representatives met with students, Ministry officials, teachers and school counsellors for an overview of how Al Fakhoora is supporting the mental health capacity of teachers and school counsellors helping vulnerable children. The opening ceremony aimed at launching the reconstruction works and at honouring QDF, took place at the Islamic University of Gaza, which incurred USD 1.25 million worth of damages in the past.

The trip included a visit to Ja'far Bin Abi Taleb Primary Girls School where four additional classrooms are being built. For the first time children's input is included in the recovery and reconstruction process, which is coordinated by a UNICEF Child Friendly School architect, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). June Kunugi, UNICEF Special Representative, explained how innovative design and a participatory approach are distinctive features of the initiative: "*For the first time, children and adolescents in Gaza are not only beneficiaries, but also active participants in the recovery and development process. Their views and suggestions are taken seriously and incorporated, enabling them to be part of building their future while improving their psychosocial well-being, a critical element for recovery*."

Other projects highlighted included schools in North Gaza currently being repaired and re-equipped for the 251,000 students who attend UNRWA schools in Gaza. QDF officials had the opportunity to meet with children and families served by UNRWA schools during and after the war, and to see how the programme is truly transforming their lives thanks to the support provided by Al Fakhoora via the QDF funding. Azzam Abuhabib, Assistant Projects officer, Al Fakhoora funded projects focal point at UNRWA expressed his emotion as follows: "*During the summer 2014 conflict war, 90 UNRWA schools were used as emergency shelters for internally displaced children. Seeing hope again in the eyes of those children watching their beloved schools move from war shelters to normal schools is priceless.*"

Commenting on the progress of the project, Ali Abdulla Al-Dabbagh, QDF Executive Director, said: "*We are proud to see that Qatar's support is making a real difference in the lives of displaced children and orphans in Gaza. Al Fakhoora is making significant progress in school rehabilitation and we are pleased to be part of this project.*"

Fahad Al-Sulaiti, CEO of Education Above All Foundation, reiterated the need for continuous support in providing access to quality education in conflict zones such as Gaza: "*EAA's Al Fakhoora programme is the living proof of the impact of our efforts to support the education sector in Gaza. Building safe learning environment through reconstruction of schools and universities is the best way to empower Gaza students and youth with quality education and skills to shape the future they want. We are grateful to the Qatar Development Fund for its generous contribution and are pleased to have the opportunity to show them the funds in action*."

During the gala event, 82 undergraduates and six international masters students graduated, while 25 orphans were awarded undergraduate scholarships within the Al Fakhoora Dynamic Futures programme.

Commenting on QDF visit today, Roberto Valent, UNDP Special Representative of the Administrator said: "*Education is key to development and has been a cornerstone of Palestinian resilience and aspiration over the years. EAA's Al Fakhoora programme and support from QDF are a winning partnership in making the world a better place for youth and children in Gaza*."

Capping off the visit, UNDP, represented by Roberto Valent, and the Palestinian Welfare Association, represented by Dr Tafeeda Jarbawi, signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Wajd programme in Fakhoora Scholarship Programme, granting orphan students a full four-year multi-faceted scholarship empowerment programme. The Wajd programme was launched after the 2014 hostilities in Gaza and is funded by QDF.

About the Al Fakhoora Programme

Al Fakhoora is a programme of Education Above All Foundation that works to provide young Palestinians with education opportunities in Gaza. Working in partnership with local and international 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.

fakhoora.org
take action: defend education.
A programme of education above all™

صندوق قطر للتنمية
Qatar Development Fund

UNDP 50 YEARS
Empowered lives. Resilient nations.

About Qatar Development Fund
Qatar Development Fund (QDF) is a Qatari public organization established and organised pursuant to Law Number 19 of 2002 as amended and established under the laws of the State of Qatar. QDF was envisioned and articulated as an independent body to coordinate and implement foreign assistance on behalf of the State of Qatar. As such, QDF will serve as the "face" and brand of Qatar's foreign assistance efforts. QDF, through representing the State of Qatar, aims at helping Arab countries and other developing countries to develop their economies and implement development programs by providing loans, grants and technical assistance for the economic and social development of these countries. In addition, QDF aims at contributing to the capital of development finance institutions and other international and foreign development institutions that aim at helping developing countries in the development of their economies.

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 in the occupied Palestinian territory visit www.ps.undp.org.

About UNRWA
UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip achieve their full human development potential, pending a just and lasting solution to their plight. UNRWA services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, and microfinance.

About UNICEF
UNICEF promotes the rights and well-being 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

For further information, please contact:

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP/PAPP)
Ms Dania Darwish, Communications Specialist, Tel. +972-2-6268229 – e-mail: dania.darwish@undp.org. For more information on UNDP/PAPP see http://www.ps.undp.org.

Education Above All (EAA)
Lubna Al-Attiah, Education Above All, +974 5563 8868, lalattiah@eaa.org.qa

Clementine Martini
Memac Ogilvy, PR for Education Above All, +974 7048 4477, clementine.martini@ogilvy.com