

ECW High-Level Steering Group

Statement by the UN Deputy Secretary-General Ms. Amina Mohammed

Friday 11 September 2020

10:00 - 11:30 EST

**

As a friend and strong advocate of Education Cannot Wait, I welcome this opportunity to convey my support for ECW's critical work and my solidarity with the millions of children and youth who are still being deprived of the opportunity to obtain a quality education because they are caught up in conflict, crisis or disaster.

Education is foundational to all the Sustainable Development Goals, but to advance on the Decade of Action and to recover better from the COVID-19 pandemic, we must step up our efforts to ensure that all girls and boys, including the poorest and most marginalised, are able to complete their primary and secondary education. That requires addressing the often deeply rooted gender inequalities in both education and in crisis and investing far more in girls' education.

I commend Education Cannot Wait for working to ensure that girls and adolescent girls make up at least 60% of the total number of children and youth reached and this entails breaking down the long-standing barriers to education for girls and adolescent girls, including by sustainably increasing access and improving protection, including through activities that help to increase the proportion of women educators.

The COVID-19 pandemic has reversed some of the important gains made in recent years, while its impacts are being felt universally by those already marginalised by conflict or disaster are hit hardest by the pandemic: sometimes barely coping with one crisis, they are now being forced to face yet another. Education Cannot Wait was amongst the very first to respond to the outbreak including to countries hosting large refugee and/or IDP populations.

I thank ECW's strategic donor partners for their support. I also recognize UN Special Envoy for Global Education Gordon Brown, ECW Director Yasmine Sherif and her entire team for their tireless efforts to reach those left furthest behind.

Education Cannot Wait is an example of how the United Nations system delivers quality with speed to advance SDG4 leveraging the best from across the UN family. Now is the time to take our work to the next level, to reimagine education, deliver the financing and policies to bring quality education to all, to tackle deeply engrained disparities and in the words of the new Global Campaign, save our future.
