ACEA Statement on COVID-19 Pandemic
Reconsidering Education in Emergencies Strategies in the Arab World

Recently, the world has witnessed a rapid spread of COVID 19 which has been declared by World Health Organization as a Pandemic. It has affected more than (1.52) billion learners around the world, in addition to the closure of schools and universities in 165 countries. This closure affected about 87% of the total number of students in the world, and these statistics are constantly increasing every moment.

COVID 19 Continues to spread in the Arab Countries which resulted in hitting all aspects of life and adversely impact the educational process; where millions of students and teachers can’t reach their educational institutions.

During the last decade the Arab Countries have witnessed many crises and conflicts which led to the destruction of many development gains and led to the rise of humanitarian needs for millions of people, especially those who have been displaced. However, this pandemic considered to be the most dangerous crisis that the Arab World witnessed especially for the education sector and its workers. According to preliminary estimates, this current crisis affected the progress of the educational process for (50) million students in the Arab region, and this number is expected to increase at every moment.

Despite the confusion, fear and danger sensations that carried out by this crisis, it still carries within its folds promising opportunities to search for new education systems and to think seriously about the future of education and stressing on the importance of using technology for the benefit of education and learning process especially during emergencies. In this regard, The Arab Campaign for Education for all is making great efforts through opening dialogue with all stakeholders at all levels to rethink about education issues during the pandemic and document the possible results and experiences.

ACEA as educational movement appreciates the efforts made in these emergency circumstances and call on all parties to:

1) Reconsider the concept of "Education in Emergencies" which is restricted to countries and regions that are under colonial domination or are experiencing civil wars or armed conflicts.

2) Review the possible approaches of the official school and revisit its roles by conducting comprehensive reviews for the school programs to ensure that the social outcomes of the educational systems will be used to promote national and international solidarity

3) The Learners as part of the educational system will be affected directly from this pandemic, thus we must collaborate to protect them and guarantee their rights and search for possibilities to reach the vulnerable groups in order to ensure the three pillars of education (Access, Quality and Education System Strengthening)

1 According to UNESCO Data and Reports: https://en.unesco.org/covid19/globaleducationcoalition
4) Adopt the participatory approach in developing strategies related to education in emergencies, by involving all educational actors without exclusion.

5) Review the countries priorities, and reaffirming that education is a fundamental priority that must be protected by governments and all parties and thus allocating the necessary funds, and increasing education budgets in all the Arab countries.

6) Consider the readiness of the governments to respond to the crises through providing the necessary digital equipment that guarantees the continuity of the learning process and adopt the distance learning approach and eliminating the gap between the rural and urban areas and providing internet for all.

7) Acknowledge the importance of digital platforms accredited for distance education, taking into account the limitations of the assessment process, although it opposes with a basic principle of the SDG4 principles, which is equal of opportunities.

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