



Education in Times of Turmoil

Concept note
**Educaid.be International
Conference 2026**



Education in Times of Turmoil

Ensuring the continuity and protection of learning for stability, development, and peace

Educaid.be International Conference
Online & in Brussels – 28.05.2026

BACKGROUND

The world is witnessing a troubling surge in instability and crises - from Ukraine to Gaza, from the Democratic Republic of Congo to the Sahel region - education systems are destabilised, educational gains set back, and the right to education is increasingly under threat. The growing crisis is not confined to the humanitarian sphere but is encroaching on development cooperation. The once-clear boundaries between emergency response, recovery and long-term development are becoming increasingly blurred. As education systems struggle under the weight of crises and conflicts, humanitarian and development actors are being called upon to respond in ways that are both immediate and sustainable.

The impact of this disruption is profound. We are not merely witnessing a temporary setback in learning; we are facing the potential loss of an entire generation. The consequences extend far beyond the borders of the affected countries, threatening global stability, security, and social cohesion - including in our own societies. Inaction is not an option. We owe it to ourselves, and to future generations, to engage, to act, and to help prevent this educational erosion from becoming irreversible.

Education is not only an investment in human capital, but it is also a powerful tool for preventing violence and fostering lasting peace. By equipping young people with skills and opportunities, education can break cycles of instability and contribute to reconciliation and social cohesion.

Yet, this urgent need for action stands in stark contrast to a troubling reality: education budgets are shrinking. The imbalance between growing needs and dwindling resources calls for a renewed commitment, innovative partnerships between humanitarian and development actors, between governments and civil society, between communities and school leaders, and a rethinking of how we protect and promote the right to education in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The Educaid.be Conference 2026, themed Education for Stability, taking place on May 28 in Brussels and online, will explore how educational, humanitarian, and development actors can collaborate effectively in contexts of instability and conflict.

International experts will examine the interrelationship between education and stability, emphasising the essential role both play in addressing unpredictability and fragility in the current world environment.

Government representatives from partner countries, NGOs, and specialists will share perspectives on key challenges and strategies for safeguarding education and help us understand how inclusive access to learning, alongside the protection of schools, teachers, and learners, strengthens resilience and supports peacebuilding efforts.

Drawing on global examples from Educaid.be member organisations and their partners, four learning labs will address the challenges of education in times of crisis — from interrupted learning and psychological distress to heightened risks for vulnerable children and youth — and will explore how these challenges have been transformed into actionable strategies and practical solutions to keep education going against the odds. By sharing their experiences, these sessions will highlight the need for context-specific approaches and illustrate the close link between education, protection, and stability.

You can find more details about the programme on our website.