Humanity First
Serving Mankind

'Realizing Human Rights through Education and Healthcare for Children in Conflict Zones'

Side Event 2025
UN Human Rights Council Social Forum

31 October 2025
UN Palais, Geneva

13.00 - 15.00
Central European Summer Time
(CEST)

ROOM XI

CONCEPT NOTE

TITLE

Realising Human Rights through Education and Healthcare for Children in Conflict Zones

DATE & TIME

Palais des Nations, Geneva
(Side Event to the 2025 UN Human Rights Council Social Forum)

DURATION

90 minutes to 120 minutes
(40 minutes panel discussion & 20+ minutes Q&A)

VENUE

13.00 - 15.00 Central European Summer Time (CEST)
October 31, 2025
(To Coincide with the Social Forum of the Human Rights Council)

BACKGROUND

In accordance with UN Human Rights Council Resolution 56/12, the 2025 Social Forum focuses on "**the contribution of education to the respect, promotion, protection and fulfilment of all human rights for all.**

This side event brings together key actors working with children in conflict zones to explore how education and healthcare are fundamental tools to uphold children's rights and human dignity.
Children are disproportionately affected in humanitarian crises and armed conflict. Denied access to quality education and healthcare, they become both immediate and long-term victims of systemic human rights violations.
This session aims to elevate field perspectives and present policy recommendations to better integrate education and healthcare access as part of a holistic human rights strategy.
The side event will also feature videos to engage participants further in the discussion during the question-and-answer session.

OBJECTIVES

- To highlight the critical intersection of education, healthcare, and children's rights in conflict zones.
- To share field-based insights from frontline humanitarian organisations.
- To discuss policy-level actions that member states and UN agencies can take to improve access to education and healthcare for children.
- To invite dialogue with diplomats, civil society, and UN actors on the implementation of Resolution 56/12.
- To share videos of successful stories around the world and the empowerment of education.



SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER

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Sitara Brooj Akbar

Award-Winning Scientist
Multiple World Record Holder
Women's Rights activist
Cancer Researcher at the University of Oxford

Topic: Integrating child health and education in human rights frameworks

Sitara Brooj Akbar is a multiple academic World Record Holder, Scientist, and Youth Ambassador who has received numerous prestigious awards for her achievements, including gold medals from both the President and the Prime Minister.

She is a passionate advocate for women's rights and equal access to education, believing that education opens doors to opportunity.

Sitara first gained national attention at the age of five when she appeared on television and spoke to large audiences. By the age of 11, she became the youngest person in the world to complete her IGCSE exams. She later completed her A-levels at the age of 13, setting another record. At 15, she achieved a perfect Band 9 on the IELTS exam, becoming the youngest non-native speaker to do so. By 17, she had also become the world's youngest Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialist, among several other records.

Driven by curiosity, Sitara was inspired by polymaths who pursued research and learning across multiple fields rather than focusing solely on one area of specialisation. She completed her postgraduate studies in cancer research at the University of Oxford.

In addition to her scientific work, she has experience in financial crime prevention, education management, and community service.

Panel Composition



MODERATOR:

Anwar Mehmood Ur Rehman

International Consultant for Human Rights & Development

Swiss Political Scientist

SPEAKERS

Speakers (5 – 10 mins each)

OPENING SPEAKER



H.E Professor Muhammadou M. O. Kah

Ambassador of Gambia to the UN Geneva

Topic: The use of IT in Education and ensuring youth are protected and imparted with skills

M. O. Kah, a leading scholar of Information Technology and Development in Africa. Amb. Prof. Kah currently serves as the Permanent Representative of The Gambia to the Swiss Confederation and Permanent Mission to the UN, WTO, and other international organizations in Switzerland.

Panel Composition

SPEAKERS

Speakers (5 – 10 mins each)



Kate Takes
Lawyer Children Not Numbers

Topic: Documenting the human cost of conflict – stories and data from Gaza.

Kate is a UK-based lawyer with a background in regulatory law. As a member of the legal team at Children Not Numbers, she plays a key role in supporting the organisation's mission and initiatives including advocating for children in Gaza.



Dr. Raouf Salti
Founder Children's Right to Healthcare (CRH)

Topic: **The role of healthcare access in protecting children's rights in emergencies.**

For twelve years, Dr. Salti has been practicing medicine with passion as a urological surgeon in Geneva, dedicating his expertise to the health and well-being of his patients.



H.E. Hoyce Anderson Temu
(Deputy Ambassador of Tanzania to UN Geneva)

Topic: The Role of the Media - Ensuring Education is promoted for Children & Youth

H. E. Hoyce Anderson Temu is the Deputy Permanent Representative the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations Office and other International Organisations in Geneva.

Panel Composition

SPEAKERS

Speakers (5 – 10 mins each)



Dr Aziz Hafiz
Chairman, Humanity First UK

Topic: Education as a tool for resilience and rights in post-conflict recovery.

Dr. Aziz Ahmad Hafiz is a distinguished leader in humanitarian service and medical practice, currently serving as Chairman of Humanity First UK, a global non-governmental organization dedicated to disaster relief, community development, and safeguarding human dignity across more than 60 countries.



Paulette Diakité Lacroix
OIEC representative to the UN in Geneva

Topic: Role of OIC in promoting Education in areas of conflict and other affected areas

Paulette Diakité Lacroix is the representative of the International Office of Catholic Education (OIEC). She is working on various projects around the world and is an avid advocate of promotimng education.



Pradeep Wagle
Chief, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Section, OHCHR, Geneva)

Topic: The Role of the OHCHR in Promoting Education and Development

Pradeep Wagle joined the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Section (ESCR Section) with OHCHR Geneva in April 2022. Before joining the ESCR Section, he was the Country Representative of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Cambodia.

HUMANITY FIRST

KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE (KFL) PROGRAM

OUR IMPACT

45+ Schools Built

33+ Training Centres

287,995+ Students Supported

Masroor Senior Secondary School

Click to Visit

Since 2005, Humanity First has established the Masroor Senior Secondary School in The Gambia. The school has continued to expand and now supports over 1400 students, with equal access for girls and boys. Their assembly hall is the largest in the country.

The performance of the school has been stunning, being in the top three schools in the country. With the support of our donors, Masroor Senior Secondary School is enabling many students to attain high-quality education to pursue their dream of securing admissions in top universities.







Structure

Time | Agenda

| 0:00–0:05 | Welcome and Opening Remarks |

| 0:05–0:25 | Panel Presentations (5 minutes per speaker) |

| 0:25–1:00 | Interactive Q\&A with audience (40 minutes) |

Target Audience

UN Member State Delegations

OHCHR and UN agencies (UNICEF, WHO, UNESCO)

Civil society organizations

Media and academia

Human rights defenders and education advocates

Outcomes

Raise awareness among international stakeholders about the urgency of protecting children's rights in conflict.

Encourage integration of education and healthcare in human rights-based humanitarian responses.

Identify pathways for collaboration between governments, UN bodies, and NGOs.



HUMANITY FIRST

KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE (KFL) PROGRAM

Every child deserves the best chance to learn, access quality education, and build a brighter future. At Humanity First, we help children realise their full potential by supporting and promoting a better global education system, one that aims to eliminate disparities and create equal opportunities for both children and adults.

Our capabilities and resources enable us to plan, execute, and optimise the best strategies to develop an education system that is resilient, fair, and inclusive, ensuring everyone, everywhere, can learn. We invite you to be part of our journey.

OUR VISION

We envision a world where no child is left behind, a world free from gender discrimination, where both boys and girls can get access to early childhood development, feel empowered, and grow into a confident generation shaping a better future.

- Building new schools and vocational training centres;
- Refurbishment of existing facilities; and
- Empowerment of teachers and students to enable more children and youth to attain qualifications and to get themselves out of poverty.

KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE

Education is a basic human right, and according to the latest **UNESCO** report, 250 million children aren't attending school, and two-thirds of illiterate adults are women.

If this social issue is not approached properly, it is predictable that by 2030, almost a billion young people will not have the skills they need to work and build lives for themselves.

Another report released by UNESCO referred to the lack of funding as one of the main challenges governments face worldwide.



HUMANITY FIRST

KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE (KFL) PROGRAM

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS:

HUMANITY FIRST - KNOWLEDGE FOR LIFE (KFL)

The KFL programme aims to make early childhood education available to every child worldwide, especially in low-income countries. Most of our KFL program is focused on the sub-Saharan African region, where more than half of all out-of-school children and adolescents in the world are located.

Our highly ranked primary and secondary schools are safe and inclusive environments for all children. Humanity First is committed to building schools in areas with the most need, refurbishing and upgrading existing ones and equipping scientific labs.

Vocational training centres: Beyond primary school education, Humanity First also trains adults to embark on a wide variety of careers through our vocational centres. Students build skills for careers that are in demand in their local area, such as sewing and tailoring, IT, catering, electrical work, or driving.

Over 2,000 people have graduated and been certified from vocational courses in Uganda, Gambia, Mali, Liberia, Burkina Faso, Guyana and more.

At Humanity First, we believe that skilling centres are a pathway to sustainable skills development, helping youth secure better employment and an improved lifestyle.

Skilling centres equip communities with essential abilities for a sustainable and better livelihood. Skill education empowers individuals to excel in their profession and enhances confidence, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Learning a new skill helps them discover their passion and strengthens them, leading to fulfilling lives and careers.