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# Hundreds of Thousands of Children in Gaza Lack Education, Swedish Foundation Plans to Build 400 Schools

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Palestinian children in Khan Younis, Gaza, learn math, reading, writing, and receive mental health support from UNICEF. (Twitter/@TedChaiban) Arab & Middle Eastern Society

JAKARTA - The Swedish Akelius Foundation plans to build 400 schools in the Gaza Strip, Palestine, because more than 650,000 children there have not received [an education](#) for the past two years, following the destruction of 97 percent of school facilities in the region.

The initiative aims to restore learning opportunities after extensive damage to educational infrastructure across Gaza.

Swedish businessman Roger Akelius made a donation to Gaza on March 20 in collaboration with the Swedish government through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The Akelius Foundation, founded in 2007, has previously provided \$60 million in aid to Palestine. Its latest contribution to Gaza is \$75 million.

Specializing in modern pedagogy, the foundation runs free online courses in languages and mathematics with a team of around 150 staff.

With an annual budget of approximately \$300 million, the foundation seeks to direct its resources to educational projects and has supported educational initiatives in 40 countries.

The foundation primarily works through humanitarian organizations including UNICEF, the UN refugee agency (UNHCR), SOS Children's Villages – an international organization that provides family-based care for orphaned and abandoned children – and Doctors Without Borders (MSF).

In an interview with Anadolu Agency, Akelius said the foundation plans to provide access to schools, play areas and food for children in Gaza.

He noted that the latest donation will fund the construction of 400 schools, each designed for 250 children.

"This is a challenging project. Our goal is to build tent schools and permanent structures, employ teachers, and provide 100,000 meals per day for five years. As usual, Israel will restrict or prohibit access. They will shoot school staff and children," Akelius said, as quoted by *Anadolu* (31/3).

He said the Swedish government had informed Israeli authorities of the aid effort. Sweden is known to have donated approximately \$35 million through UNICEF, bringing the total aid package to over \$100 million.

It is known that schools in Gaza can no longer operate after Israel destroyed or damaged 96 percent of educational institutions in the region.

According to Akelius, children in Gaza not only need to learn to read and write, but also need to experience normal life again.

Meanwhile, UNICEF data states that more than 97 percent of schools in Gaza have been damaged and around 658,000 children have not been to school for two years.

Tags: international Palestine Gaza child education