**Committee:** UNICEF (Junior)

**Country:** The Kingdom of Netherlands

**Agenda Item(s):** Fighting against social exclusion and child poverty, providing education during emergencies

Netherlands is a country located in Western Europe, bordering the North Sea, between Belgium and Germany ruled by parliamentary constitutional monarchy. As nearly 25 % of the population consists of young people, the welfare of the children is highly important for us. Our country is in the 45th rank in terms of the issue of education. Also, we have the sixth-largest economy in the European Union, thus we play an important role in financial matters with a 13.6% population below poverty line.

In Netherlands, for children with educational disadvantages caused by social, economic and cultural characteristics, a compensatory policy programme operates at the national and the local level. For children with learning and behavioural difficulties the ‘Going to school together’ policy programme has been developed. This policy aims at stabilising or reducing the number of children referred to special education. More of these children should be catered for in mainstream primary schools. Teachers from special schools help primary schools to provide the appropriate care for these pupils. For disabled children a new educational policy was introduced in 1997, to be operational in 2001. This policy includes a system where disabled pupils receive a personal budget, which the parents can spend on their child’s education. This is called the ‘Rucksack’ funding model, because pupils can take their personal budget to the school of their parents’ preference. The new policy was developed to in response to the needs of parents of disabled children, who tend to prefer to enrol their child at a school nearby the home. This new policy makes it possible for parents to enrol their child at a mainstream school.

Within the international community the Netherlands is considered a pioneer in the field of education in developing countries. Dutch policy is aimed at achieving internationally agreed goals to get every child in the world into school by 2015 at the latest and to make it possible for them to complete their education. Thus, The Netherlands announced a new, additional contribution of €6 million for supporting Education Cannot Wait’s COVID-19 education in emergency response on 11 September 2020 in New York. This new contribution expands ECW’s latest [COVID-19 response](https://www.educationcannotwait.org/education-cannot-wait-announces-us19-million-in-new-covid-19-education-response-for-refugees-and-idps-across-10-crisis-affected-countries-ecw-covid-19-investments-approved-now-total-43-5-million/) targeting over 850,000 crisis-affected children and youth; 460,000 girls and adolescent girls and 50,000 children with disabilities. Over the next few years, the Netherlands will give extra support to provide children in emergencies with education. Agnes van Ardenne, the Minister for Development Cooperation, has entered into an agreement to this effect with the UN Children's Fund UNICEF. A €166 million contribution will be used to support a UNICEF programme that aims to provide 25 million children and young people in 40 countries with a better education and a more promising future. The programme will enable 10 million children who are currently deprived of any form of education whatsoever to return to school. And it will give another 15 million children living in crisis situations a better education. Children from countries such as Sudan (Darfur), the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, Liberia, North Uganda and Afghanistan will benefit. All of these countries have been affected by current or recent bloody conflicts or by natural disasters, such as earthquakes or floods. Where possible, the programme will also invest in strengthening education systems in a general sense so that they can contribute to the creation of more stable societies.

The delegation of Netherlands firmly believes that all children have a right to have a healthy life, live and get education under equal conditions. To address urgent needs of vulnerable children we recommend a complete emergency plan for the economic, social, health and education areas. We think that there are still many things to do and we invite all the member states to support us both at the national and international levels.