

EXOR partners with Save the Children and Fondazione Agnelli to support students in need and strengthen their study motivation

www.arcipelagoeducativo.it

Following the experience this Summer, the activities of the **Arcipelago Educativo** project will be continued and further expanded in the coming months, facing the difficult context of the current school year with new learning labs, courses and other initiatives, both online and in presence: the project will support 1,700 students in 5 Italian cities with their studies, helping them catch up on learning loss and reducing the risk of them dropping out of school.

EXOR will support in the current academic year The **Arcipelago Educativo** (www.arcipelagoeducativo.it) project, which was co-designed and promoted by **Save the Children** and **Fondazione Agnelli**, and initially made possible thanks to the contribution of the Bolton Hope Onlus Foundation.

The project began this past Summer, both on line and in presence, and was carried out by a network of local partners¹ and in cooperation with schools. The goal was to provide a concrete response to the most urgent needs resulting from the dramatic COVID-19 crisis, in addition to the usual learning loss caused by the summer break: the closing of the schools, the inequality in accessing to on line teaching and the risk of dropping out for the most vulnerable student. Hence an educational project was successfully experimented, preparing students to get back to their classes for the new school year.

At the end of the pilot over the summer, a questionnaire sent to students revealed that their main concern, in addition to a possible new lockdown, was related to homework and school tests: they were aware of their learning deficit piling up and of their weaker study habits, which were difficult to recover. The parents' priority was that children should continue to be supported in catching up on their education and school subjects. In order to meet these needs, EXOR decided to support the extension of the project to other areas. Students will be supported throughout the year in education centers within existing schools, located in difficult social contexts of five cities, including Turin, Milan, Aprilia (near Rome), Bari as well as Reggio Calabria (which will be included in Save the Children's reach for the first time, thanks to EXOR).

11 education centers in all will be activated as part of the project, which will involve 47 primary and secondary schools and a total of 1,700 students aged 9 to 14. These multi-purpose spaces, operating inside existing schools, will provide the students access to tools such as study support and learning

¹ ACLI Milano, Kreattiva, Cooperativa CISV Solidarietà, Psy+ Onlus

labs to strengthen their skill levels. The goal is to help students most at risk of dropping out to keep on learning and remain motivated to study.

A particularly innovative feature will be personal online tutoring for 330 students to help them catch up and boost their skill level in certain core subjects (reading, math, science, languages). The young tutors – volunteer graduates — will be trained by Save the Children, in collaboration with various universities. Courses will begin after mid-year assessments with participants selected on the basis of recommendations from Department Heads at the schools and with the agreement of their families. The Archipelago Educativo web portal, an educational platform which has been visited by 40,000 students so far, will help students to strengthen their digital skills too. All participants will be provided a tablet and internet connection.

In Turin, **Arcipelago Educativo** will make it possible to extend the experience of the activities launched by Save the Children in recent years to fight the dropping out of students, fully engaging up to 16 schools in the Falchera, Pietra Alta, Barriera di Milano, Barca and Vallette neighborhoods. The activities will focus on promoting the participation of the students in their school activities, increasing their motivation to study and their learning skills. Classes and families will also be targeted, following the difficult reopening of schools and throughout all the current academic year. The scheme will include learning labs, teacher training and support for families.

"Schools and education are at the heart of the social commitment of EXOR and its companies. In a year marked by so many difficulties, we have chosen to support students, starting with those most at risk of falling behind in their schooling", said **John Elkann**, Chairman of EXOR and of the Agnelli Foundation. "Thanks to Save the Children and the Fondazione Agnelli, we will be able to help them build more effective study skills and boost their knowledge. We will also be there for their families, especially those who find it most difficult to support their children in their studies, by getting them involved and helping them to communicate with the schools."

"Thanks to the valuable support from EXOR, the Arcipelago Educativo project, carried out in cooperation with the Agnelli Foundation, will continue to support many kids and teenagers in their studying in a delicate historical phase for our Country. In what is expected to be a challenging school year, the actions promoting study motivation and skills strengthening are fundamental tools to fight educational poverty and school drop out, through the development of an "educational community" which supports and complement schools in their education mission" said **Claudio Tesauro**, Chairman of Save The Children".

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