

# Fund the Future:

Guaranteeing an education for all of the world's children

**RESULTS**  
the power to end poverty

Education for all is at a critical moment. While some great progress has been made, there are still 57 million primary age children out of school around the world. A further 69 million adolescents are unable to attend lower secondary school, and around 250 million children in school are not learning basic skills, even though half of them have spent at least four years in school. Meanwhile, global spending on education is declining just when it is needed most. The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is a unique organisation that is at the forefront of tackling this crisis by supporting education in fragile and conflict-affected states, promoting girls' education, helping countries increase basic numeracy and literacy skills, and improving teacher effectiveness.

This year, the GPE is launching a crucial 'replenishment' that could be a turning point for the future of education. Later this month, a GPE Board meeting will make key decisions about the replenishment. We want the UK Government to lead the call for an ambitious replenishment campaign aiming to raise US\$4 billion for the GPE fund to help get every child into school for a quality education.

## Why is education important?

All the evidence shows that education is absolutely fundamental to development and global progress. Central to ending poverty, education empowers individuals to lead long and productive lives, contributes to economic growth, healthier populations, and more stable, equal societies. World leaders know this, and have set international goals to guarantee everyone can access a quality education, including the six 'Education For All' goals and the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of achieving universal primary education by 2015. But the world is not on track to reach these goals.

## How is the world doing on education?

This week, UNESCO published its annual report on progress towards the 'Education For All' goals and it is clear that we are making progress towards universal education. Since 1999, the number of primary school age children out of school has fallen by 47%, but three-quarters of this reduction was achieved between 1999 and 2004. Between 2008 and 2011, progress stalled altogether. UNESCO now report that there are 57 million children of primary age out of school, and a further 69 million adolescents unable to attend lower secondary school. A big message from UNESCO is "*despite advances over the past decade, not a single goal will be achieved globally by 2015*". See **Background Sheet 2** for more detail on the state of education.

## Funding for education in developing countries

In 2000, world leaders committed that no country would be prevented from providing education for all

by a lack of resources. Sadly, donors are failing to fulfil this commitment. Globally, aid to education has seen a downward trend over the past few years. Although the UK is an important exception to this rule, commitments to education globally decreased an alarming 15% between 2010 and 2011 alone, signalling the potential for far greater decreases over the coming years as a number of donor countries deprioritise aid to education.

## What is the Global Partnership for Education?

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is a partnership made up of governments, civil society, international organizations, teachers, foundations, and the private sector which helps developing countries access money, and global and local expertise to achieve their education goals. It is the only global initiative devoted to getting all children in the world's poorest countries into school for a quality education.

## How is the GPE helping?

The GPE plays a unique role by coordinating financial support and specialist skills to deliver on nationally-designed education plans, which are created by countries and take in all of the quirks and nuances of their individual situations. It's delivering results:

- **More children in GPE countries are enrolled in and completing primary school.** The average completion rate rose from 58% in 2000 to 75% in 2011. The share of out-of-school children declined from 39% (58 million) to 24% (42 million).
- **More children are accessing lower-secondary school.** In 2011, 58% of children had access to lower-secondary, compared with 38% in 2000.

- **Gender parity** in primary enrolment has been or is close to being **achieved in most GPE countries**.
- **Public spending on education in developing countries which are partners of the GPE is increasing**. For instance, the 59 countries that are members of the GPE have on average increased their public expenditure on education from 16% in 2000 to 18% in 2011. Domestic spending in developing countries now amounts for almost half of the total resources needed for education. Unfortunately this still leaves a major gap where donor aid is urgently needed.

### **The GPE replenishment – a turning point?**

The GPE's replenishment campaign (which is seeking funding for the four years 2015-18) was launched in September at the UN General Assembly. The campaign will culminate in a pledging event attended by global leaders in June 2014 in Brussels, hosted by the European Commission. The replenishment aims to be a turning point in tackling the education crisis, getting the resources needed to achieve education for all; including pledges to the GPE Fund (the money GPE spends directly), education spending commitments by developing countries, and increases in direct aid spending by countries like the UK and USA, for basic education in the world's poorest countries. An ambitious and successful replenishment is critical, and this will be our education campaign goal for 2014. **For**

**more on the GPE see Background Sheet 1.**

### **What is the UK's role?**

We should be proud that the UK Government is currently the largest individual donor to basic education as well as playing a crucial role in the GPE; we are the largest donor to the GPE, contributing £50 million a year to the GPE fund, and the UK is represented on the GPE's Board of Directors. We want to see the UK using that leadership position to help ensure the GPE is funded to reach its goals.

### **What do we want the UK to do?**

In Washington DC on 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> February, the GPE's Board of Directors will meet to agree the overall target for the replenishment; that is to say how much money they plan to raise *in total*. We want this target to be ambitious enough to transform education for millions of the world's poorest children. Civil society across the globe has concluded that the replenishment must aim to raise US\$4 billion over the four year period -US\$1 billion per year- to achieve the transformative impact needed. We want the UK to take the lead in calling for the agreement of this overall target at the Board meeting, and do everything they can to persuade other donors to step up. Once that overall target is agreed, our campaigning will move on to focus on what we want the UK Government to pledge at the replenishment in June.

### **Take action**

**1. Contact your MP asking them to call for UK leadership at the GPE Board meeting 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> February, leading the call for an ambitious GPE replenishment target of US\$4 billion. Ask them to raise this urgently with Lynne Featherstone MP, the DFID Minister responsible for education. Use the EPIC format (Engage your reader, explain the Problem, Inform of the solution, make a Call to action).**

- **Engage** their interest in education for all. You could use the statistics from these materials and/or share your personal passion for the issue;
- Explain the **problem**: that despite progress, millions of children are still unable to get a quality education. And while the UK is an exception to the rule, most donors are cutting aid to education just when it is needed most.
- **Inform** them about the Global Partnership for Education and the unique role it is playing, supported by the UK (currently GPE's biggest donor). Explain that the GPE replenishment is coming up and outline the opportunity it represents, and the importance of the decisions made at the Board meeting this month.
- Make a **Call to action**. Ask them to raise the issue urgently with Lynne Featherstone MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development. Ask them to include:
  1. Thank her for the UK's leadership in aid to education, and for their commitment to the GPE;
  2. Ask that the UK lead the call at the GPE Board meeting for an ambitious replenishment target of US\$4 billion for the GPE fund (US\$1 billion per year for four years); and that the UK does all it possibly can to bring other donors along with them to ensure every child can fulfil their right to education.
- You can find the details of your MP at [www.theyworkforyou.com](http://www.theyworkforyou.com)

**2. SAVE THE DATE! On Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm, join grassroots from the UK, US, Canada and Australia on our unique Global Grassroots Call with Alice Albright, CEO of Global Partnership for Education (further details to follow).**

**3. Take our 'e-action' on this issue and email Ms Featherstone directly. Just follow this link: <http://bit.ly/LorTPt>**