

Open Letter to the G7 on the Global Partnership for Education

To the Leadership of the G7:

We, the undersigned, are writing to encourage leaders of the world's most powerful economies to ensure a successful replenishment of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) on February 2nd, 2018, co-hosted by the governments of Senegal and France. This is a critical moment for G7 leaders to commit to fund education and ensure that the next generation of girls and boys fully enjoy their human rights and are equipped with the skills to contribute to our shared goals of healthier, wealthier, inclusive and more just and peaceful societies while leaving no-one behind.

At present, 264 million children and youth remain out of school, with 75 million children in countries facing war, violence and instability needing educational support. Even more alarming, is that more than 617 million children and adolescents (6 out of 10) globally are not achieving minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics. The World Bank's 2018 World Development Report has called this "a learning crisis" that threatens to stifle economic growth and global prosperity.

The power of education is clear — brighter futures, healthier communities, and increased economic growth for individuals and countries. Educated societies develop institutions and governance systems that value gender equality, inclusion, peace and stability, and are more resilient to crises and emergencies. Education is a critical enabler to the achievement of all other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), evidence of which is well documented. As the Education Commission notes, "education is so central for facilitating development that each one of the 17 SDGs includes a target which relates to or depends upon learning and education."

Yet despite its critical importance, global financing for education has declined in recent years, even while investment in other areas of international development has risen. Since 2002, education's share of official development assistance (ODA) globally has fallen from 13 to 10 percent. Its share of total ODA declined for six years in a row between 2009 and 2015, although ODA itself rose by 24 percent during the same time period. As leaders of the G7 you can help to reverse this startling trend in global education financing.

Financing for education is a shared responsibility. All stakeholders — developing country partners and donors alike — must step up their political and financial support for education. We encourage you to demonstrate your continued commitment to education, building off the G7 2017 Taormina Progress Report *Investing in Education for Mutual Prosperity, Peace and Development*. The Taormina Progress Report affirms that G7 investments in education can act as a force multiplier to accelerate progress across a range of G7 priorities, including global development and security. The report calls on G7 members to give greater support to GPE which it notes has "grown to become the world's largest multi-stakeholder partnership dedicated to helping all children access quality basic education in the world's poorest countries." The report further recognizes GPE's upcoming Financing Conference as "an

important opportunity for the global community to recommit to the promise of education and unleash the potential and talent of the next learning generation.”

With previous contributions from G7 members, as well as other key donors, GPE has committed more than US\$4.7 billion since 2002 in more than 60 countries, including in 29 countries affected by fragility and conflict. The GPE’s partnership model has been remarkable in its ability to bring stakeholders from all levels around the table to design durable and needs-based national education sector plans in a coordinated and efficient way. The GPE also works to see that the educational needs of girls, Indigenous, and refugee and internally displaced children are taken into consideration right from the start. The GPE is committed to the efficient use of donor dollars and the timely delivery of funding, and exemplifies the principles of aid effectiveness in education.

GPE has now set the goal of raising US\$2 billion a year by 2020, doubling to US\$4 billion a year by 2030, as recommended by the Education Commission. GPE financing of US\$2 billion a year by 2020 would support the education of 870 million children in 89 developing countries that are home to 78 percent of the world’s out-of-school population.

To achieve this much-needed scale-up, donor governments must commit a total of US\$3.1 billion to GPE over 2018-2020. To play their part in a successful GPE replenishment, we are calling on the leadership of the G7 to commit to lead the replenishment of the Global Partnership for Education at the Financing Conference on February 2nd, 2018:

G7 leadership is not only critical to the Global Partnership for Education, but for other global education initiatives, such as Education Cannot Wait. We look forward to building on the financial commitments made at the GPE replenishment with further political commitments through a G7 Declaration to Educate Girls in Crises at the upcoming G7 hosted by Canada. We believe such a Declaration will add depth, policy resonance and potential for heightened focus and impact for the most vulnerable out of school girls.

G7 governments have made substantial contributions to the GPE in the past. Now, we call on the G7 to not only continue but step up its support in this time of urgency by making ambitious commitments to GPE at its Financing Conference in 2018.

Sincerely,

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