

April 19, 2021

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Chair, Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Vice Chair, Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chris Coons  
Chair, Subcommittee on State,  
Foreign Operations, and Related Programs  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on State,  
Foreign Operations, and Related Programs  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chair, Appropriations Committee  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member,  
Appropriations Committee  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Barbara Lee  
Chair, Subcommittee on State,  
Foreign Operations, and Related Programs  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hal Rogers  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on State,  
Foreign Operations, and Related Programs  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Leahy, Vice Chairman Shelby, Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Graham, Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, Chairwoman Lee, Ranking Member Rogers,

We, the undersigned organizations, thank you for your steadfast commitment to fighting extreme poverty and supporting education for children in need around the world, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. We urge you to provide at least **\$1.1 billion for the International Basic Education account in the Fiscal Year 2022 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, including strong support for bilateral education programs, at least \$150 million for the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), and at least \$50 million for Education Cannot Wait (ECW)**. This funding should not come at the expense of other humanitarian and poverty-reducing accounts.

In addition to strong funding, we urge you to restore U.S. leadership in global education and further progress in reaching Sustainable Development Goal 4: *Ensure inclusive and equitable, quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*, through the following actions:

- **Pledging \$1 billion over five years to the Global Partnership for Education**, including \$150 million for FY2022 as the first year, ahead of the *Global Education Summit: Financing GPE 2021-2025*, to be held in July 2021. Multi-year commitments will allow GPE to better allocate spending and plan programming to support long-term investments in public education systems, and address learning losses resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, including ensuring that 175 million children will learn and 140 million students will be reached with professionally trained teachers;
- **Engaging with the United Kingdom, civil society groups, and other key partners at the upcoming G7 and G20 Summits**, including committing to robust financing and learning outcomes for basic and girls' education, disability-inclusive education, education for crisis-affected children and early childhood education; and investing in holistic, resilient, and innovative systems that mitigate learning loss and improve access to quality education for children and youth, especially the most vulnerable;
- **Renewing support for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** to address the world's learning crisis and reimagine education, including by scaling up world-class digital learning solutions to reach all children, especially the most marginalized;
- **Continuing support for the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR)**, which works with partners to fund and implement important education interventions for forcibly displaced and refugee children;
- **Rejoining the United Nations Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization (UNESCO)**, which places education at the center of its mission to build peace and has played a key role in addressing the unprecedented education disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- **Considering U.S. endorsement of the *Safe Schools Declaration***, which would support measures to protect education from attack during armed conflict.

U.S. bilateral basic education programs focus on strengthening quality, inclusive education, including in crisis contexts; providing early learners with foundational skills; and preparing youth for long-term success. This programming is critical for countries to achieve sustainable economic growth, poverty alleviation, social stability, gender equality, and participatory democracy.

While always important, the need for international education assistance has increased exponentially during the COVID-19 pandemic, with school closures disrupting the lives and education of more than 91 percent of the world's student population. In 2020, 463 million children were unable to access remote learning. Education is an essential lifeline in times of crisis, and investments in international education are needed immediately to mitigate the harmful secondary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the lives of children and youth. Past experience has demonstrated that the longer at-risk children and youth are away from school, the less likely

they are to return. Girls, in particular, are more likely to face obstacles to continuing their education, including high risks of child marriage, gender-based violence, and early pregnancy. Children with disabilities and/or complex learning needs and displaced children face additional barriers to remote learning, as distance learning tools are not always accessible to them.

U.S. support for international organizations, including the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and Education Cannot Wait (ECW), complements our bilateral programs and leverages additional resources to address ongoing education challenges. GPE is the largest global fund solely dedicated to transforming education in lower-income countries and operates as a unique, multi-stakeholder partnership. To receive GPE funding, governments must commit to making significant domestic investments in education. In 2020, GPE was the largest provider of education grants in the global COVID-19 response, mobilizing over \$500 million to ensure continued learning, school re-openings, and recovery. The United States government provided \$100 million in FY2020 and \$125 million in FY2021 to GPE in the State and Foreign Operations appropriations bills.

ECW delivers rapid, collaborative responses to the educational needs of children and youth affected by crises. ECW has activated its First Emergency Response funding window to re-program current grants and deliver nearly \$100 million in new funding to 26 countries in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. From 2016-2019, the U.S. provided \$33 million in funding to ECW and \$25 million was included in the FY2020 and FY2021 State and Foreign Operations appropriations bills.

We value the impact made by global basic education programs and urge you to fund the Basic Education account in the Fiscal Year 2022 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill at a level of at least \$1.1 billion. Robust funding can address the education needs that existed prior to the pandemic as well as support COVID-19 recuperation efforts, including inclusive remote learning, safe school re-opening, and recovery. We greatly appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

**260BY26**

260by26



Africa Schoolhouse



Amal Alliance



Association d'Aide à l'Education de l'Enfant Handicapé (AAEEH)



Building Tomorrow



Center for Inclusive Policy

**ChildFund**

ChildFund



Child Labor Coalition



ConTextos



Educate the Children-Nepal



Education Cannot Wait



GCE Netherlands



Girl Up



Global Campaign for Education-US



Global Citizen



Global March Against Child Labour



Global Partnership for Education



GlobalPartnersUnited

GlobalPartnersUnited



Humanity & Inclusion



Inclusive Development Partners

Inclusive Development Partners (IDP)



International Rescue Committee



IREX



Jesuit Refugee Service/USA



Light for the World



Lisa & Favour Foundation



Magis Americas



Malala Fund



National Consumers League



NGO Bridge of Hope



ONE



PDRC International



RESULTS



Right To Play International



The RISE Institute

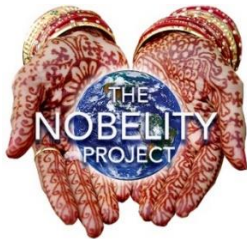
RISE Institute



Rukmini Foundation



Save the Children



The Nobility Project



The United Methodist Church  
- General Board of Church  
and Society



UN Girls' Education Initiative



UNICEF USA



United World Schools



VSO



World Vision