



International Basic Education Caucus

The Path to Quality Education for All

In 1999, over 204 million children and adolescents around the world were denied access to a basic education. But action by developing countries to abolish school fees, build infrastructure, and train teachers, paired with commitment from donors to support their efforts, resulted in a drastic decrease in the number of children out of school.

Despite these efforts, progress has stagnated over the past several years. 121 million children and adolescents are still not in school worldwide. Over half of these out-of-school children are girls. More than a third live in areas affected by conflict or fragility, and these numbers continue to grow. Pre-primary education remains out of reach for the poorest children who would benefit the most, reaching only 19 percent of children in low-income countries. Even among those children who do make it into a classroom, a staggering global total of 250 million kids – nearly 40 percent of the world’s children of primary school age – can’t read a single sentence.¹

Achieving access to quality education worldwide is critical to fulfilling global development goals, breaking cycles of poverty, fostering economic growth, and promoting U.S. national security. In fact, if all students in low-income countries were to leave primary school with basic reading skills, 171 million people would be lifted out of poverty.² Looking ahead, ongoing U.S. leadership will be critical to sustaining this progress, combating increased attacks on education around the world, and helping achieve education for all.

International Basic Education Caucus

In June 2015, Congressman Dave Reichert (R-WA) and Congressman Mike Quigley (D-IL) founded the first-ever International Basic Education Caucus. This bipartisan caucus provides opportunities for members of Congress to join together to support international basic education and act quickly to respond to global events affecting access to quality education.

Through the establishment of an International Basic Education Caucus, members of Congress will:

- Help increase support in Congress for international basic education programs.
- Increase member and staff understanding of global education challenges and build bipartisan support to address these issues.
- Establish a platform to respond quickly to global events such as recent terrorist attacks on schools in Nigeria and Kenya.

¹ Education for All Global Monitoring Report, [Education for All 2000-2015: Achievements and Challenges](#). April 2015.

² UNESCO. [Education Counts: Towards the Millennium Goals](#). 2011.

Potential Caucus activities might include:

- Caucus-sponsored briefings on basic education issues for members of Congress and their staff.
- Members-only briefings with international field staff.
- Congressional receptions in coordination with partner organizations such as the Basic Education Coalition, RESULTS, and the Global Campaign for Education-U.S.
- Letters to the Administration and world leaders surrounding global events.
- One-minute floor speeches around key basic education opportunities such as global events or international days like International Literacy Day, International Women's Day, and Global Action Week for Education.



Photo Credit: GPE/Michelle Mesen

Why Support for Basic Education Matters

U.S. investments in basic education are giving countries the boost they need provide their most vulnerable children a quality education, helping them become thriving, productive citizens:

- **The Global Partnership for Education:** The Global Partnership for Education is the only multilateral partnership exclusively dedicated to getting all children into school and learning. Since 2003, the Global Partnership has worked with partners to enroll 22 million more children in primary school in the poorest countries. At the same time, partner countries have increased the number of kids completing primary school to 75 percent, up from 61 percent in 2002. And contributions to the Global Partnership help leverage commitments from developing countries – in fact, last year developing country partners pledged an impressive \$26 billion to finance the strengthening of their own education systems.
- **Basic Education:** USAID's basic education strategy aims to improve early grade reading, strengthen workforce development, and increase access to education for children in conflict and crisis. U.S. support has helped reach more than 30 million learners with primary grade reading programs and has created opportunities for more than one million children and youth in conflict and crisis-affected environments.

To Join the Caucus, Please Contact:

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