The Global Partnership for Education and Basic Education

In 1999, over 100 million primary school-aged children around the world were denied access to an 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, to 58 million today.

Despite these efforts, progress has stagnated over the past several years. 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.

The Global Partnership for Education, the only multilateral partnership exclusively focused on achieving quality education for all, is working to change this picture. In 60 developing countries, the Global Partnership brings together education stakeholders to develop, implement, and fund national education plans. By putting its developing country partners at the front and aligning donors and other partners behind them, the Global Partnership helps build strong, sustainable education systems that will provide children an education for generations to come.

Why Funding 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**: 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, this past June 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 enroll over 16 million kids in primary school, train more than 333,000 teachers, and supply 37 million textbooks to help children learn.
Janet’s Story

Growing up in rural Kenya, there was no guarantee that Janet Muthoni-Ouko would finish school. Many of her female friends dropped out early, often to be married at a young age. Schools themselves were in neighboring villages, a long walk away. But because Janet’s father was a teacher and embraced the value of education – even for girls – Janet completed primary and secondary school and then went on to earn her university degree.

Now, Janet lives in Nairobi and runs a Kenyan civil society coalition working for quality education for all called Elimu Yetu, which means “our knowledge” in Swahili.

Since 1999, Kenya has made enormous strides in education for all. After Kenya abolished fees for primary school in 2003, net enrollment of kids in primary school increased to 84 percent by 2011, up from just 63 percent in 1999. With its first grant from the Global Partnership for Education in 2005, Kenya further strengthened its own commitment to education, increasing its share of financing for education by more than 16 percent as a share of their GDP.

Even as Kenya improves its education system, Janet and her partners are working to ensure that not only are children getting in the classroom, but they’re learning. The Global Partnership has played a critical role working with the Kenyan government and civil society, including Janet, to focus on the most important issues in Kenya today like training teachers, making secondary school affordable, and fighting for gender equity so all girls can go to school, like Janet did.

“I am the best example of how education can benefit our country,” Janet said. “It’s not just about each girl and each boy – it’s about building the next generation of leaders.”

RESULTS’ Request and Funding History

As members of Congress submit annual appropriations requests to the relevant Appropriations Subcommittees, they can show support for achieving education for all by requesting funding within Development Assistance in the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill for Basic Education, which includes funding for the Global Partnership for Education (GPE).

To do so, please submit a formal appropriations request form for Basic Education and GPE to Senators Graham and Leahy or Representatives Granger and Lowey as Chairs and Ranking Members of the State and Foreign Operations Subcommittees of Appropriations. Contact RESULTS staff Crickett Nicovich for support: cnicovich@results.org.

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