RESULTS National Webinar – Grassroots Campaigns

September 2017

Dr. Joanne Carter: Hello and welcome to the September RESULTS webinar. I want to say that we are thinking about all of our community members and everyone in the path of Hurricane Irma this weekend. We are glad that you are on the call. All of our RESULTS family in Texas and Louisiana are okay, but our thoughts and prayers are with all of those impacted. In every disaster and emergency here and everywhere in the world is that those who are living in poverty are at risk.

Our work to reduce vulnerability and make sure that everyone's needs are met is critical. Today we will be talking about children living in impoverished countries. The greatest barriers are going and staying in school. We are looking for support. When we come together at pledging moments, we want to make sure we are at the table. Shortly you will be hearing from an important speaker. We know that education can be transformational for every child. It can break the cycle from generational poverty. We are not only education but also we want schools to be a place of safety

I do want to share some exciting and confidential news. We ask that you do not share this at all until we make it public on Tuesday. The exciting news is that the READ Act that we have worked on for a decade was signed on to law yesterday. Take a moment to celebrate that. It was previous the Education for Law Act and it is now law. Many people worked hard on this legislation. Your advocacy is a huge reason as to why this was passed. Because of that, millions of the most vulnerable children will have a chance towards education.

We will share some additional background on how we are moving forward. It points to just how unique it was generated and how exciting it is. We are releasing this news Tuesday. Keep it confidential so the congressional allies feel the victory next week. We want to respect the focus on Hurricane Irma as well as the anniversary of 9/11.

I want to congratulate you and encourage you to keep up the amazing work you have been doing. You called for congress' leadership. We have already had more face to face meetings than any year we have recorded in history. Let's keep up that fantastic momentum. One of our leaders in Kansas, Adam Wilkerson recently found Senator Moran in the weight room at the gym. We would love to hear more about that particular school. He talked to him on [the Global Partnership for Education]. He confirmed he would co-sponsor the bill. It was a great example of what we are doing. Congratulations on that work.

We want to expand so we have even more political muscle. We want to face these challenges and we want even more action to take forward. We want to get us to 2030 where we want to be. Over half of you have already had over 250 outreach actions last year. We have so much energy right now. People want to be in action and have what we have to offer. Continue this outreach and show people they can make a difference.

I will turn the call over to Tony Baker. I want to publicly express my gratitude towards Tony for all of his leadership and hard work.

Tony Baker: Thank you so much for that. It is my pleasure to introduce our guest speaker. She is a real leader in the field with humanitarian work. Her work at UNICEF global headquarters focuses on policy [advising]. It has a specific focus on fragile states. Her roots go back to being a teacher and worker in the Peace Corps. It is very timely she could join us today. Lisa, thank you so much again for joining us, I will turn it over to you to tell us more about your work and how UNICEF coordinates response to education and emergencies.

Lisa: Congratulations on your hard work. Thank you for the wonderful introduction. I think you have a good sense of my background. I wanted to share something more personal. We are fostering a three month old baby. Being in close contact with the social system reminds us of the huge need. This girl is precious and wonderful and it is such a gift to have her. It means so much to me that you are working so hard for other people's children and right to education.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak with this issue close to my heart. I have been working with these issues for a decade now. I started my work with commitment in the Peace Corps. I was a classroom teacher. I got an inside look to the challenges in the education system in lower income countries. It gave me a realistic perspective on some of the challenges these countries were facing. When I was in the Peace Corps we worked with HIV and AIDS. It was very meaningful work. I have worked with countries as diverse as Yemin. I wanted to share that this work really works. What progress have we made? You can see that things take time. When they work it is very powerful.

When I was working in the Democratic Republic of Congo we had a catch up program. The militia there had wreaked havoc. They were even burning children. I had the opportunity to see the results of the end of our catch up program. The children in our program out performed children whose education had not been disrupted in other areas. Education in crisis creates opportunity to do our work better and opens up access to education for children who previously had no access. We are making it safer for kids to go to school. We are doing a lot of things to make education more relevant to these countries in crisis.

We have been providing special advice to counterparts working in the emergency with hurricane Harvey. There were long lasting impacts good and bad after Hurricane Katrina. It is two-fold. Some of it is controversial. It was one of the lowest performing areas and now they are on par and proceeding other areas. Other children who missed the most days from school because of the hurricane, many of them did not catch up. They got lost in the system. There is a lot of promise in peril and we want to take those lessons to heart with the Hurricane Harvey response.

UNICEF and GPE have been working from the very beginning with structure and interventions that were most useful. UNICEF has been around since 1961 and we are very trusted by communities and civil society. We helped GPE establish its credibility and take a leadership role in other countries. We bring all the partners together. There is mutual accountability. We are ensuring that everyone is coming to the table and doing their part to ensure we have quality education to all the children in need.

We play a role in the government. It is important that we work together in advocacy. We collaborate on big local events. This is my opportunity to do a bit. It is so needed. It is really possible. There are so many people who say that the goals are too high. It is not true. If we look at trends in other sectors, major change can happen. Health investment has helped phenomenally in the last few years. It is about money in and what you get out. We need to increase the money in. It is available we just need to unlock it. Education is a virtuous cycle. For every dollar we invest we get so much out of it. We know that more educated populations are more peaceful. These are measurable things. It is great for everything we care about. We can provide talking points in to why education is a smart investment for them. I can give you a few more talking points on why education in emergencies.

We have gotten a lot of challenges in the past. I worked closely in the humanitarian sector. There is an old school thinking that is very charity driven. We will give you this thing. This is the aid we will provide for you. We are moving it to a mutual model on how we build communities and respect the rights and how we do things together. Education is beautiful when we do it together. They just need technical expertise. In many countries, parents are not literate. They need teachers to come in and there needs to be materials for students and teachers to work with. When we think about education it may not be life-saving. But it is about people thriving and being able to prevent and prepare for the next crisis. If you cannot understand your rights or read, then you are not able to do those things.

When we talk about education in emergencies - where are they? They are in very dangerous places. The children in Haiti were in camps near stagnant water. They were waiting in line for food distribution. They are under the sun for hours. Children belong in school and with their friends and adults who can care for them and make sure they are engaging in the kinds of normalcy and nurturing environments that will help them recover from the recent disaster.

We are providing life-saving information. The information we provide is life-saving. We need to teach children what to do when their little brothers and sisters have diarrhea. We need to let them know that the water sources may not be safe any longer. They may be at risk of electrocution. Paths that they may have taken may not be safe anymore. We provide life-saving information at schools. You may want to know more about advocacy points.

Ken: Thank you so much, Lisa. We have a few minutes for Q/A. I am sure you get this question a lot. How is UNICEF able to provide aide in countries that have no functioning government?

Lisa: It is very complex. I can give you a few examples. When I was in Congo, there is essentially no government in the eastern regions. The education system is managed through a Christian organization. We built upon that existing system where different churches were responsible for education. We were able to coordinate with them and the local government to ensure there was consistency in how we were doing. We work within the organization there. Civil society is a huge partner for us. It is very community driven and it is about partnering with people on the ground. Even if the government is corrupt, there are still people committed to education that we can work with.

Ken: Excellent. We work through partners and in that type of context to deliver those types of services. We see another question here. It is a challenging one. What is the dollar return? It is a challenging question to answer given the long term impacts of education. What are your perspectives on that?

Lisa: There are decreases in poverty. It decreases child marriage. There are many indicators linked to ending poverty and advocating equity that are directly linked with education. We would like to have the money before the really bad thing happened. We know that for every $1 saved in preparedness we save $8. It is about getting the most out of our money.

Ken: Very interesting. We may have time for one more question from Yvonne in Detroit, Michigan. You have spoken about partners on the ground with UNICEF. Can you speak about how UNICEF and GPE provide education in countries in fragile states?

Lisa: We work with the government on the ground to help them with their consultations. We help provide what the parameters are and what can be funded. They had drawn up a map of where these schools would be constructed. UNICEF wanted another look at the list. They wanted to find where there are different types of populations to ensure that the distribution of schools is equitable by communities. Let us help you communicate that so we can help them know how the decisions were made.

Ken: Thank you so much!

Lisa: Thank you all so much for your time. I am really excited about the work you are all doing.

Ken: Now I will turn it over to John Fawcett for our legislative update.

John Fawcett: Thank you. That was fantastic. There are three things I will touch on. I will give you some more detail on the kind of surprising and excellent news regarding the passage of the READ Act. First of all, the READ Act. So, what happened? Yesterday the president signed the READ Act into law. It was surprising to all of us. Let me give you some background. I want to again emphasize what Joanne said in the beginning. We want to keep this news confidential for a couple of days until you see the announcement come up on Tuesday. There will be a note and a press release. We want to make sure that everyone gets proper credit.

As we all learned how acts get signed into law, you know that the process is complicated. Even after seeing some fairly interesting developments it has been good. They needed to pass a release funding for Hurricane Harvey. They needed a legislative vehicle to move that funding back. I don't understand all the reasons. The House republican leadership chose the READ Act as the emergency vehicle to attach to the funding too. You may have read about this deal that president Trump struck with Pelosi about the debt ceiling and continuing government funding. The Senate took the READ Act which already had the emergency funding attach and they added lifting the debt limit, and continuing to fund the government [un]til the end of the fiscal year. They added more emergency Harvey funding. They sent that back to the House and then the president signed it yesterday afternoon. That means that the House passed the READ Act four different times. Now it is finally signed into law. Again, this represents a lot of hard work by grassroots.

It indicates a couple things. The fact that the House leadership would pick the READ Act they knew it had strong support. They would not pick something that did not have strong support. It is an indication to see how little else is moving in the Senate. There are so few things that are actually moving in this incredibly challenging environment. The issues in the READ Act was on track to pass on the senate. I am very confident it would have been signed into law anyway. The fact that it happened this week is good news and an incredible indication of the work that has been done. When you see press release and the announcement come up on Tuesday, I want to encourage you to share that news. Share it with your action networks. Share it with anyone who has ever come to a letter writing you have done. Let them know we are making progress. It is a great opportunity to thank congress that has helped over the years. We want to continue to build the work. I hope you will join us in celebrating next week.

In the house, we have the GPE House resolution 466. We are up to 23 co-sponsors. Our fearless leaders have set a goal of 150 co-sponsors. Just this week Congress has come back from a long August recess. They drove into a lot of issues. I wanted to give you a quick update on our work on appropriations. I want to thank everyone who took action on the House tuberculosis amendment. We were trying to increase global tuberculosis funding. That amendment failed but it was an important demonstration on our ability to mobilize quickly. Many of you organized and called in your community and within your groups. I appreciate that. I wanted to show why even though that resolution failed it is still important. The other thing happening last week was that the Senate Appropriations Committee was marking up its version of the appropriations bill and they increased $20 million dollars on the funding. The House level is still $140 million. When the House and Senate negotiate I think that all the calls will give special support to these senators who spoke in favor of the amendment in trying to push the highest number possible. The overall picture I want you to understand from the senate's action last week is that we do well on our funding priorities on maternal and child health. We are increasing funding over the previous year.

Congress has gone even further and continues to grow these programs. As Joanne mentioned, in a couple of weeks we will have more news on the Global Partnership for Education. We have some material coming out in our replenishment work. Thank you very much for joining. There is more info about the READ Act coming later.

Ken: Excellent work everyone on all of the work on the READ Act. Congratulations on that. I want to start out the cafe building on Joanne's start of the webinar and acknowledging all the work you have done. Our meetings at the International Conference has boosted the numbers of contacts we have. We are at critical times. 143 face-to-face meetings so far this week. 45 face-to-face meetings with Senators. 595 congressional meetings overall. This is higher than all of 2016 combined and the highest number that we have had so far. We want to continue to build on this as the year continues. I want to give you an example. I asked some people to share what they have doing since the International Conference to continue to build the congressional that they had.

Mary: I get emails about what is happening Indivisible groups. It was a town hall event. Three reps. from the House were there. I got there early to speak with them before the event. I thanked them for the face-to-face meetings we had. I discussed the Reach Act with both of them. Yvonne and our newest member asked question and we got face to face answers from all three reps. The third was Representative Brenda Lawrence. We got to hear from everyone. The moderator was one of the *Detroit Free Press*. Yvonne asked him if he would be willing to write a column on the expansion and plan to encourage people to save some of that. She knew that would interest him. He said he was interested and that we should contact him. We talked to him about RESULTS Global and Domestic. Hopefully we will be able to do other things with that, too.

That was the first one. I know [Rep.] Brenda Lawrence's outreach coordinator well. She was having an event next week. I spoke with her about our issues. We talked about RESULTS. We got to do a lot of outreach with people that were there at her event. She had a congratulations party when she won the last election. We have gotten very close to her. She will do a lot we would like her to do. I have signed up to received emails and then we get them all around here we go early to talk to people. We are in contact with seven offices around Detroit. I also have a radio broadcast monthly and we do work on that. I try to put out that broadcast. Every month I talk a bit about it.

Ken: There is a website called the Town Hall Project ([www.townhallproject.com](http://www.townhallproject.com)) and you can get local events. Another quick story is a member from our California area [named Gail Dolson]. She got a ticket to town hall for her senator there. It is difficult to get a meeting with senators in California. She went by herself and she got a beautiful picture with the senator. She got a minute to talk about the Reach Act. The aide with her recognized Gail. She was able to have a little face to face meeting with the senator. Great work, Gail.

I want to highlight our outreach goal. We want to get more people involved. We have 247 outreach activities reported. We are well on our way to the goal of 500. Right now 54% of groups have recorded doing those 247 activities. If the other 45% can do that, then we can hit our target by the end of the year. The purpose is to get people an opportunity to express themselves and put their voices in a powerful way to grow this organization. We have outlined a couple of priorities. One is to support 100% of our groups to engage in their communities and do outreach. We also want support groups to build their communities.

You will hear more from your regional coordinators. We have a couple of great outreach activities coming up. We will be doing a GPE outreach and media tour. We will have a speaker that will be with that tour. One of the webinars will be guest friendly. We have a group of 15 folks that we will encourage to call on them to support you in doing outreach in your community with some training. We have the training curriculum you can access on our website. You can use to train people in our community. We have a fall training webinar series. We really want to wrap this in the fall. It is an opportunity for us to be involved.

We talked about the pyramid. We have our RESULTS group and we have an action network. We want to create a support group around you. It involves a couple of things. We will ask you to talk to folks on your action network. They are willing to take some action. Ask them if they are willing to take two actions per month. Tell them that is what you need to have a broad base in your community. We would like you to have them send us their contact info. We will make sure we will have two actions to do every month. We can give you feedback. Those are two big priorities for the fall.

Let me move on to a couple of final announcements. The training series is on the slide. You can find it on the weekly update. This week one of them is coming up. It is the Global Partnership for Education. It is with Tony Baker. It is about why we care and you can ask all the nitty gritty questions about GPE. That is Wednesday 9 p.m. EST. We have the congressional recess. It will be an opportunity to get going with them. Finally, the mid October outreach tour is going on as well.

Congratulations everybody on the great work done. I will turn this over to Lisa Marchal.

Lisa Marchal: [Lori Saltveit is on the phone with me].

Lori: Hi.

Lisa: Lori [a Regional Coordinator] is based in California. We will finish off the call by empowering you to do something we have talked about you doing - the follow-up with your members of the house. We want to make sure that they are part of the 150 folks that we want to get on the house supporting GPE. We want to give you a mock-up of how this conversation might go. I will be the member of Congress and Lori will make the call.

Lori: Ring ring.

Lisa: Hi, this is Congressman Carson.

Lori: Hi, I am calling from California. I am calling to follow up today regarding the meeting we had on July 25th with Congressman [Carson’s] office. I sent an email in August regarding the Global Partnership for Education. Do you have two minutes?

Lisa: I do. You have the right person. I can take down the info and pass it along to the right aide. What was this legislation?

Lori: We are talking about House Resolution 466. It is about GPE. As you might recall from our conversation, 263 million children and youths around the world who should be in school or not. We reached out to the congressman to support the resolution. The GPE is working to give more children the education they deserve from 2018 to 2020 we want to get 25 million additional kids into the classroom. US support is so critical to getting leadership from other countries. My ask is that I know [Congressman Carson] understands the power of education. I would love to add his name to the growing list of co-sponsors.

Lisa: I need to refresh my memory on the details of the resolution. I know you said we talked. I am recollecting that. What I could really use - do you have a one pager you could send that highlights the top line information that I could give him?

Lori: Could I email that to you?

Lisa: I can give you my email address. Can you remind me? Was there a group of you or were you alone? You are part of a group called RESULTS?

Lori: There were four of us that came in. We are the RESULTS Group from our county. We came on July 25th. There were probably over 100 meetings that day with other groups.

Lisa: It is a busy time. Send me that information and then I can review it. I know my boss is interested in the issue but will want to take a look at the details.

Thanks for playing along, Lori! The conversation can be gentle. It will not be precisely like that. When you make your call, ask to speak specifically with the person you met before. Find that aide. Be prepared to have that conversation with them.

We hope you have a great day! Again, congratulations on passing the READ Act!

[End webinar.]