

Media Appearing on Education for All January–December 2011

Editorials

1. *The Herald-Sun*; Durham, North Carolina (April 27)
2. *Houston-Chronicle*; Houston, Texas (September 10)
3. *Deseret News*; Salt Lake City, Utah (October 5)
4. *Dallas Morning News*; Dallas, Texas (October 18)

Op-Eds

1. *Houston Chronicle*; Houston, Texas; Beth Wachira (September 1)
2. *The Citizen-Times.com*; Asheville, North Carolina; Christy Sharp (September 2)
3. *The Galveston County Daily News*; Galveston, Texas; Beth Wachira (September 6)
4. *Asheville Citizen-Times*; Asheville, North Carolina; Ken Patterson (September 8)
5. *Courier Post*; Central New Jersey Phyllis Alroy (September 13)
6. *The News of Cumberland County*; Cumberland County, New Jersey; Phyllis Alroy (September 14)
7. *The Standard Examiner*; Ogden, Utah; Naresh Kumar (September 21)
8. *The Advocate*; Stamford, Connecticut; Sandra Eagle (September 29)
9. *My Central Jersey.com*; Trenton, New Jersey (September 29)
10. *The Clarion-Ledger*; Jackson, Mississippi; Crickett Nicovich (October 1)
11. *The Courier-News*; Central New Jersey; Phyllis Alroy (October 1)
12. *The Times*; Trenton, New Jersey; Phyllis Alroy (October 1)
13. *Herald News*; Northern New Jersey; Phyllis Alroy (October 1)
14. *Home News Tribune*; Phyllis Alroy (October 1)
15. *The Tennessean*; Nashville, Tennessee; Retired U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen John A. Bradley (October 10)

Letters to the Editor

1. *The Seattle Times*; Seattle, Washington; Donna Munro (March 26)
2. *The News Tribune*; Tacoma, Washington; John B. Hornby (April 6)
3. *The News Tribune*; Tacoma, Washington; Donna Schindler Munro (April 11)
4. *Kitsap Sun*; Kitsap, Washington; Donna Munro (April 26)
5. *San Jose Mercury News*; San Jose, California; Shahab Moghadam (August 20)
6. *The Miami Herald*; Miami, Florida; Linda Horkitz (August 21)
7. *The Clarion-Ledger*; Jackson, Mississippi; Alyson Karges (August 29)
8. *The Herald-Times*; Bloomington, Indiana; Stephen Arnold (August 31)
9. *The News Tribune*; Tacoma, Washington; Donna Schindler Munro (September 6)
10. *Asheville Citizen-Times*; Asheville, North Carolina; Caroline Fleming; (September 7)
11. *San Francisco Chronicle*; San Francisco, California; Linda Lewin (September 7)
12. *Houston Chronicle*; Houston, Texas; David Schubert (September 7)
13. *Connecticut Post*; Westfield, Connecticut; Nancy Gardiner (September 8)
14. *Houston Chronicle*; Houston, Texas; Margaret Hansen (September 8)
15. *Houston Chronicle*; Houston, Texas; Nancy Perich Daly (September 9)

16. *Kitsap Sun*; Kitsap, Washington; Donna Munro (September 12)
17. *The Tampa Tribune*; Tampa, Florida; Linda Schatz (September 14)
18. *The Daily Journal*; Kankakee, Illinois; Diane Lindley (September 22)
19. *The Seattle Times*; Seattle, Washington; Donna Schindler Munro (September 29)
20. *The Herald-Times*; Bloomington, Indiana; Stephen Arnold (October 6)
21. *The Seattle Times*; Seattle, Washington; Karen N. Gielen, (October 18)
22. *The Washington Post*; Washington D.C.; Lisa Peters (October 21)

Articles

1. *Daily Sitka Sentinel*; Sitka, Alaska (October 12)

EDITORIALS



http://www.heraldsun.com/view/full_story/12951998/article-An-education-from-Uganda?instance=hs_editorials

April 27, 2011

An education from Uganda

How depressing is it that North Carolina, which passed the North Carolina Public School Act in 1839, is plagued by the same problems that bedevil Uganda, a nation that's only had state-funded public education since 1997?

It depends.

Teopista Birungi Mayanja, co-founder and general secretary of the Uganda National Teachers Union, was in Durham this week as part of a multi-state tour sponsored by RESULTS, an international advocacy group that focuses on the problem of poverty. Mayanja, a former teacher, watched in 1997 as her country introduced government-funded education up to seventh grade. The number of students in school more than doubled in a year, from 2.7 million to 7 million.

The student-teacher ratio there is 100 to 1. At Durham Public Schools, it's 14 to 1.

After 1997, school enrollment in Uganda so overmatched building funds that, as Mayanja put it, "every space around which had a shed became a classroom."

Many of the schools don't have separate bathrooms for boys and girls, or desks, or cafeterias, or chairs.

But the point of contrasting Uganda and North Carolina isn't to draw attention to how much worse it could be (answer: very) or how desperately Uganda needs the United States to live up to its pledge of \$2 billion for global education (again: very).

Instead, it's interesting to see how far the needle can be moved on the sorts of resources that money can buy, and then to look at the problems that remain.

When Uganda's student population mushroomed, the country made choices. The government pays for teachers, buildings and texts. The local community -- mostly parents -- are supposed to provide food and clothes, and make sure students get to classes. (If you think that sounds like North Carolina's charter school model, well, it does.)

Furthermore, getting kids into school, keeping them there and teaching them, "you can't as a state do it alone. You have to have a community," Mayanja said.

If that sounds like something that Durham Public Schools Superintendent Eric Becoats, would say that's because he and Board of Education Chairwoman Minnie Forte-Brown wrote in an op-ed last October, "Community involvement in education reform is crucial to its success."

But, Mayanja said, "This has been a very, very big challenge for us. Most of the requirements of the community is where the challenges lie."

So we have two examples: One very new school system, one very old. One with a budget that is literally penurious and one whose budget is only relatively so.

Although the complaints are startlingly similar, the glare of contrast sheds light on the fact that the only problem the schools really share is one that funding doesn't seem to solve. And, if nothing else, that's certainly educational.



<http://www.chron.com/opinion/editorials/article/Educate-girls-to-get-bang-for-our-foreign-aid-2163711.php>

September 10, 2011

Educate girls to get bang for our foreign-aid bucks

Around the world, 67 million kids don't go to school at all. Of those, the majority are girls. And for the U.S., that's a problem.

Long-term, it's in America's military and economic best interests to have a planet full of stable, prosperous countries. Shaky, poor nations create terrorists. Stable, prosperous nations buy iPhones and Coca-Cola.

So, what makes a country stable and prosperous? Education - particularly the education of girls, who in poor countries are far less likely to attend school than boys. Educated women make more money, are healthier, and have healthier kids. One study, for instance, found that for a girl in a poor country, each year of school past third or fourth grade increases her wages by 20 percent, and decreases by 10 percent the odds that her children will die of preventable causes.

But sadly, much of the world's girl power isn't being tapped. According to a recent report by the [RESULTS Educational Fund](#) and the [Global Fund for Education](#), in 47 of 54 African countries, girls have less than a 50 percent chance of attending secondary school. A girl in South Sudan is more likely to die in childbirth than to finish high school.

We've been impressed by the bang for the buck delivered by The Education For All - [Fast Track Initiative](#). Launched by UNESCO in 2002, it tries to ensure that all kids (boys *and* girls) get reasonable educations.

To receive Fast Track Initiative money, a country must create a worthy national education plan and fund much of it itself - a requirement that not only leverages the aid grants' power, but means that the countries are literally invested in the program's success.

To date, Fast Track has supported 45 low-income countries, including Afghanistan and 24 African countries. Between 2004 and 2008, the number of kids enrolled in school in African Fast Track countries shot up by 50 percent. And in all Fast Track countries, between 2000 and 2008, the number of girls enrolled in school doubled. No wonder the G-8 has called Fast Track a model of aid effectiveness.

This year, Fast Track asks that the U.S. make a three-year, \$375 million pledge. We're asking, too. The world's girl power is a terrible thing to waste.



<http://www.deseretnews.com/article/700185097/Focus-on-education.html>

October 5, 2011

Focus on Education

Given how Congress so far has avoided making the necessary tough decisions to reduce the federal deficit, it should come as no surprise that both parties seem poised to cut foreign aid budgets. After all, a lot of Americans probably feel these are wasted expenditure, money blown on ungrateful foreign governments.

That sort of thinking not only is wrong, it is dangerous. A lot of foreign aid programs are important to national security, providing long-term benefits that enhance America's reputation even as they improve living conditions in a variety of ways. These budgets make up a scant 1 percent of all federal spending.

But, as it would be disingenuous to call for no cuts to aid budgets at a time when the nation must reduce drastically in all areas, we have a suggestion. Use the limited resources that remain to focus mainly on programs that aid education, and particularly the education of young women. We suggest investing in the Global Partnership for Education, formerly known as the Fast Track Initiative. This is a partnership of donors, private foundations and corporations, and other institutions. It requires strict accountability for money spent. The organization already has helped education projects in 45 struggling nations, including 24 in Africa, with great success.

The reason for this emphasis is clear. Nothing will benefit the next generation as much as educated mothers. Figures from the United Nations Population Fund show educated girls are less likely than others to contract AIDS, and that they and their children will be less likely to suffer from extreme poverty. A study by the Center for Universal Education found that each year of education beyond the third or fourth grade results in a 20 percent increase in wages and a 10

percent decrease in death from preventable causes. If women have six or more years of education, they are likely to obtain prenatal care and other assistance that will reduce the risks to themselves and their children in childbirth.

It should go without saying that the children of educated women would be less likely to be enticed by extremist philosophies that threaten the United States than would those raised in squalor by mothers who feel powerless and hopeless.

Despite these known benefits, a study by the RESULTS Education Fund and the Global Campaign for Education found that young women have a less than 50 percent chance of going to secondary school in 47 of 54 African countries. About 67 million young people in the world won't attend any school at all, and most of those are girls.

As a story in The New York Times made clear earlier this week, Congress is likely to add to the \$8 billion in cuts the State Department and foreign aid budgets sustained earlier this year. The Republican House would reduce President Barack Obama's proposed budget for those areas by \$12 billion, and the Democratic Senate would drop it by \$6 billion. This would impact how the U.S. responds to disasters abroad as well as how it promotes democracy in the Middle East and elsewhere.

It should not, however, stand in the way of helping young girls go to school, something for which the Global Partnership for Education is asking \$375 million from the United States. That could be the best investment anywhere in the federal budget.

Smarter Afghan school aid

Just as in DISD, the problem is how disparate groups can help in a strategic way without tripping over one another, says **William McKenzie**

As odd as this may sound, some of the worries we have about our schools right here in Dallas are not so different from the anxieties that education advocates face in Afghanistan.

Both in the Dallas district and in those schools halfway around the world, the problem is this: How do advocates effectively work together without tripping over one another?

For example, many nonprofits are hard at work with DISD students. That could mean mentoring them, helping them get into college or training their parents to become more effective in their academic lives. But those groups aren't laced into a larger plan, one that would work with the district toward big-picture goals. Luckily, a new effort, Commit!, is trying to change that dynamic.

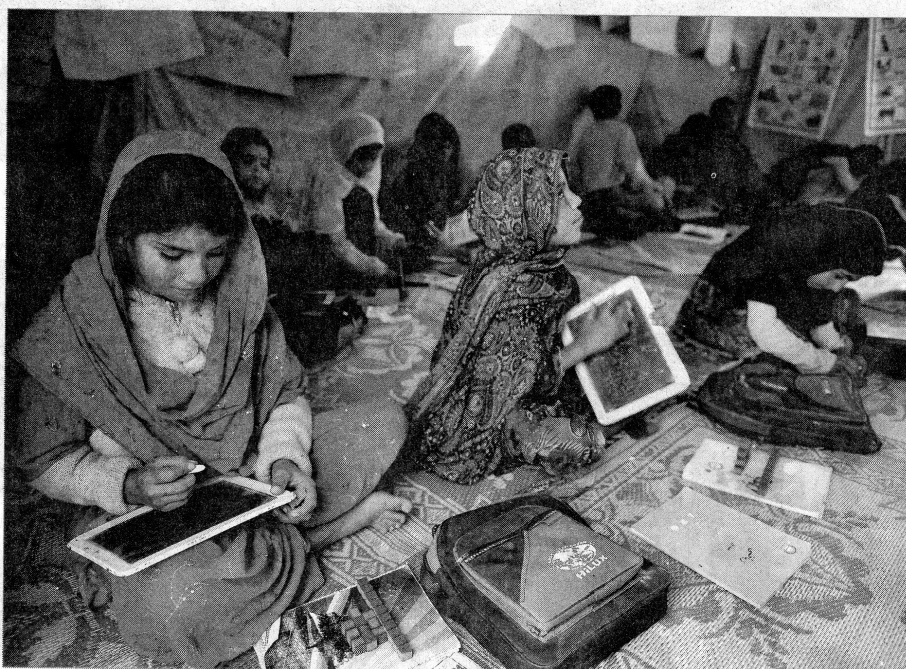
Thousands of miles away, a small army of government and private organizations is battling the same challenge in Afghanistan, according to Julia Bolz, a Seattle lawyer who founded a nonprofit to build and fund schools there.

She would know. Bolz started her education work in 2002 in Mazar-e-Sharif, a city that sits on the historic trading route of the Silk Road and, not surprisingly, is a melting pot of languages, religions and tribes. It also is near the former Soviet border, and the Northern Alliance once aggressively fought the Taliban there. So the region has been war-torn since the 1980s.

Bolz described to me that, when her work there began, even the children carried guns — to school. Not now. The adults are standing by their promise to put their weapons aside if new schools could unite formerly warring villages. Today, adults from different backgrounds serve on PTAs while their children attend class and play soccer together.

Bolz acknowledges a crazy-quilt approach to education: Some groups build schools. Some train teachers. Some equip classrooms.

All important work, but the left and often doesn't know what the right is doing, which lessens the



Adek Berry/Agence France-Presse

Afghan girls attend a class at a camp for the displaced in Kabul. Aid groups have a crazy-quilt approach to education in Afghanistan: Some build schools. Some train teachers. Some equip classrooms.

power of the overall effort.

The solution, Bolz says, is for the White House to join a global education fund, which can happen next month when Obama administration officials attend a conference in Copenhagen. Participants will be asked to donate to a fund that invests in schools in countries with serious poverty or internal conflicts. I don't know about you, but I'd say Afghanistan tops that list.

The U.S. has mostly gone its own way with its international education work. To some extent, I am OK with that. After all, the \$900 million we already are investing annually overseas on education is no small amount.

But American taxpayers would get more bang for their bucks by putting some of that money into the fund Bolz is pushing — the Global Partnership for Education, which asks donors to contribute

\$375 million over three years and work toward shared goals. Additionally, the countries petitioning for the money must present a strategic plan for their school systems.

Working collaboratively makes sense to me. Unless we want to keep fighting for a long time, we need to give more Afghan children the means to learn and grow.

This point came home vividly during a conference at the George W. Bush Institute at SMU last spring.

One Afghan woman explained how families in some rural parts of her country marry off their young girls in about the eighth grade. There are many social ramifications to those decisions, but one of the worst is that those girls don't get any more schooling after that point.

As I listened to her speak, I thought about my own young

daughter and couldn't imagine what it would be like for her to leave school in the eighth grade. She loves learning; were that pipeline to close, the life would just go out of her.

We are separated by distance and culture, but the desires we have for our kids here in Dallas are no different than the hopes families have for their children in Afghanistan. If it takes joining a global fund to bring about a holistic education solution, let's do it.



William McKenzie is a Dallas Morning News editorial columnist and moderates Texas

Faith at dallasnews.com/texasfaith and The Education Front at dallasnews.com/educationfront. His email address is wmckenzie@dallasnews.com.



<http://www.chron.com/opinion/outlook/article/Education-aid-enhances-U-S-security-prosperity-2151836.php>

September 1, 2011

Education Aid Enhances U.S. Security, Prosperity

My sons, 6 and 8, are excited about the new school year, which is just getting started. However, in other parts of the world, 67 million elementary-school-age children and 74 million high-school-age young people are not excited at all. School is completely out of the picture for them because of their personal poverty or the poverty of their nation as a whole. My younger son receives the benefits of special education, but for millions deprived of basic education, special education is a myth.

Since I was born in a poor village in Kenya and went to elementary and high school there, I have direct experience with the poverty and lack of education of developing nations. Fortunately, I was one of the lucky ones who was able to go to school, even though I had to walk barefoot five miles each way to the nearest school. Without education, I would still be living in poverty.

Of the various organizations actively helping developing countries in educating children, one of the most effective is the Fast Track Initiative, which is at work in 44 of the world's poorest countries. It has enabled 19 million children to enroll in elementary school, hired more than 300,000 teachers, supplied more than 200 million textbooks, built almost 30,000 classrooms, and perhaps most importantly, has provided 700,000 children a daily meal.

The Fast Track Initiative provides education for both boys and girls, but its benefits for girls are especially impressive. Education not only provides girls with the ability to get a job, it also gives them the knowledge to see to the medical and educational needs of their own children in the future. Education delays marriage, increases the self-confidence and decision-making power of girls, and dramatically reduces HIV/AIDS. A recent study shows that rural Ugandans with secondary education have a 75 percent lower rate of HIV infection than those with no education.

The Fast Track Initiative does not work by itself. It works in partnership with the developing country. In fact, the developing country itself provides at least 80 percent and sometimes more than 90 percent of the funding for education.

I am advocating for the United States to become a significant financial supporter of the Fast Track Initiative. Many readers may object to this. The U.S. is in the midst of financial problems.

Why should we help the developing countries educate their children? We have too many problems in our own country. Why should we give money for foreign aid?

Why should this be of concern to the residents of the city of Houston? First, I hope the example of education allowing me to escape the cycle of poverty will inspire the boys and girls of Houston who are struggling with their education to stay in school, graduate and earn a good living. In addition, the benefits of education in Kenya affect the lives of citizens of Houston, especially because it is a port city. Education in the countries of the developing world increases the economic well-being of those countries, and also increases their consumption of U.S. exports. This has already started to happen, as the [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#) reported that developing countries are now purchasing more than half of all U.S. exports. The Chamber pointed out that the number of jobs in the U.S. will increase as developing countries get in a position to buy even more U.S. products. Improving education in Kenya increases jobs in Houston.

Not only does education increase the economic well being of the entire planet, it also increases security. This year, 70 high ranking, retired U.S. military generals and admirals sent a joint letter to Congress stating that it was essential to the security of the United States that selective and efficient foreign aid be directed to solving the root causes of poverty in the developing world. Lack of education is certainly one of the root causes of poverty.

Giving children a way out of poverty is in the interest of the security and economic welfare of the United States. But most importantly, it is morally imperative that we do it, and that we do it now.

Wachira was born in Kenya, where she attended elementary and high school and lost one parent to TB and another to AIDS. After immigrating to Houston, she graduated from the [University of Houston-Downtown](#) and received an [MBA](#) at the [University of St. Thomas](#). She works as a business consultant in Houston and is a volunteer for RESULTS, an advocacy organization working to end poverty.



<http://www.citizen-times.com/article/20110904/OPINION03/309040010/All-kids-deserve-chance-school>

September 2, 2011

All Kids Deserve a Chance at School

My child is fortunate to be in the new Spanish immersion kindergarten class highlighted in the recent Citizen-Times article “Buncombe school gets new Spanish program.” I am excited that my son will have the opportunity to learn a language spoken around the globe. He is discovering that the world is much bigger than his neighborhood or community.

Buncombe County is right to make global education a part of the standard curriculum. Yet, as we seek to help our kids understand their world better, there are children around the globe who will never have the opportunity to go to school.

Because school is not free in many countries, many families are too poor to send their kids, or they live hours from the nearest school. Other communities have no trained teachers. All kids deserve the chance to go to school. There is little hope for the future of a child, a family, even a community, where there is no education.

There is currently legislation in the House of Representatives — H.R. 2705: The Education for All Act of 2011 (EFA Act) — which affirms the right of all children to have access to education and addresses many of the barriers to education.

The EFA Act focuses on eliminating school fees and educating girls and kids living in conflict zones and rural areas. These are the kids who are often denied access to education. The EFA Act also provides for teacher training and investments in the Education for All-Fast Track Initiative , an organization that helps other nations implement national education plans.

The Fast Track Initiative has already shown great promise in areas like Rwanda, where great strides have been made in getting kids to school. This is smart because education reduces rates of hunger, poverty, HIV/AIDS infection and child mortality. It leads to higher wage potential, economic development and political stability. Research shows that education is the linchpin for many markers of success. When my son came home from school this week counting in Spanish, I thought about all the opportunities his education will afford him.

Every parent should have the chance to create this same hope and promise for their kids, no matter what language they speak. We need to support H.R. 2705, as do our representatives. Education is the key to the future.

The Rev. Christy Sharp lives in Fletcher.



<http://galvestondailynews.com/story/256038>

September 6, 2011

United States Should Invest in Education

My 8- and 6-year-old sons and I are excited about the new school year, which is just getting started. However, in many other parts of the world, 67 million elementary school-age children and 74 million high school age young people are not excited at all

School is completely out of the picture for them because of poverty, either personal poverty or the poverty of their nation as a whole.

Since I was born in a poor village in Kenya and went to elementary and high school there, I have direct experience of the poverty and lack of education of developing nations. Fortunately, I was one of the lucky ones who was able to go to school, even though I had to walk barefoot 5 miles each way to the nearest school. Without education, I still would be living in poverty.

Of the various organizations actively helping developing countries in educating children, one of the most effective is the Fast Track Initiative, which is at work in 44 of the world's poorest countries. It has enabled 19 million children to enroll in elementary school, hired more than 300,000 teachers, supplied more than 200 million textbooks, built almost 30,000 classrooms and, perhaps most importantly, has provided 700,000 children a daily meal.

I am advocating that the United States become a significant financial supporter of the Fast Track Initiative. Many readers may take objection to this. The U.S. is in the midst of financial problems. Why should we help the developing countries educate their children?

We have too many problems in our own country. Why should we give money to foreign aid?

Why should this be of concern for the city of Galveston?

First, the example of education allowing me to escape the cycle of poverty will hopefully inspire the boys and girls of Galveston who are struggling with their education to stay in school, graduate and earn a good living.

Education in the countries of the developing world increases the economic well-being of those countries and also increases its exports to U.S. ports. This already has started to happen as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce reported that developing countries are now purchasing more than half of all U.S. exports. So, improving education in Kenya increases jobs in Galveston.

Not only does education increase the economic well-being of the entire planet, it also increases security. This year, 70 high ranking, retired U.S. military generals and admirals sent a joint letter to Congress stating that it was essential to the security of the United States that selective and efficient foreign aid be directed to solving the root causes of poverty in the developing world.

Lack of education is certainly one of the root causes of poverty. Giving children a way out of poverty is in the interest of the security and economic welfare of the United States. But most importantly, it is morally imperative that we do it and that we do it now.

Beth Wachira was born in Kenya where she attended elementary and high school and lost both her parents to TB and AIDS. After immigrating to Houston, she graduated from the University of Houston-Downtown and received a MBA at University of St. Thomas. Married with two young children, she works as a business consultant in Houston and is a volunteer for RESULTS, an advocacy organization working to end poverty.



<http://www.citizen-times.com/article/20110908/OPINION03/309080008/Did-we-learn-anything-from-Sept-11->

September 8, 2011

Did We Learn Anything from September 11?

I was in Yonkers, a 30-minute train ride from Manhattan, when the planes hit the Twin Towers on Sept. 11, 2001. I watched on TV in disbelief, wondering which of our friends and neighbors were in the city. In the following days we heard stories of panic and relief as people located family members, and stories of sorrow as others were never found.

A decade later, we are much smarter about defending against attacks, but are we smarter about preventing them in the first place? Judging from the massive cuts the House of Representatives made to our International Affairs budget, perhaps we are not. Clearly many representatives don't understand the link between investments in diplomacy and development, and U.S. security and economic strength.

We need only look at Afghanistan to understand why development investments are critical to our security. After we helped the Mujahedin repel the Russians in the '80s, we walked away from Afghanistan. We did not help the Afghans educate their people or ensure that their nation was on a path to prosperity. Our failure to invest allowed the Taliban to seize power, deny education to all girls, and build a climate of extremism. Ten years into a costly war there, one of our key counterinsurgency strategies is putting girls and boys in school. It's been a costly lesson.

Rwanda is another example of how investments in education can transform. In 1994, Rwanda was shredded by genocide that killed more than 800,000. Today Rwanda is a model nation of peace and burgeoning prosperity. Why? Because Rwanda decided to heal itself using education as a pillar, and it received support from donor nations, not in military assistance, but in education and healthcare.

Though many in the U.S. House didn't get the memo, a convergence of opinions has emerged around the value of wise foreign assistance investments. The 9/11 Commission report stated that, "education must be a key element in any global strategy to eliminate terrorism." And this year 70 retired military brass and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce wrote to Congress imploring them to expand investments in international development and diplomacy.

We cannot afford to be shortsighted regarding global development investments, education in particular. This November the Partnership for Global Education will be seeking U.S. support to fund national education plans. These plans will put more kids in school and ensure that developing nations are on a path to prosperity. A modest U.S. investment would yield dividends in security, economic prosperity and global leadership.

Ken Patterson is the global grass-roots manager for RESULTS (www.results.org) and lives in Swannanoa.



<http://www.mycentraljersey.com/article/20111001/NJOPINION03/310010004/Education-all-leads-better-world>

September 13, 2011

Education for All Leads to a Better World

As children from New Jersey are getting back to school, around the world there are 67 million children who won't go to school at all. This is true especially for girls. There is no single development intervention that can so radically and comprehensively change the course of a girl's life for better as education. Educating girls has been shown to reduce their risk of HIV/AIDS and delays early marriage.

Despite the urgent need to educate girls, the recently released USAID education strategy notes that USAID will withdraw funding and de-emphasize support for secondary education. How superior it would be to invest some of our education money in the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), which supports girls' primary and secondary programs. The GPE is a global partnership of donors and developing countries, multilateral institutions, private foundations and companies, and civil society organizations that aims to ensure that all children receive a quality basic education.

The GPE has a strong track record of progress on girls' education. In 2008, more than two-thirds of girls completed the last grade of primary school in all GPE countries, compared with only 52 percent in 2000. In most of the GPE countries, the number of girls enrolled in primary school

more than doubled between 2000 and 2008. In addition, the gender gap in primary school was reduced or closed in many countries.

Yet the GPE receives more requests for funding support for national education plans than it can fulfill. Half of the 67 million out-of-school children live in fragile and post-conflict states, with a growing number of them GPE-eligible. This population of children creates unprecedented opportunities for GPE funding to help countries bridge the gaps.

It is time for the U.S. to make its first-ever contribution to the GPE, a reasonable requirement for being a voting member to the GPE board of directors. The GPE is asking donors to make three-year pledges totaling \$2.5 billion at the first-ever replenishment conference in Copenhagen on Nov. 6 and 7. The U.S. share is \$375 million spread over three years. This contribution would be leveraged sixfold with other donors, and many times more with 80 to 90 percent of education budgets coming from donor countries themselves.

The GPE is increasingly viewed as the global partnership for education. There is growing support in Congress: Rep. Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.) ranking member on the Foreign Operations Committee, and Dave Reichert (R-Wash.) introduced the bipartisan Education for All Act of 2011, which calls on the U.S. to support a multilateral education initiative like the Global Partnership for Education.

When you look at the numbers, slashing global poverty programs won't make a dent in the deficit. Most Americans believe we spent a quarter of our budget on development assistance; in fact, based on that assumption, most Americans would be happy to "cut" foreign aid to 7 to 10 percent of the budget. Actually, it's less than 1 percent. While slashing these effective instruments wouldn't do anything meaningful for our national deficit, it would have a tragic impact on these life-improving programs.

Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) replied to a young constituent, "I will tell you that the real problem in America's spending is not foreign aid. Sometime in the minds of many, our foreign aid is exaggerated. It really is a miniscule part of our overall budget and it's not the reason we have this growing debt in America...Foreign aid is important if it's done right, it spreads America's influence around the world in a positive way. These are our allies that in the future can help us, not just in political struggles, but, who can be our partners in economic trade. A world where people are prosperous and free to grow their economies and pursue their own dreams and ambitions is a better world for all of us."

Phyllis AlRoy of Ewing is a volunteer for RESULTS, a citizens lobby group working to end hunger and the worst aspects of poverty.



September 14, 2011

Education for All Good for the World

As children from New Jersey are getting back to school, around the world there are 67 million children who won't go to school at all.

This is true especially for girls. There is no single development intervention that can so radically and comprehensively change the course of a girl's life as education.

Educating girls has been shown to reduce their risk of HIV/AIDS, improve the health of women and their children, alleviate extreme poverty, delay early marriage, reduce female genital cutting, and increased girls' self-confidence and decision-making power.

And while primary education is critical, the full benefits are realized when girls continue through middle and high school. On average, for a girl in a poor country, each additional year of education beyond grades three or four will lead to 20 percent higher wages and a 10 percent decrease in the risk of her own children dying of preventable causes.

Despite the urgent need to educate girls, the recently released USAID education strategy notes that USAID will withdraw funding and de-emphasize support for secondary education. How superior it would be to invest some of our education money in the Education For All — Fast Track Initiative (FTI), which supports girls' primary and secondary school programs.

The FTI is a global partnership of donors and developing countries, multilateral institutions, private foundations and companies, and civil society organizations that aims to ensure that all children receive a quality basic education.

To date, FTI has supported 45 low-income countries, including Afghanistan and 24 African countries. Between 2004 and 2008, the number of children enrolled in school in FTI-supported countries in Africa went up 50 percent, compared to 27 percent in African countries without FTI support.

The FTI has a strong track record of progress on girl's education. More than two-thirds of girls completed the last grade of primary school in all FTI countries compared with only 52 percent in 2000. In most of the FTI countries, the number of girls enrolled in primary school more than doubled between 2000 and 2008. In addition, the gender gap in primary school was reduced or closed in many countries.

Yet the FTI receives more requests for funding support for national education plans than it can fulfill. Half of the 67 million out-of-school children live in fragile and post-conflict states, with a growing number of them FTI-eligible. This population of children creates unprecedented opportunities for FTI funding to help countries bridge the gaps.

It is time for the U.S. to make its first-ever contribution to the FTI, a reasonable requirement for being a voting member to the FTI Board of Directors.

The FTI is asking donors to make three-year pledges totaling \$2.5 billion at the first ever replenishment conference in Copenhagen, Nov. 6-7, 2011. The U.S. share is \$375 million spread over three years. This contribution would be leveraged six fold with other donors, and many times more with 80 to 90 percent of education budgets coming from donor countries themselves.

The FTI is increasingly viewed as the global partnership for education. In his recent report “Education for All: Beating Poverty, Unlocking Prosperity,” former Prime Minister Gordon Brown asserted that the limited support and resources that FTI has received in comparison to the global funds for health “represents a wasted opportunity” since the FTI directly links aid to national education plans and “provides donors with an opportunity to pool resources, thereby lowering transaction costs, and harmonizing their efforts to support national plans.”

There is growing support in Congress as well: Representative Nita Lowey (N.Y.-D) ranking member on the Foreign Operations Committee and Dave Reichert (WA-R) introduced the bipartisan Education for All Act of 2011, which calls on the U.S. to support a multilateral educational initiative like the Fast Track Initiative.

When you look at the numbers, slashing global poverty programs won’t make a dent in the deficit. Most Americans believe we spend a quarter of our budget on development assistance; in fact, based on that assumption, most Americans would be happy to “cut” foreign aid to seven to 10 percent of the budget. Actually it’s less than one percent! While slashing these effective investments wouldn’t do anything meaningful for our national deficit, it would have a tragic impact on these life-improving programs.

Senator Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) replied to a young constituent, “I will tell you that the real problem in America’s spending is not foreign aid. Sometime in the minds of many, our foreign aid is exaggerated. It really is a minuscule part of our overall budget and it’s not the reason we have this growing debt in America. Foreign aid is important. If it’s done right, it spreads America’s influence around the world in a positive way. These are our allies that in the future can help us, not just in political struggles, but who can be our partners in economic trade. A world where people are prosperous and free to grow their economies and pursue their own dreams and ambitions is a better world for all of us.”

Phyllis AlRoy is a volunteer for RESULTS, a citizens lobby group working to end hunger and the worst aspects of poverty.



<http://m.standard.net/stories/2011/09/21/foreign-aid-used-education-helps-fight-terrorism>

September, 21, 2011

Foreign Aid Used for Education Helps Fight Terrorism

(UNEDITED)Americans across the political spectrum acknowledge that the deficit is an urgent problem. Many suggest cuts to foreign spending, but don't realize it only represents 1 percent of the budget. And half of that 1 percent is for the least fortunate.

Many don't realize that modern foreign aid is actually an investment. The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States reports that "education that teaches tolerance, the dignity and value of each individual, and respect for different beliefs must be a key element in any global strategy to eliminate terrorism."

Each year of school reduces a male's chance of engaging in violent conflict by 20 percent and increases a girl's future income by 20 percent.

A child born to an educated mother is over twice as likely to live to the age of five. Education is a "social vaccine" against AIDS, halving infection rates among primary school graduates, with the potential to prevent seven million more cases of HIV over a decade.

Education is necessary for a strong economy. No country has achieved and maintained rapid economic growth with less than a 40 percent adult literacy rate.

The International Food Policy Research Institute found in their 63-nation study, that more productive farming due to female education reduced malnutrition by 43 percent between 1970 and 1995. Education works. We can maximize our education investment by adopting the policies outlined in the Education for All Act (HR 2705) and by supporting the Education for All Fast Track Initiative.

Naresh Kumar, Salt Lake City



<http://www.stamfordadvocate.com/opinion/article/Op-Ed-Want-to-beat-terrorism-Educate-girls-2195590.php>

September 29, 2011

Want to Beat Terrorism? Educate Girls

In some cultures, a girl is promised as a bride as early as six years old, is married upon puberty, and has her clitoris removed. Such traditions are practiced today, usually among those living in extreme poverty. I have heard stories from girls who were promised as child brides, but who escaped this destiny because they were in school. Ultimately they were deemed more valuable to their families and communities for their education than as a married child.

I don't have statistics on how many girls escape genital mutilation and marriages of bondage because of access to education. I do know that a child born to a girl who has even five years of education is twice as likely to survive past the age of five than the child born to a mother with no education.

I do know that bombing villages maims and kills, and knocks out the electricity necessary for clinics to help the injured, or for sewage systems to function, or to have clean water, increasing the spread of diseases, starvation, and death.

Imagine yourself a girl married at age 12, mutilated, with no education and raising babies, some of whom you watch die slow, painful deaths of starvation or disease. Imagine yourself to be a boy in this family, unable to read, hearing the pained cries of a dying sibling even as your own belly hurts from hunger, day after day. How willing would you be to go with a terrorist gang who would feed you and fill you with images of getting back at the country to blame for all this suffering?

Now imagine yourself a girl who got an education and is working as a teacher in your community, able to pay the school fees for your children to go to school, with the resources to travel to a clinic when they are ill, and able to read about what might be helpful. Imagine yourself a little boy in this family. What incentive would there be to leave your family, your schoolmates and your community - to leave your life of such dignity to risk getting killed by going with scary, bullying, gangs?

Sixty-seven million primary-school-aged children, and 74 million adolescents, have no access to education, the majority of them girls. H.R. 2705, The Education For All Act of 2011, introduced by [Nita Lowey](#) (D-N.Y.) and [Dave Reichert](#) (R-Wash.), calls on the president and USAID, our international development agency, to do our part to put all kids in school by 2015. The bill calls for the U.S. to assist in getting girls and children in conflict zones into school, to outline a plan to increase enrollment, and to invest some of our global education dollars in the Global Partnership for Education. GPE helps countries create concrete national education plans and raise the additional 5 percent to 15 percent of their education budgets needed to fill the gaps.

The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have cost us over \$1 trillion to date, and even with our most minimizing statistics, our continued involvement costs us \$10 billion-\$14 billion monthly.

Current annual U.S. funding for global education is around \$850 million!

If you look at what happens when a child goes to school, it is obvious that educating girls and boys is good for families and national stability. Education is necessary in our effort to prevail over terrorism, something our military leaders have made clear to Congress, in letters supporting

funding for our foreign aid initiatives. The final report of the [National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States \(9/11 Commission\)](#) agrees with the determination of the [Center for Strategic And International Studies' Commission on Smart Power](#):

"Education is the best hope of turning young people away from violence and extremism."

For me, educating girls is the right thing to do, for the sake of educating girls. I present this additional information for anyone besieged with the argument that we can't afford to educate girls because we need the money to fight terrorism. Educating girls is strategically fundamental in prevailing over terrorism.

Sandra Eagle, a Stamford resident, is a member of Results, an advocacy organization working against hunger and poverty. For more information about the Fairfield County chapter, email sandra@sandraeagle.com, or visit www.results.org.



<http://www.mycentraljersey.com/article/20111001/NJOPINION03/310010004/Education-all-leads-better-world?odyssey=navlhead>

September 29, 2011

Education For All Leads to a Better World

As children from New Jersey are getting back to school, around the world there are 67 million children who won't go to school at all. This is true especially for girls. There is no single development intervention that can so radically and comprehensively change the course of a girl's life for better as education. Educating girls has been shown to reduce their risk of HIV/AIDS and delays early marriage.

Despite the urgent need to educate girls, the recently released USAID education strategy notes that USAID will withdraw funding and de-emphasize support for secondary education. How superior it would be to invest some of our education money in the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), which supports girls' primary and secondary programs. The GPE is a global partnership of donors and developing countries, multilateral institutions, private foundations and companies, and civil society organizations that aims to ensure that all children receive a quality basic education.

The GPE has a strong track record of progress on girls' education. In 2008, more than two-thirds of girls completed the last grade of primary school in all GPE countries, compared with only 52 percent in 2000. In most of the GPE countries, the number of girls enrolled in primary school more than doubled between 2000 and 2008. In addition, the gender gap in primary school was reduced or closed in many countries.

Yet the GPE receives more requests for funding support for national education plans than it can fulfill. Half of the 67 million out-of-school children live in fragile and post-conflict states, with a growing number of them GPE-eligible. This population of children creates unprecedented opportunities for GPE funding to help countries bridge the gaps.

It is time for the U.S. to make its first-ever contribution to the GPE, a reasonable requirement for being a voting member to the GPE board of directors. The GPE is asking donors to make three-year pledges totaling \$2.5 billion at the first-ever replenishment conference in Copenhagen on Nov. 6 and 7. The U.S. share is \$375 million spread over three years. This contribution would be leveraged sixfold with other donors, and many times more with 80 to 90 percent of education budgets coming from donor countries themselves.

The GPE is increasingly viewed as the global partnership for education. There is growing support in Congress: Rep. Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.) ranking member on the Foreign Operations Committee, and Dave Reichert (R-Wash.) introduced the bipartisan Education for All Act of 2011, which calls on the U.S. to support a multilateral educational initiative like the Global Partnership for Education.

When you look at the numbers, slashing global poverty programs won't make a dent in the deficit. Most Americans believe we spend a quarter of our budget on development assistance; in fact, based on that assumption, most Americans would be happy to "cut" foreign aid to 7 to 10 percent of the budget. Actually, it's less than 1 percent. While slashing these effective investments wouldn't do anything meaningful for our national deficit, it would have a tragic impact on these life-improving programs.

Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) replied to a young constituent, "I will tell you that the real problem in America's spending is not foreign aid. Sometime in the minds of many, our foreign aid is exaggerated. It really is a miniscule part of our overall budget and it's not the reason we have this growing debt in America ... Foreign aid is important if it's done right, it spreads America's influence around the world in a positive way. These are our allies that in the future can help us, not just in political struggles, but who can be our partners in economic trade. A world where people are prosperous and free to grow their economies and pursue their own dreams and ambitions is a better world for all of us."



<http://beta.clarionledge.com/article/20111001/OPINION/110010308/1166/COL/U.S.-should-support-the-global-education-partnership>

October 1, 2011

U.S. Should Support the Global Education Partnership

My mother just retired after 37 years as a teacher here in Mississippi. She taught everything - high school math, special education, pre-kindergarten and even classes for teachers in training.

Growing up, my teacher-mom always encouraged me to take advanced classes. As difficult as these classes were, Mom knew they'd be life changing, so she pushed me to excel.

Around the world the same is true. Education is life changing - often even life-saving.

In fact, studies show that educating girls reduces their risk of HIV/AIDS, improves their health and that of their children, alleviates extreme poverty, delays early marriage, reduces female genital cutting and increases girls' self-confidence and decision-making power.

In the U.S., the quality of schools varies, but at least everyone has the opportunity for education.

But around the world there are 67 million children who will never even enter a classroom. That's about the population of Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Florida and Texas combined - nearly all of the SEC states left uneducated. Try tailgating at that football game.

No single development intervention can so radically and comprehensively change the trajectory of a girl's life - and future generations - as education.

In Washington, D.C., Congress is in the midst of debating national debt and budget slashing scenarios.

It is increasingly clear that making the most of every dollar is critical - including smart investments in high-impact foreign aid like education.

It is also clear that slashing poverty-focused aid, as proposed by many in Congress, including our own Sen. Roger Wicker, is not a solution.

These programs make up less than 1 percent of our budget! Cutting programs that fight HIV/AIDS and TB, or provide life-saving vaccines, or even global basic education, will not meaningfully impact the deficit and will undermine long-term international security and economic stability. Or, as Mom would say, "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water!"



http://www.nj.com/times-opinion/index.ssf/2011/10/opinion_us_should_contribute_t.html

October 1, 2011

U.S. Should Contribute to the Global Partnership for Education

Children in New Jersey are now back in school, but around the world, there are 67 million children who won't be going to school at all. This is true especially for girls. There is no single intervention that can so radically and comprehensively change the course of a girl's life for the better as education. Educating girls has been shown to reduce their risk of HIV/AIDS, improve the health of women and their children, reduce the incidence of female genital cutting and increase girls' self-confidence and decision-making power.

Despite the urgent need to educate girls, the recently released USAID (United States Agency for International Development) education strategy notes that USAID will withdraw funding and de-emphasize support for secondary education. How much better it would be to invest some USAID money in the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), which would support girls' primary school programs in developing countries. The GPE is a global partnership of donor and developing countries, multilateral institutions, private foundations and companies, and civil society organizations that aim to ensure that all the world's children receive a quality basic education.

The GPE has a strong track record of progress on girls' education. More than two-thirds of girls completed the last grade of primary school in all GPE recipient countries, compared with only 52 percent in 2000. In most of the GPE countries, the number of girls enrolled in primary school more than doubled between 2000 and 2008. In addition, the gender gap in primary school was reduced or closed in many countries.

Yet the GPE receives more requests for funding support for national education plans than it can fulfill.

Half of the 67 million out-of-school children live in fragile and post-conflict states, and a growing number of them are eligible to receive GPE funds. This population of children creates unprecedented opportunities for GPE funding to help countries bridge the education gap.

It is time for the U.S. to make its first-ever contribution to the GPE. This is a reasonable requirement, since the U.S. is a voting member on the GPE board of directors.

The GPE is asking donors to make three-year pledges totaling \$2.5 billion at the first-ever replenishment conference, to take place in Copenhagen Nov. 6-7.

The United States' share is \$375 million spread over three years. That contribution would be leveraged sixfold by funding contributed by the other donors.

The GPE is increasingly viewed as the global partnership for education.

There is growing support in Congress: Reps. Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.), ranking member on the House Foreign Operations Committee, and Dave Reichert (R-Wash.) introduced the bipartisan

Education for All Act of 2011, which calls on the U.S. to support a multilateral educational initiative like the Global Partnership for Education.

When we look at the numbers, we see that slashing global poverty programs won't make a dent in the U.S. deficit. Most Americans believe we spend one-quarter of our budget on assistance for developing countries; in fact, based on that assumption, most Americans would be happy to "cut" foreign aid to 7 to 10 percent of the budget.

Actually, it's now less than 1 percent of the budget!

While slashing these effective investments wouldn't do anything meaningful to help reduce our national deficit, it would have a tragic impact on this life-improving program.

As Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), has said, "[T]he real problem in America's spending is not foreign aid. Sometimes, in the minds of many, our foreign aid is exaggerated. It really is a minuscule part of our overall budget, and it's not the reason we have this growing debt in America. ... Foreign aid is important. If it's done right, it spreads America's influence around the world in a positive way. These are our allies who in the future can help us, not just in political struggles, but who can be our partners in economic trade. A world where people are prosperous and free to grow their economies and pursue their own dreams and ambitions is a better world for all of us."

Phyllis AlRoy is a volunteer for RESULTS, a citizen lobby group working to end hunger and the worst aspects of poverty.

NorthJersey.com

http://www.northjersey.com/news/opinions/130898058_Education_means_a_better_world_.html

October 1, 2011

Education Means a Better World

While children from across New Jersey have returned to school in recent weeks, some 67 million children around the globe won't be going to school at all. This is true especially for girls. And yet there is no single development intervention, from the United States or anywhere else, that can so radically and comprehensively change the course of a girl's life for the better than a solid education. Indeed, educating girls has been shown to reduce their risk of HIV/AIDS, improve the health of women and their children, reduce female genital cutting and increase girls' self-confidence and decision-making power.

Despite this urgent need to educate girls, the recently released USAID education strategy notes that USAID is set to withdraw funding and deemphasize support for secondary education. How important it would be to invest some of our education money in the Global Partnership for

Education, which supports girls' primary schools and education programs. The GPE is a global partnership of donors and developing countries, multilateral institutions, private foundations and companies, and civil society organizations. Its aim is to ensure that all children receive a quality basic education.

The GPE has a strong track record of progress on girls' education, in particular. In 2008, more than two-thirds of girls completed the last grade of primary school in countries that had a strong GPE presence, compared with only 52 percent in 2000. In most of the GPE countries, the number of girls enrolled in primary school more than doubled between 2000 and 2008.

Today, the GPE receives more requests for funding support for national education plans than it can fulfill. Half of the 67 million out-of-school children live in fragile and post-conflict states. This population of children creates unprecedented opportunities for GPE funding to help countries bridge the gaps.

It is time for the United States to make its first-ever contribution to the GPE, a reasonable requirement for being a voting member to the GPE Board of Directors. The GPE is asking donors to make three-year pledges totaling \$2.5 billion at its first-ever replenishment conference in Copenhagen, set for Nov. 6-7. The U.S. share is \$375 million spread over three years. This contribution would be leveraged six fold with other donors, and many times more with 80 to 90 percent of education budgets coming from donor countries themselves.

The GPE is increasingly viewed as the global partnership for education. And there seems to be growing support in Congress to fund this cause: Rep. Nita Lowey, D-N.Y., ranking member on the Foreign Operations Committee and Dave Reichert, R-Wash., have introduced the bipartisan Education for All Act of 2011, which calls on the United States to support a multilateral educational effort like the GPE Initiative.

When you look at the numbers, slashing global poverty programs won't make a dent in the deficit, but doing so would have tragic impact worldwide. Many Americans believe we spend a quarter of our budget on development assistance, when in actuality the amount spent is less than 1 percent.

Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., expounded on this truth recently when he replied to a young constituent, "I will tell you that the real problem in America's spending is not foreign aid. Sometime in the minds of many, our foreign aid is exaggerated. It really is a miniscule part of our overall budget and it's not the reason we have this growing debt in America... Foreign aid is important if it's done right. It spreads America's influence around the world in a positive way. ... A world where people are prosperous and free to grow their economies and pursue their own dreams and ambitions is a better world for all of us."

Now, more than ever, many nations around the world need help educating their children. The GPE Initiative remains a positive, and successful way to do just that.

Phyllis AlRoy is a volunteer for RESULTS, a citizens lobby group working to end hunger and the worst aspects of poverty around the world.



<http://www.mycentraljersey.com/article/20111001/NJOPINION03/310010004/Education-all-leads-better-world?odyssey=navlhead>

September 1, 2011

Education For All Leads to a Better World

As children from New Jersey are getting back to school, around the world there are 67 million children who won't go to school at all. This is true especially for girls. There is no single development intervention that can so radically and comprehensively change the course of a girl's life for better as education. Educating girls has been shown to reduce their risk of HIV/AIDS and delays early marriage.

Despite the urgent need to educate girls, the recently released USAID education strategy notes that USAID will withdraw funding and de-emphasize support for secondary education. How superior it would be to invest some of our education money in the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), which supports girls' primary and secondary programs. The GPE is a global partnership of donors and developing countries, multilateral institutions, private foundations and companies, and civil society organizations that aims to ensure that all children receive a quality basic education.

The GPE has a strong track record of progress on girls' education. In 2008, more than two-thirds of girls completed the last grade of primary school in all GPE countries, compared with only 52 percent in 2000. In most of the GPE countries, the number of girls enrolled in primary school more than doubled between 2000 and 2008. In addition, the gender gap in primary school was reduced or closed in many countries.

Yet the GPE receives more requests for funding support for national education plans than it can fulfill. Half of the 67 million out-of-school children live in fragile and post-conflict states, with a growing number of them GPE-eligible. This population of children creates unprecedented opportunities for GPE funding to help countries bridge the gaps.

It is time for the U.S. to make its first-ever contribution to the GPE, a reasonable requirement for being a voting member to the GPE board of directors. The GPE is asking donors to make three-year pledges totaling \$2.5 billion at the first-ever replenishment conference in Copenhagen on Nov. 6 and 7. The U.S. share is \$375 million spread over three years. This contribution would be leveraged sixfold with other donors, and many times more with 80 to 90 percent of education budgets coming from donor countries themselves.

The GPE is increasingly viewed as the global partnership for education. There is growing support in Congress: Rep. Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.) ranking member on the Foreign Operations Committee, and Dave Reichert (R-Wash.) introduced the bipartisan Education for All Act of

2011, which calls on the U.S. to support a multilateral educational initiative like the Global Partnership for Education.

When you look at the numbers, slashing global poverty programs won't make a dent in the deficit. Most Americans believe we spend a quarter of our budget on development assistance; in fact, based on that assumption, most Americans would be happy to "cut" foreign aid to 7 to 10 percent of the budget. Actually, it's less than 1 percent. While slashing these effective investments wouldn't do anything meaningful for our national deficit, it would have a tragic impact on these life-improving programs.

Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) replied to a young constituent, "I will tell you that the real problem in America's spending is not foreign aid. Sometime in the minds of many, our foreign aid is exaggerated. It really is a miniscule part of our overall budget and it's not the reason we have this growing debt in America ... Foreign aid is important if it's done right, it spreads America's influence around the world in a positive way. These are our allies that in the future can help us, not just in political struggles, but who can be our partners in economic trade. A world where people are prosperous and free to grow their economies and pursue their own dreams and ambitions is a better world for all of us."



<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20111012/OPINION03/310120074/Global-access-education-critical>

October 11, 2011

Global Access to Education is Critical

Sixty-seven million children worldwide did not attend school this year. Most of them were girls, who will be impacted throughout their lives in the form of lower wages and poor health.

America will be impacted, as well. Education is one of the most effective ways to reduce global poverty. It also helps us advance America's goals abroad and build a safer, more cooperative world. We should not allow the U.S. budget crisis to deter our commitment to expanding global access to education.

Tennessee's "Education Crossroads" Report, published in 2008, eloquently demonstrated the value of educational investments across a range of socioeconomic metrics. More education led to higher earnings, greater economic security and a better quality of life.

According to the Council on Foreign Relations, an extra year of school for girls in low-income countries can mean a 20 percent boost in wages later in life — 25 percent for an extra year of

secondary school. In poor countries, more education reduces birthrates and lowers the chance of contracting HIV/AIDS.

There is great temptation to reduce foreign aid in order to trim the deficit. However, the U.S. spends less than 1 percent of its budget on aid — and we get a tremendous return on that investment. Cutting these funds would not significantly reduce the deficit, but it would have a lasting effect on the world we leave to our children.

When we invest in educational opportunities abroad, we help create healthier, stronger and more democratic societies. We also build trust.

Aid is a critical component of our mission in conflict-torn countries like Afghanistan, which I visited five times while in the Air Force, and where my wife and I work through our nonprofit foundation. We believe education is the key to Afghanistan's future, especially for its girls. As we say, "When one educates a boy, one educates a boy. When one educates a girl, one educates a family."

The U.S. cannot close the education gap alone. More than 36 million girls are out of school this year. Relatively few girls make it to secondary school, and even fewer are graduating. Rajiv Shah, administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, has said a woman in South Sudan is more likely to die in childbirth than finish high school. Yet, the agency is now forced to scale back support for secondary education.

If we are serious about closing the education gap, we must invest in new partnerships. Copenhagen will soon host the first replenishment summit for the Global Partnership for Education. The U.S. should take this opportunity to make its first financial commitment.

The Partnership has helped 46 low-income countries enroll 19 million children into school. It also has helped build more than 30,000 classrooms and train more than 337,000 teachers.

If the U.S. contributes \$375 million to the partnership over three years, nearly 4 million more children would be sent to primary school. And there would be substantial returns through economic empowerment and international security.

With the funds our foundation is raising, my wife and I have built three schools and are renovating a school for 3,000 students in Kabul. We realize the need is great, but we believe that the opportunity to change the course of people's lives is greater. We hope the U.S. government will join us in expanding our commitment to education.

Retired U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley and his wife, Jan Bradley, are co-founders of the Lamia Afghan Foundation. They live in Nashville.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/northwestvoices/2014569165_houserepublicansdefundnpr.html

March 22, 2011

House Republicans Defund NPR

Public Broadcasting needed for an informed society

Regarding Danny Westneat's article showing that the Republican-House majority pushed through an emergency bill to "defund" National Public Radio, even though the NPR gets only 3 percent of its budget from federal grants ["NPR issue is politics, not savings," NWSunday, March 20]:

This is a cheap and irresponsible grab to appear fiscally responsible! It won't affect our national deficit, but it will prohibit local radio stations from using tax dollars to buy programming, which is how NPR raises much of its money.

It's my understanding that to a large extent corporations don't own, and therefore have less influence on, NPR's broadcasts and that isn't palatable to the right.

We have about 100,000 troops stationed in Afghanistan now. How many people know that for the cost of just one of those soldiers for one year, we could start about 20 schools there? Or that for every year of schooling a male in a less-developed country gets, there is a 20 percent less likelihood that he will engage in violent activity (72 million primary school-aged children are not in school.)

Many people think that 25 percent of our national income goes to foreign aid. In fact much less than 1 percent of our national income goes to poverty-focused foreign aid. We need to have access to unbiased reporting so that we can make responsible decisions that affect us all.

-Donna Schindler-Munro, Bremerton



<http://blog.thenewstribune.com/letters/2011/04/06/women-as-colateral-damage/>

April 6, 2011

Women: Empowering of Females Lifts Society

Kathleen Parker's "Women aren't a side issue, they are the main issue" (column, 4-5) asserts that protecting women should be at the core of our foreign policy.

How true. It is in our strategic interest to save women and children of the world through U.S. development efforts. If given the chance, women can be the stabilizing elements of any society. Educating children to at least the primary level, especially girls, provides the economic and personal empowerment allowing them to make healthier choices for themselves and their families.

Microcredit programs that reach out to women in poverty offer them an alternative to a life of despair, providing them with the income they need to start small businesses and earn a living with dignity. Women themselves benefit within the home and community from the higher social status they achieve when they are able to provide income.

As Defense Secretary Robert Gates said, "Development is a lot cheaper than sending soldiers."

-John B. Hornby, Gig Harbor



<http://blog.thenewstribune.com/letters/2011/04/11/human-rights-not-womens-rights-2/#ixzz1SBNVRKmk>

April 11, 2011

Women: Empowerment Good for the World

I read with interest Kathleen Parker's opinion piece on women's rights in foreign policy (TNT, 4-5). She quoted an anonymous senior White House official who said, regarding women's rights: "There's no way we can be successful if we maintain every special interest and pet project."

Special interest, indeed! It's a human rights issue.

More than two-thirds of the world's illiterate are women. Larry Summers, President Obama's chief economic adviser has asserted that "educating girls yields a higher rate of return than any other investment we can make in the developing world."

For every year of schooling that a girl has beyond grades three or four, there's a 10 percent birth rate decline, and she earns 20 percent higher wages over her lifetime. Poor women universally tend to invest their money first into their children's health and well-being.

People of voting age with a primary education are 1 1/2 times more likely to support democracy than people with no education. Studies show that increasing the percentage of children in school by just 10 percent decreased the likelihood of conflict in that country.

No country has reached sustained economic growth without achieving near universal primary education. Developing countries are a significant growth market for U.S. exports.

Translation: Empowering women empowers us all.

-Donna Schindler Munro, Bremerton



<http://m.kitsapsun.com/news/2011/apr/26/letter-to-the-editor-empowering-women-empowers/>

April 26, 2011

Empowering Women Empowers Societies

I read with interest syndicated columnist Kathleen Parker's piece women's rights in foreign policy. She quoted an anonymous senior White House official who said, regarding women's rights: "There's no way we can be successful if we maintain every special interest and pet project." Special interest, indeed! It's a human rights issue.

Over two thirds of the world's illiterate are women. Larry Summers, President Obama's chief economic adviser, has asserted, "educating girls yields a higher rate of return than any other investment we can make in the developing world." For every year of schooling that a girl has, beyond grades 3 or 4, there's 10 percent birthrate decline and she earns 20 percent higher wages over her lifetime. Poor women universally tend to invest their money first into their children's health and well-being.

People of voting age with a primary education are 1½ times more likely to support democracy than people with no education. Studies show that increasing the percentage of children in school by just 10 percent, decreased the likelihood of conflict in that country.

No country has reached sustained economic growth without achieving near universal primary education. Developing countries are a significant growth market for U.S. exports. Translation: empowering women empowers us all!

-Donna Munro, Bremerton



http://www.mercurynews.com/opinion/ci_18720342

August 20, 2011

Buffett not practicing what he preaches

Warren Buffett continues to talk the talk on higher taxes on the rich, but when it comes time to walk the walk, he is a first class tax evader. Warren Buffett has pledged his \$45 billion fortune to the Gates Foundation, so upon his death, he will incur an estate tax of 0 percent. So rather than pay roughly \$20 billion in federal estate taxes as he would at current rates, he will transfer his fortune 100 percent tax free to the Gates Foundation. It will undoubtedly do a lot of good there, but that's just the point; Warren Buffett has decided that the Gates Foundation will make better use of his money than will the government. Rather than encourage the government to take more of our money while sheltering his from the reaches of the tax system, Buffett would be more honest in singing the virtues of private enterprise, where he made his fortune, and private philanthropy, where he's directing his fortune.

-John Foster, Portola Valley

The Miami Herald

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2011/08/21/2367001/dont-pigeonhole.html#WpOlpJFs>

August 21, 2011

Education For All

Children in Florida are back in school, but 67 million children around the world will not set foot in a classroom this year. Without access to quality education, the health, economy and security of many countries are at risk.

The United Nations has set a target of ensuring that all children complete a full course of primary school education by 2015. But hope is dimming.

To change this, the bipartisan Education For All Act of 2011 has been introduced in the House. It calls for a focus on educating girls and hard-to-reach populations; the formation of a comprehensive U.S. strategy to achieve the 2015 goal; and investment in the Education For All Track Initiative to assure the best use of our foreign investment dollars.

I urge our local representatives to support this bipartisan bill. Lives depend on it.

-Linda Horkitz, Miami Beach



August 29, 2011

Put Education on World Checklist

Like many Mississippi parents, this past week I watched my 9-year-old perform the annual ritual of getting ready to go back to school.

Vaccines up to date? Check. New notebooks and school bag packed? Check. Perfect first day of school outfit? Check.

My daughter's life is very different from the 67 million children around the world who will not set foot in a classroom this year. That number will surely increase with what is happening in the Horn of Africa. Without access to a quality education, the health economy and security of many countries are at risk.

In 2000, the world set a target of ensuring that all children complete a full course of primary school education by 2015. We have lost focus and are not achieving this.

To change this, the bipartisan Education for All Act of 2011 has been introduced in the House. It calls for a focus on educating girls and hard-to-reach populations; the formation of a comprehensive U.S. strategy to achieve the 2015 goal and investment in the Education for All Fast Track Initiative to assure the best use of our foreign investment dollars.

I urge our local representatives to support this bipartisan bill.

As a nation, we should work to check "All Kids Get an Education" off our "to-do" list.

-Alyson Karges, Starkville

August 31, 2011

Education For All

What if there were a magic pill you could give girls in the developing world that would significantly raise their earnings in adulthood and greatly reduce the chances their own children would become malnourished or die of preventable causes? What if you could give the same pill to boys and make them much less likely to engage in violent conflict? What if this pill halved the likelihood that these boys and girls would contract HIV/AIDS? What if it made them, as adults, more likely to support democracy? What if it led to increased development in their countries and a bigger market for American exports?

There is such a pill. It's called primary education. Unfortunately, 67 million primary-school-aged kids aren't enrolled in school. Disproportionately, they represent girls, disabled kids, and kids living in countries with armed conflicts or humanitarian crises. Without more effective policies and more international support, we won't bring this number down.

Hoosier members of congress can help by co-sponsoring the bipartisan Education for All Act, HR 2705, which would make U.S. policies more effective in helping developing countries get their kids into school. Passage of this bill would help make this magic pill available to every child.

-Stephen Arnold, Bloomington



<http://blog.thenewstribune.com/letters/2011/09/06/millions-of-kids-not-in-school/>

September 6, 2011

Foreign Aid: Support Fast Track Initiative

Millions of kids are getting ready to go, or already are, back in school. But not in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia or the Middle East.

Around the world, nearly 70 million elementary school-aged kids (especially girls) don't go to school at all. Millions more kids receive a poor-quality education and will not be able to read, write or count.

Slashing global poverty-focused aid programs won't make a dent in our national debt and will undermine long-term international security and economy stability.

Most Americans think the U.S. spends 25 percent of its national budget on global development aid, but it's actually less than one percent. Less than one percent! One percent of the U.S. national budget goes to global health, education and other programs that save lives, reduce poverty, build stable nations and healthy economies. These programs support countries so they can buy our products, help grow our economy and be our allies.

The bipartisan Education for All Act of 2011 has recently been introduced into Congress. It calls on the U.S. to support a multilateral education initiative, like the Fast Track Initiative. The FTI is evidenced-based and has been cited by the Global-8 as a model of aid effectiveness. We need to support it.

-Donna Schindler Munro, Bremerton



<http://www.citizen-times.com/article/20110908/OPINION02/110907008/Education-offers-us-chance-hope>

September 7, 2011

Education Offers Us A Chance For Hope

The guest commentary in Sunday's AC-T entitled "All Kids deserve a chance at school" was for me an invitation to hope: hope that even in the most seemingly hopeless of places (Rwanda for example), change and redemption are possible... through education. Rwanda turned from being a country practically destroyed by ethnic genocide to a nation where school children no longer identify themselves as tutsis or hutus, but rather as "Rwandans." This happened because the government of Rwanda decided to focus on education, and with the help of international funding through the EFA-FTI (Education for All-Fast Track initiative), it now offers all children an opportunity to go to school and learn new values. If it can happen in Rwanda, it can happen anywhere. Why should we care? Education is key not only for development but also for our own national security. Consider this: for every year that a young man is in school, he is 20 percent less likely to engage in violent conflict. As we approach the 10th anniversary of 9/11, let's focus

our efforts on real solutions to solving the problem of global poverty and resulting violence, which inevitably affects us here at home. Let's support the Education for All Act.

-Caroline Fleming, Asheville



<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2011/09/07/EDHV1L0P0E.DTL>

September 7, 2011

Expand Educational Opportunity

As children all over the country go back to school, even with bigger classes, cuts in arts and other special classes, books and supplies, and fees for joining sports teams, there are still 70 million children in the world who cannot go back to school because there *are* no schools in their villages. The [Education](#) for All resolution, HR2705, calls for three key reforms:

- A focus on educating girls and hard-to-reach populations.
- The formation of a comprehensive U.S. strategy to achieve the 2015 Education for All goal.
- Investment in the Education for All Fast Track Initiative to ensure the best use of our foreign investment dollars.

Congress needs to support this effort. Education reduces the number of children born, improves their health and job potential, and promotes peace through prosperity and security.

-Linda Lewin, San Francisco



<http://www.chron.com/opinion/letters/article/Foreign-aid-conundrum-2158033.php>

September 7, 2011

Foreign Aid Conundrum: Spreads Abroad

Sixty-seven million children never set foot in elementary school - what a tragedy, what a loss of potential!

Of the 67 million, how many lost Aristotles, Homers, Virgils, Thomas Jeffersons, Abraham Lincolns, Edisons, Marie Curies, Einsteins, Mother Teresas, Gandhis and Nelson Mandelas ?

How many lost scientists, medical doctors, teachers, engineers, inventors? This is a tragedy that can be avoided.

The United States needs to join the other nations of the world to work in partnership with the poor countries of the world. In this partnership, the underdeveloped country provides most of the funding.

Many Americans think that foreign aid is 25 percent or 10 percent of the federal budget, but in actuality, it is a mere 1 percent. What better use of our money than to educate children who will be our future leaders?

-David Schubert, Houston

CONNECTICUT POST

<http://www.ctpost.com/news/article/Support-education-for-everyone-here-and-abroad-2161380.php>

September 8, 2011

Support Education for Everyone, Here and Abroad

Connecticut's children started back to school this week, temporarily inconvenienced by Hurricane Irene's effects. For 67 million children, the majority of whom are girls, in the developing world, there is no primary school for them to attend this week, or any week.

My 17-year-old daughter came home from school and went to work on her calculus homework. In the developing world, 1 in 7 girls are married by the age of 15. Yet if such a girl receives seven or more years of education, she marries four years later, has 2.2 fewer children, her wages increase by 15-25 percent, she vaccinates her children, and she reinvests her earnings into her family and her children's education.

The world has made steady progress towards universal education since 2000, but unless more effective policies are implemented and there is greater international support, 72 million children may still be out of school by 2015 -- more than in 2008. As Congress heads back to Washington, and the [Super Committee](#) looks for funding cuts, I ask you to consider: what would your child's future look like with no access to school? Foreign aid represents less than 1 percent of the federal budget, but those meager dollars can change the trajectory of millions of the world's poorest children who would give anything to be attending school this week. You can make a difference

by asking our legislators to take a stand for children in September by co-sponsoring the bipartisan Education for All Act of 2011.

-Nancy Gardiner, Trumbull



September 8, 2011

Education Cures Ills

Regarding "Education aid enhances U.S. security, prosperity" (Page B7, Friday), the Fast Track Initiative cited by Beth Wachira articulates very well the importance of enhancing education opportunities for girls the world over.

Focusing on the education problem casts a very wide net in addressing many issues of poverty faced by millions of people today. So many other social problems go away when the poor are educated. This was also convincingly addressed by Nicholas Kristof in the book "Half the Sky." The return on investment for these education initiatives is huge, and we should invest so well in all our efforts.

-Margaret Hansen, Houston



September 9, 2011

Education Solves Ills

Regarding "Education aid enhances U.S. security, prosperity" (Page B7, Friday), when I read Beth Wachira's oped on aid for education, I was reminded of times when I've been in another country, unable to understand the language or read the signs. One feels, and is, so helpless when ignorant of what others know.

Education is such an enormous benefit, for all the reasons Wachira lists. It not only contributes to material prosperity but to better family life and better health. Yes, we need to do more — much more — to improve education in our country. But it's a small world, and helping others become educated can benefit us, as well.

-Nancy Perich Daly, Houston



<http://www.kitsapsun.com/news/2011/sep/12/letter-to-the-editor-an-inspiration-for-global/>

September 12, 2011

An Inspiration for Global Education

An inspiration for global education

What an inspiration to read your recent article regarding Silverdale's Cathy Harris collecting books and visual aids for primary schools in Kenya! ("Classrooms in Kenya get help," Sept. 8)

The comment from a former Kenyan recalling seeing situations like 50 students reading out of 12 books was particularly intriguing. It's disgusting, actually, when I read that what we spend in five months in Afghanistan could insure that practically every child on this planet get a primary education. Globally, 67 million elementary school-aged kids don't go to school at all. Millions more kids receive a poor-quality education and will not be able to read, write, or count.

Slashing global poverty-focused aid programs won't make a dent in our national debt and will undermine long-term international security and economy stability. I was surprised to learn that last year, developing nations purchased 50 percent of U.S. exports. One in five jobs in the U.S. is export-related. Helping developing nations does help us!

The Education for All Fast Track Initiative (FTI) has recently been introduced into Congress. The FTI is evidenced-based and has been cited by the Global-8 (a forum of the 8 countries consisting of the largest economies) as a model of aid effectiveness. We need to support the FTI.

By the way, Cathy Harris is trying to figure out how to pay the shipping costs for the 200 plus pounds of books, etc. that has been donated for the schools in Kenya. You can contact the Kitsap Sun for her contact information, if you want to send her a check.

-Donna Munro, Bremerton

THE TAMPA TRIBUNE

<http://www.pressdisplay.com/pressdisplay/viewer.aspx>

September 14, 2011

Education Bill

U.S. Rep. Kathy Castor has just co-sponsored the 2011 Education For All Act, which would focus our foreign education assistance on girls and on hard to-reach populations, such as those torn by war.

It would create a U.S. strategy that would aim to achieve education for all by 2015. And it would support the Global Partnership for Education, a multilateral approach that mirrors the great success of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Some 67 million kids around the world have no access to free public education in primary school, something we take for granted. We have 50 million primary-and-secondary-school kids, with education a major source of our national success.

Under the act, assisted countries would fund most of the costs themselves. They would benefit and so would we. Studies show that in an educated country you'll find decreases in child mortality and in boys turning to terrorism, as well as increases in girls' earning power and in political stability.

-Linda Schatz, Tampa



http://www.dailyjournal.net/view/local_story/Letter_Education_end_to_povert_1316729867/

September 22, 2011

Education, End to Poverty Best Way to Fight Terror

On the anniversary of Sept. 11, 2001, I can think of no better time to reflect on how our country sets its priorities toward fighting the "War on Terror." The best bang for our buck, the best defense against radicalism, is education.

Education matters because: Education, especially for girls, reduces poverty and improves health, stability and economic development. Every year of schooling decreases a male's chance of engaging in violent conflict by 20 percent. Countries with available primary schooling and little difference between rates of boys' and girls' schooling tend to enjoy greater democracy.

Right now there is a bipartisan Education for All Act (H.R. 2705) before the House, sponsored by Reps. Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.) and Dave Reichert (R-Wash.), which seeks to improve U.S. policies so we can more effectively get children into school.

This act requires U.S. leadership to ensure a successful international effort to provide all children with a quality basic education. It calls for improved policies to expand access to school, improve education quality and reach marginalized and vulnerable children, including those affected by conflict and humanitarian crises.

This act does not require more funding but more accountability. I am asking readers to contact their representatives before Oct. 1 to co-sponsor the Education for All Act. The most effective way to fight terrorism is to promote an end to poverty, hunger and extreme inequality around the world.

-Diane Lindley, Needham



http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/northwestvoices/2016367210_edlets01.html

September 29, 2011

Education Changes Lives

The bipartisan Education for All Act of 2011 (H.R. 2705) has been introduced into the U.S. Congress.

Former U.N. Ambassador Bill Richardson has stated, "A crucial effort in fighting terrorism must be support for public education in the Muslim world, which is the best way to mitigate the role of those madrassas (Islamic religion schools) that foment extremism." Many peasant children attend these schools because there are no other schools available.

The true cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is in the trillions. We spend a tiny fraction of 1 percent (far less than 1 percent!) of our national budget on global education, yet education nourishes peace. Consider these points:

For every year of school a boy attends, there is a 20 percent decrease in the likelihood he will engage in violent activity. Studies show that increasing the percentage of children in school by just 10 percent decreases the likelihood of conflict in that country.

One out of three elementary-school-aged kids in sub-Saharan Africa is not in school. Millions more receive a poor-quality education and will not learn to read, write and count.

We need to support H.R. 2705.

-Donna Schindler Munro, Bremerton

The Herald-Times
See what's in it for you

<http://www.heraldtimesonline.com/stories/2011/10/06/lte.852131.sto>

October 6, 2011

Promise Not Kept

Sixty-seven million children of primary school age in our world are not in school. Yet we know that providing a basic education to every child is an essential step in creating a world that is more secure, fair, and prosperous. This is why Congress has regularly increased the proportion of our foreign aid going to support basic education.

When Barack Obama was running for president, he made a promise to achieve education for all by supporting a global education fund. This promise has never been kept. But there already is a Global Partnership for Education which aims to ensure that all children receive a quality basic education. To date, it has supported programs in 45 countries, including fragile and conflict-affected states where 28 million children are out of school.

With foreign aid spending constrained by economic and political realities, we need to make sure that what we do spend makes a real difference. President Obama should attend the Partnership's November funding conference and make a \$375 million pledge to the organization-just 15% of the total needed. It's past time to make sure that every child in the world gets a chance to go to school.

-Stephen Arnold, Bloomington, Indiana

The Seattle Times

Education as prevention

The best way to impact our long-term debt is to stop spending a huge percentage of our resources on defense. The best way to achieve that is to provide educational opportunity to the 67 million children around the world who will not attend school this year.

We must not cut, and should consider increasing, our foreign-aid budget and investment in the Global Partnership for Education.

Educating girls serves as a “social vaccine,” decreasing risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, decreasing maternal and child death, and increasing economic opportunities. Each additional year of education for boys greatly diminishes the likelihood of them joining in armed conflict.

In fact, the 9/11 Commission report recommended that the U.S. government join other nations in funding the building and operation of primary and secondary schools in those Muslim states that commit to investing in public education.

We currently spend roughly \$1 million per year for each soldier we send into conflict. Spending that same million to support the Global Partnership for Education could get us 74 new classrooms or 500,000 new textbooks or 8,000 more children in school. We must invest now for a more peaceful world or pay for the consequences for years to come.

— Karen N. Gielen, Seattle

The Washington Post

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/why-cutting-foreign-aid-is-a-bad-idea/2011/10/21/gIQAu1dEM_print.html

October 21, 2011

Why Cutting Foreign Aid is a Bad Idea

Regarding the Oct. 20 editorial “Foreign flop”:

I agree that the Republican presidential candidates’ apparent willingness to drop humanitarian foreign aid from the U.S. budget is deeply disturbing. Some argue that foreign aid is ineffective and only props up corrupt governments. But UNICEF and the World Health Organization just reported that the annual child mortality rate has dropped in the past 20 years from 12 million to 7.6 million children per year; much of this decrease can be attributed to investments of foreign aid.

Another result of foreign aid is an increased number of children in school; one effective group called the Global Partnership for Education has enabled 19 million more children to go to school since 2002. Education is recognized as the most effective type of aid; more than 700,000 cases of HIV could be prevented if all children received a primary education.

The United States has a chance to support this Global Partnership at its first fundraising conference next month. I hope that the Obama administration will make this crucial investment, and that the Republican candidates will come to recognize the importance of foreign aid to the safety and stability of the United States and the world.

Lisa Peters, Bethesda

Articles



Sitka-Afghanistan School Link Urged

October 12, 2011

When the congressional Super Committee considers cuts to the federal budget, education activist Julia Bolz hopes funding for foreign aid will be spared the chopping block.

“What we’re trying to show them is that the foreign aid shouldn’t be cut,” said Bolz, a volunteer with RESULTS, a nonprofit promoting education for all, and ending poverty around the world.

“(Foreign aid) is less than 1 percent of our budget, but it’s strategic to national security, global security and the world economy, aside from the moral issues involved,” she said.

Bolz was the speaker at the Sitka fundraising dinner for RESULTS on Friday, and gave talks in the schools about RESULTS projects, and the work of her separate nonprofit organization in Afghanistan. Sitkans can do their part by sending letters to Rep. Don Young’s office in favor of the three-year \$375 million budget item for the Global Partnership for Education, she said.

Bolz urged Sitka students to get involved in the work of expanding educational opportunities in poor countries.

“We want the kids to understand they have powerful voices themselves: you can make a difference,” Bolz said. “We’re encouraging these kids to write to Rep. Young, to talk about kids deserving an education. It’s a very powerful message that kids can carry.”

In addition to her volunteer work for RESULTS, Bolz works for the international nonprofit Ayni, which has been building schools in Afghanistan, focusing particularly on helping girls and women.

For the first time in 10 years, Bolz is not making trips to Afghanistan but is spreading the word for RESULTS, lobbying in Congress, and encouraging others to do the same around the country.

“It’s important to be part of this conversation,” Bolz said. “I felt it was very important for me to be here, and be part of the conversation, having seen what works, and what doesn’t work, and how our tax money could be spent more effectively.”

RESULTS supports the Global Partnership for Education, which involves 45 governments in developing countries, 30 governments of “donor” countries (such as the U.S.), banks, agencies, civil society organizations and private corporations and foundations. More than \$2.2 billion has

been allocated from the fund in 45 countries, resulting in the construction of 30,000 classrooms, training 337,000 teachers and enrolling 19 million children.

RESULTS says that for every \$1 million invested in the Global Partnership for Education, 74 new classrooms are built, 8,000 more children will enter primary school, 500,000 textbooks will be distributed and 1,000 teachers will receive a year of training.

The organization also said that 67 million children worldwide don't go to school, the majority of them girls. "We must do our part to ensure the poorest and hardest-to-reach children, especially girls, can go to school and learn," RESULTS states in its official literature. It says that this leads to empowerment of women and girls, improved survival rates and maternal health, less hunger, improved earnings, and progress toward peace and security in their countries and the world.

Bolz said she has seen the positive effects of these education programs, in breaking down stereotypes and prejudices among peoples.

In her work with Ayni, Bolz said she works on breaking down the barriers by partnering every new school in Afghanistan with a U.S. school, in a program "Journey with an Afghan School." She hopes a Sitka school will agree to become a partner with one in Afghanistan.

"I talked to student councils, as well as teachers and principals, trying to get the kids 'journeying' with one of our Afghan schools," Bolz said. She said she had a good reception from student councils at both Mt. Edgecumbe and Sitka High.

Ayni has built or repaired more than 40 secular schools in north-central Afghanistan, serving 25,000 kids, mostly girls, in grades K-12. Wars in Afghanistan have destroyed schools, but children still want to learn, she said. Even without books, paper and pencils, thousands were still attending makeshift schools, sitting on the floor and using chalkboards against mud walls.

"We asked the (community) leaders what they needed, and time after time, they told us, 'Schools,'" Bolz said. "They understand that schools are the building blocks to transforming their community socially, politically and economically."

In her first project with Ayni, Bolz worked with a 55-year-old woman with an eighth-grade education who had been running an underground school for girls during the years of the Taliban, risking her life in the process.

"She felt it was so important she was willing to teach those kids," Bolz said.

The first Ayni-sponsored girls school opened with 420 girls and eight teachers, and the same 55-year-old woman as the school director. The school now has 1,200 students and 20 teachers, and the oldest kids are now entering 10th grade.

The school desperately needs to be expanded," she said. "Our hope is that we can work with this community (Sitka), and that they will want to 'journey' with the school, and get to know them." The result will be a cultural exchange, with information going back and forth between Sitka and Afghanistan.

Ruby Gale, Sitka High student body president, said she heard Bolz' presentation several times Friday as she spoke to different classes.

"She was amazing," Gale said. "She totally inspired me. She totally inspired our student council."

Gale said she is hoping the SHS student council can get together with Pacific High and Mt. Edgecumbe student councils, and the National Honor Society, for fundraisers for the Afghanistan schools program.

"We'd like to bring our senators, and Rep. Don Young here to show them what we're doing, and see what we can do to help out," Gale said.

Gale said she is also interested in the idea of a "cultural exchange" to connect with the students on a personal level in Afghanistan.