

Global Partnership for Education Second Replenishment 25-26th June 2014, Brussels

Statement by the Global Campaign for Education

Over 80 members of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) including national, multilateral, civil society, private sector and foundation partners have made political and financial pledges to get millions more children into school, with financial pledges totalling \$28.5 billion over the 2015-2018 period.

Of the total pledged at GPE's Second Replenishment Conference, hosted in Brussels, Belgium, the vast majority has been pledged by governments in Africa and Asia who have committed to increase their own education budgets by a total of \$26 billion over four years. GCE welcomes this unprecedented commitment, but is concerned that with the exception of some generous pledges – notably from the United Kingdom, the European Commission (co-hosts of the replenishment), Denmark, Norway and Sweden – donors have not mirrored the ambition shown by developing country partners. The Global Partnership for Education had set a target of \$3.5 billion from donor countries and \$16 billion from developing countries. Other donor governments must now step up in the next few months to make the pledges that will bring the total to the \$3.5 billion donor target for this replenishment.

The pledges from 27 developing country governments to increase their education budgets by \$26 billion, over 2014 baseline figures, exceeds by \$10 billion the target set for domestic resource pledges. It is both a tribute to the advocacy of national civil society education coalitions in these countries, and a sign of strong political commitment to education – the top priority of the world's citizens, according to the UN's MyWorld2015 global survey. Nineteen countries committed to spending 20% or more of their national budgets on education by 2018. Some notable pledges include a commitment by the government of Kenya to increase education's share of the government budget to 29% by 2019, and significant pledges by Zambia to raise spending to 22% of government expenditure, while Côte D'Ivoire promised to significantly boost education spending toward a target of 26% of expenditure. All pledges will be scrutinised in detail in the coming days.

Donor pledges to the GPE fund totalled \$2.1 billion, which is a strong start towards the replenishment target of \$3.5 billion, but leaves some significant work to be done. The European Commission opened the replenishment with a pledge of \$510 million, to be delivered over a slightly longer period, up to 2020. Following sustained lobbying by GCE UK and many of its members, the UK remains the biggest contributor to the GPE Fund during the replenishment period, promising \$510m over the four years, but with some of this subject to a greater level of commitment by other donors.

GCE members the Danish NGO Education Network and Danish NGO IBIS had their lobbying efforts rewarded with a commitment of \$270 million to 2018, pledging \$55 million in 2014 and around \$70 million every year from 2015.

A first-time commitment came from the Republic of Korea to make a financial pledge in the coming days – which GCE will closely follow.

Other first-time pledgers included two foundations, CIFF (up to \$22 million on performance-based grants and the monitoring of these), and Dubai Cares (\$1 million for monitoring and evaluation). Whilst GCE welcomes all pledges, we note that – true to the GPE’s values of partnership and country ownership – pledges should not be directed to specific programmes or priorities, but un-earmarked contributions to support partner countries’ own education sector plans.

Full details of pledges can be [found on the GPE website here](#).

Not all donor partners to the GPE have contributed, bitterly disappointing civil society campaigners and the public alike. France, Spain and Canada pledged no monies to GPE – despite education being the number one development priority for citizens in every country around the world. There have been indications that other countries will continue to pledge beyond this week’s conference, and GCE calls on all donors to step up at this crucial moment.

Our own pledges as civil society – from both the GCE movement as a whole, and from individual members – focused on our determination to continue monitoring and tracking government spending and delivery. This, of course, includes those pledges made at the replenishment. The Global Campaign for Education movement commits to hold governments which have pledged during the Replenishment Conference to account for their promises which, if delivered, could make the right to education a reality for millions more children around the world.

With the pledges made to date, and those that will follow, the GPE has new resources which it must spend in supporting achievement of the full EFA agenda in all its partner countries, and – looking forward – achievement of all the education goals agreed in post-2015 frameworks.

The progress towards the overall target is welcomed by GCE, but we will not ignore the work still to be done. With aid to education falling by 10% in the last four years, and the target for GPE replenishment not yet reached, the Global Campaign for Education calls for all governments to meet the level of ambition set by developing country governments and those donors who have made significant contributions. It is time to demonstrate that the right to education is taken seriously by all governments as an underpinning, foundational right, and for serious, tangible, financial commitments to be made in order to realise this right for every adult and child.