

November 5, 2014

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on State, Foreign
Operations and Related Programs
HT-2, The Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on State, Foreign
Operations and Related Programs
1016 Longworth House Office
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member Lowey:

As members of the international development and humanitarian communities, we write to ask that you prioritize investments in effective development and humanitarian programs, such as basic education, as you complete work on the fiscal year 2015 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. Together these programs help alleviate poverty, strengthen societies, foster stability and security, and spur economic growth at home and abroad.

We appreciate that Congress continues to grapple with hard spending choices and tough political realities. Yet, we must never lose sight of the goal of quality basic education for each child. We urge Congress to seek funding at the level necessary to maintain effective existing programs, and meaningfully resource the USAID education strategy. **Therefore, we strongly recommend support of the House Committee appropriated levels for education funding.**

If the House Committee level of \$800 million was enacted, compared to the Senate funding level for FY15, approximately:

- 8.4 million more students could receive primary or secondary education;
- 136,363 more teachers, educators, administrators and officials would be trained; and
- 7,595,419 more textbooks and education materials would be provided to students amongst other important interventions.¹

The Administration has set specific, time bound goals with a clear strategy to help address the **58 million children and 63 million adolescents who remain out of school and the 130 million children in school failing to learn basic skills in reading, writing and math.** Education programs will not only impact millions around the world; their success will be critical to our own economic and security interests.

Basic education increases security and stability. Today, half or 28.5 million, of the out-of-school children around the world live in areas impacted by conflict, and these numbers continue to grow. By 2050, there will be 1.2 billion youth around the world -- with nine out of ten living in developing countries. By increasing access to education in conflict and crisis situations, education programs ensure that at-risk children and adolescents have access to a quality education. Through education, schools provide security and a sense of normalcy for children in emergency or conflict situations, and education provides a foundation of tolerance and understanding to begin rebuilding a peaceful society. Additionally, access to a quality basic education is one of the best ways to prevent child labor, child soldiers, child marriage and trafficking of children.

¹ These figures are based on data disaggregated from FY 2012 appropriations and accompanying results, as reported in USAID's Commitment to Education: Creating Opportunities through Learning, including estimates of \$35.5 dollars for education interventions, (average number of primary and secondary age learners enrolled in USG supported education programs through FY09-FY11 and the correlating fiscal year appropriations levels to determine average cost per student).

Basic education spurs economic growth. In a time of economic uncertainty, global basic education programs are directly in the U.S. national economic interest. Education programs are working to foster the skills necessary for a sustainable global workforce and long-term trading partners. Today, the fastest-growing markets for America's goods are in developing countries, representing 40% of U.S. exports and one out of every five American jobs. Educating the world's poor is essential to building the stable trading partners that growing U.S. export markets require. No country has achieved rapid economic growth without investing in education and reaching an adult literacy rate of at least 40 percent. In addition, 171 million people could be lifted out of poverty if all students in low-income countries left school with basic reading skills.

Basic education multiplies our investment. Our investments in global basic education also carry beneficial results across other development sectors, helping to ensure their success and reduce overall cost. For example, we know there is a strong association between educational attainment and lowered risk of contracting HIV; that is, girls who complete primary school are three times less likely to contract HIV than those who did not complete primary school. Half of the progress that has been made in lowering mortality rates for young children is strongly linked with better education of women. Children born of educated mothers are half as likely to be malnourished and twice as likely to be immunized against disease. Therefore, UNESCO estimated in 2011 that approximately 1.8 million children's lives in sub-Saharan Africa alone could have been saved if their mothers had a secondary education.

Basic education programs have proven results. Investing taxpayer dollars responsibly must include programs - like basic education - that address key priorities for Congress, produce meaningful results, and have a lasting impact on the future. Global literacy has risen from 76% in 1990 to 84% in 2012, and the number of children out of school worldwide has dropped by 48 million since 1999. In addition, great strides have been made in improving gender equality: in 52 countries girls' enrollment has risen to over 90%. The United States, with strong Congressional leadership, has made an invaluable contribution to recent global progress.

For all these reasons, we urge you to provide the greatest possible support for basic education in fiscal year 2015. Specifically, we strongly support the House Committee levels for education funding and ask you to maximize Development Assistance spending to ensure that our basic education programs are alleviating poverty by educating the world's most vulnerable children.

Thank you for giving serious consideration to our recommendations. Please feel free to contact Anna Roberts at aroberts@basiced.org (202) 729-6718 or Ed Gragert at egragert@gce-us.org for more information.

Sincerely,



Basic Education Coalition



Global Campaign for Education, U S Chapter



A World at School



Africa Schoolhouse



Association for Childhood Education International



Building Tomorrow, Inc.



Cambridge Education



ChildFund International



Creative Associates International



Edge of Seven



Education Development Center



FHI 360



Girl Rising



Global Kids



Global Poverty Project



*Juarez & Associates, Inc.
(J&A)*



Kenya Education Fund



Mission EduCare



National Education Association



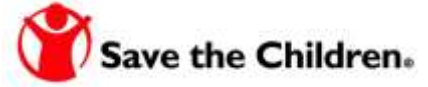
RESULTS



RTI International



Rukmini Foundation



Save the Children



School Girls Unite



SIL LEAD, Inc.



SOS Children's Villages USA, Inc



The Nobility Project



Power of Education Foundation



U.S. Fund for UNICEF



Union for Reform Judaism



WomenOne



World Education, Inc.