

GLOBAL CAMPAIGN FOR
EDUCATION
UNITED STATES CHAPTER

November 21, 2013

Dr. Rajiv Shah
Administrator
U.S. Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Administrator Shah:

As members of the Global Campaign for Education - US, a diverse coalition of organizations working to fulfill the right to a quality education for all children around the world, we are writing to urge you to support a robust U.S. contribution to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) from 2013 and 2014 fiscal year funds and in your FY2015 budget request to Congress. A strong U.S. contribution is critical in advance of GPE's second pledging conference in June 2014, which was announced by GPE's CEO Alice Albright during the UN General Assembly meetings in September. During its replenishment campaign, GPE is seeking to increase contributions to the GPE Fund, bilateral aid for basic education, and the domestic education budgets of their nearly 60 developing country partners.

We appreciate the Administration's recognition of the importance of GPE by including, for the first time, in its FY14 budget request to Congress a request for authorization to contribute to the Global Partnership for Education and a specific request of \$15 million. As the FY14 budget is finalized, we urge the Administration to support the Senate Appropriations Committee's recommended level of \$25 million to GPE. We also urge the Administration to increase its contribution to GPE to \$125 million in order to set the stage for strong multi-year pledges during the upcoming replenishment. We support this level of funding as part of the Administration's overall FY2015 investment in Basic Education, which we request to be \$925 million. This funding should not come at the expense of other effective humanitarian and development assistance programs as the proposed GPE contribution is exceptionally modest compared to other donor country contributions to GPE. Finally, although a U.S. contribution has not yet been announced for FY13, we are hopeful that a contribution to GPE will still be possible out of FY13 resources.

GPE is the only multilateral partnership focused on improving education outcomes and access for all children by supporting country-driven targets and commitments using a systems approach. Since 2002, GPE has supported an additional 23 million children to attend and remain in better equipped and supported schools. In GPE countries, the primary school completion rate rose from 56 percent to 71 percent between 2000 and 2010 and the number of out of school children fell from 34 to 18 percent. Further, GPE countries have recorded increases in literacy rates and completion rates among girls.

GPE is in a unique position to leverage not only donor funds, but also domestic financing for education. In GPE countries, financing for education as a share of GDP increased by an average

GLOBAL CAMPAIGN FOR
EDUCATION
UNITED STATES CHAPTER

of 10 percent after they joined GPE. Government expenditures on education in GPE countries overall increased from 17 percent in 2000 to 19.4 in 2011 and represented 5.8 percent of GDP in 2011 against 3.8 percent in 2000. However, an overall decline in global donor resources for basic education has increased demand on GPE. Unless donors fill a critical funding gap, GPE will not be able to keep pace with the more than 30 countries expected to apply for a total of \$1.2 billion in 2013 alone.

GPE has a strong track record of effectiveness and a clear foundation of country-ownership and national-level commitment of partner countries. Recent improvements to the initiative, including more independent and experienced leadership, and greater accountability mechanisms at country level, give us great confidence in GPE's ability to deliver effective results. We recognize the challenges of the current budget environment and support funding for the entirety of poverty-focused development accounts, but US leadership is needed now more than ever to ensure a successful GPE replenishment in 2014.

We appreciated your comments during the U.N. General Assembly about the importance of the United States remaining the largest bilateral donor to global basic education and your endorsement of GPE. We share these goals and hope you will bring them to fulfillment by increasing the United States' contribution to GPE, thereby ensuring U.S. education aid dollars contribute to the development of sustainable national education systems owned and led by developing country partners, ensuring all children have the opportunity to learn.

Yours sincerely,

Edwin H. Gragert, PhD,
Director
Global Campaign for Education-US

AND THE UNDERSIGNED MEMBERS OF GCE-US:



Association for Childhood
Education International



American Federation of Teachers



buildOn

GLOBAL CAMPAIGN FOR
EDUCATION
UNITED STATES CHAPTER



Building Tomorrow



CARE USA



ChildFund



Children's Fund



Global Kids



Mission EduCare



National Education Association



Plan International USA



Planet Aid



RESULTS



School Girls Unite



U.S. Fund for UNICEF



United Methodist Church General Board of Church and Society



Women Thrive Worldwide



World Education Foundation



Oxfam America