

August 23, 2022

The Honorable Shalanda Young
Director, Office of Management and Budget
Executive Office of the President
Eisenhower Executive Office Building
1650 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Young,

On behalf of the Global Campaign for Education-US, we are writing to share with you our funding recommendations for International Basic Education and Vulnerable Children for FY 2024. **We are asking the Biden-Harris administration to request at least \$1.2 billion for the Nita M. Lowey Basic Education Fund – including \$200 million for the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and at least \$50 million for Education Cannot Wait (ECW) – and at least \$35 million for Vulnerable Children.** We recommend funding the Vulnerable Children account with at least \$35 million to support implementation and reporting as mandated by the Global Child Thrive law, which was enacted in January 2021.

This recommendation highlights four priority areas for renewed and sustained investment. With the concurrent global challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, humanitarian crises, including those affecting Afghanistan, Ukraine, Yemen, Ethiopia, and Sudan, and others, children's sustained access to quality, inclusive education, including early and pre-primary education, is more important now than ever. Access to quality education is proven to yield better outcomes, brighter futures, improved sense of safety and security, and increased economic growth and well-being for individuals, communities, and countries – supporting all stakeholders to become more self-reliant, as education promotes healthy sustainable development. Investing in global education, especially for vulnerable children and youth, will directly support the Biden-Harris administration's priorities, including stabilizing humanitarian crises in Ukraine and Afghanistan by responding and curbing the learning losses brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic while improving gender equality and disability inclusion:

Climate Change: A recent Malala Fund [Report](#) estimates that by 2025, climate change-related crises will significantly contribute to learning losses for over 12.5 million girls per year. Investments in [girls' education improve climate strategies](#) by empowering girls and advancing their health and rights, fostering girls' climate leadership and pro-environmental decision making, and developing girls' green skills for green jobs.

COVID-19 Pandemic: School closures during the ongoing pandemic continue to disrupt the lives and educational opportunities of [94 percent of the world's student population](#). This generation of students [risks losing \\$17 trillion in lifetime earnings](#), or [about 14 percent of the total global GDP](#), due to COVID school-closure related losses alone. Across low-and-middle income countries, the scale of learning losses has left up to 70 percent of 10-year-olds unable to read or understand a simple text.

Gender Equality: Evidence shows that girls are more likely to face barriers to continuing their education, due to high risks of child marriage, gender-based violence, and early pregnancy. The longer at-risk children and youth are away from school, the less likely they are to return. Funding

programs for gender equity in education keeps girls in school longer, leading to improved life outcomes for youth and families. In Afghanistan alone, supporting girls to finish secondary education and contribute to the job market would contribute at least \$5.4 billion to the economy.

Humanitarian Crises: In spite of evidence that education serves as an essential lifeline for children in conflict-and-crisis-affected settings, providing them with education and psychosocial support and stability, only 2 percent of humanitarian funding is allocated for education and miniscule portions are allocated for pre-primary education. A recent report shows that 222 million crisis-affected children and adolescents globally are still in need of education support, and that number is growing. U.S. government funding for the education of crisis-affected populations needs to be better addressed. Funding funneled through USAID's Center for Education does not always reach these populations because of how dollars are programmed. It would be helpful to expressly indicate the need for development assistance dollars to reach crisis affected populations in protracted settings and increase the incentives for humanitarian agencies, such as the Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, to fund acute education in emergencies work.

Multilateral education efforts complement the work of USAID and other departments and agencies. Increasing U.S. support for GPE and ECW leverages additional resources from other donors and partner countries' direct commitments to their own education programs. The education multilaterals have outsized impacts and are critical to reaching vulnerable populations – such as girls, persons with disabilities, and refugees – not always served by USAID's bilateral programs in some of the hardest hit and most hard-to-reach countries, including regions across Afghanistan and Yemen, who are experiencing unprecedented learning poverty.

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) provides financial and technical support to foster educational opportunities in more than 80 developing countries. GPE brings together developing country partner governments, donors, international organizations, and civil society to pursue the shared objective of equitable, quality education for all. Understanding that domestic investment is the most sustainable form of education financing and key to the journey to self-reliance, GPE requires its partner countries to make significant investments in education before receiving GPE funding. Since the start of the pandemic, GPE has committed over \$500 million to sustain quality learning for at least 355 million children and youth in 66 partner countries. An even greater commitment is needed to address the dire learning losses exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Education Cannot Wait (ECW) delivers rapid, collaborative responses to the educational needs of children and youth affected by crises. As the first global fund dedicated to education in emergencies and protracted crises, ECW supports education programs for children and youth affected by conflicts, climate disasters and displacement from the onset of crisis through recovery phases so that no child's right to education is disrupted by conflict or disaster. Girls' education is at the heart of ECW's work, with up to 60 percent of ECW beneficiaries being female in affected countries and record rates of female teacher recruitment, around 92 percent in some programs. With both first emergency rapid response and multi-year funding platforms, ECW has reached over 4.6 million children and youth and trained over 68,900 teachers in 37 crisis-affected countries to build capacity in the face of exacerbating climate change and conflicts. An additional 29.2 million children and more than 88,000 teachers in 34 countries have been reached as part of ECW's COVID-19 education emergency response. We ask OMB to enable this lifesaving work to continue by adding at least \$50 million for ECW in the coming budget year.

We urge you to support a FY 2024 request of at least \$1.2 billion for the Nita M. Lowey Basic Education Fund – including \$200 million for GPE and at least \$50 million for ECW – and at least \$35 million for Vulnerable Children. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Christa Giesecke at cgiesecke@gce-us.org. Thank you very much for your leadership.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

1. Action Health Incorporated
2. Amal Alliance
3. Association pour l'Intégration et le Développement Durable au Burundi, AIDB (Indigenous Forum in the UN ECOSOC status)
4. Child Labor Coalition
5. Childhood Education International
6. Educate the Children, Inc.
7. Education for All Coalition
8. Global Campaign for Education-US
9. Global Citizen
10. Indigenous Peoples Global Forum for Sustainable Development, IPGFforSD (International Indigenous Platform)
11. International Development Institute (IDI)
12. International Rescue Committee (IRC)
13. Jesuit Refugee Service/USA
14. Lesotho Council of NGOs
15. Light for the World
16. Magis Americas
17. National American Sport Association of Africa (NASAA)
18. ONG GEDD GAO
19. Partnership for Early Childhood Development & Disability Rights (PECDDR)
20. PDRC International
21. Raees Child Education Initiative-RCEI
22. RESULTS / RESULTS Educational Fund
23. Rights for Disability Development Foundation
24. RISE Institute
25. Rising Child Foundation
26. Rukmini Foundation
27. The Borgen Project
28. The Delia Foundation
29. Treasureland Health Builders Initiative
30. UNICEF USA
31. United States International Council on Disabilities
32. United World Schools
33. Zimbabwe National League of the Blind

CC: Ed Meier, Michael Linden, Kim Lopez, Ariel Leuthard, Bryant Renaud