



Statement from the Government of the United States of America

Delivered by Wendy Abt, President WPA

On behalf of both Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah, the United States is pleased to support the Global Partnership for Education in our collective efforts to advance the status of basic education around the world. Despite significant progress in improving access in recent decades, serious challenges remain, particularly in the area of quality. For example, there are some countries where less than 5% of primary students are able to read at grade level, and in too many cases, students are unable to read a single word. In a world where we know that each additional year of school adds 10 percent to an individual's earning potential, and where a child born to a mother who can read is 50 percent more likely to live past the age of five, we collectively face an enormous challenge.

So today, we'd like to make three commitments:

- 1) In recognition of the fact that the Global Partnership for Education is a significant contributor to the progress we need to make towards achieving the MDGs, we acknowledge and applaud the steps GPE has taken in implementing key recommendations arising from its midterm evaluation. The United States is pleased to announce that are providing \$20 million USD in 2012 subject to the U.S. appropriations process.
- 2) As the largest bilateral funder of basic education, USAID, with approximately \$700 million in FY 2011 of basic education financing, pledges to work with other donors, civil society, and host countries to improve the quality of reading outcomes and continue our work on equitable access, with a focus on girls.
- 3) And, we pledge to focus on cost-effective new ideas to enable all of us to proactively contribute to evidence-based decision-making.

The United States Government has committed to improving the reading skills of 100 million children and increasing equitable access to education in crisis and conflict environments for 15 million learners by 2015. These goals are not achievable by one donor, or by one country. We look forward to continued collaboration and global cooperation to improve education quality and access worldwide.