

## Statement from The World Bank

Delivered by Mahmoud Mohieldin, Managing Director

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- Honorable Ministers, Heads of Agencies, Carol Bellamy, ladies and gentlemen:
- It's my great pleasure to be here today to pledge the World Bank's support for this replenishment for the Global Partnership for Education to help achieve our shared goal of free basic education and learning for all.
- How fitting to be here in Copenhagen, where in 1814 free primary schools were set up to provide compulsory education for all children in Denmark between 7 and 14 years of age.
- As the world's largest external funder of education, the World Bank believes that the GPE plays an essential role in filling the global education financing gap. GPE embodies the Paris/Accra principles of aid harmonization, on which the world is reviewing progress next month in Busan.
- The Bank will always feel a special attachment to GPE. The Bank worked together with UNESCO, Oxfam, and other key allies to create the EFA Fast-Track Initiative in 2002, building on former Bank President Jim Wolfensohn's support for a global compact for education at the 2000 Education for All summit in Dakar --and we are proud of the results.
- GPE's policy goals are closely aligned with the goals set out in the Bank's new *Learning for All* education strategy for the next decade. These include improving both access and learning outcomes, improving gender equality in education, focusing on the most disadvantaged groups, and boosting support to fragile states.
- A key pillar of our strategy is leveraging our partnership with the GPE to help countries achieve the Education MDGs.
- The Bank will work with GPE to improve our collective analytical power in education, through the development of new tools such as System Assessment and Benchmarking for

Education Results, or SABER, to benchmark country education policies according to evidence-based global standards and best practice.

- The Bank will press to integrate education more effectively into the policy dialogue with country governments to give it more visibility and traction. This will be reinforced by our recent World Development Reports on fragile states and gender equality, and next year's WDR on Jobs.
- We will also redouble our education efforts in post-conflict countries, including through our new post-conflict hub in Kenya. As our Global Monitoring Report 2011 points out, no low-income fragile or conflict-affected country has yet to achieve a single MDG, and children living in fragile states are three times as likely to be out of school.
- And we are mobilizing substantial financial support to this MDG challenge. At last year's MDG Summit, World Bank President Bob Zoellick pledged to increase our zero-interest IDA financing for basic education by an additional \$750 million by 2015, focusing particularly on African countries that are off-track to reach the education MDGs.
- Frankly, we got off to a slower start than hoped on fulfilling this pledge. Much of last year's lending had already been moved forward to 2009-10 in response to the global economic crisis, and we have had too little demand from countries to use their IDA resources for basic education.
- But I am pleased to report that for the current fiscal year, IDA's support for basic education is projected to rise sharply and will substantially exceed our historical average. Basic education is a top priority for our dialogue with low-income countries to meet our pledge by 2015. A strong GPE replenishment will help us by providing countries with more predictable education financing, so they can budget and plan more effectively.
- Going forward, we hope to do more of what IDA is doing in Mozambique: IDA was able to step in with a \$71 million IDA credit to co-finance a \$90 million grant from GPE, for a total operation of \$161 million. With this support, IDA is helping to expand school access and improve education quality and learning through teacher training, free school books, curriculum reform, and more. Ethiopia, Malawi, and Nepal provide other successful examples of joint IDA/GPE operations.

- Given the Bank's already close operational and technical cooperation with GPE as supervising entity in many countries, IDA-GPE co-financing is a promising option to expand financing for basic education, improve donor coordination, and reduce transaction costs for country governments.
- In conclusion, GPE deserves strong support from the donor community. Working together with developing countries -- as they also find ways to mobilize more domestic resources for education -- we can fund the investments that are in the best interests of our children, our economies, and our futures.
- Thank you.