Annex 1: GPE Rallying Cry Options- Research and Recommendations

GPE Board Rallying Cry Research and Recommendations

1. Methodology

Brunswick was commissioned to conduct a research project with the objective of identifying a rallying cry or rallying cry indicator for GPE and the global education sector more generally. This rallying cry is intended to inspire support for global education from political leaders, decision makers and the general public, ahead of the next replenishment

Brunswick used a two-phase approach, which combined qualitative and quantitative research. This combined approach enabled in-depth exploration of reactions to rallying cry ideas, as well as generating robust data on the most effective rallying cry. This builds on a model that Brunswick has used successfully in previous research for organisations like the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (testing messaging on overseas development aid) and the Wellcome Trust (to reframe the issue of antimicrobial resistance).

Before the project began, the Secretariat reviewed all relevant data and indicators, as well as input from board constituencies, to prepare a comprehensive package from which Brunswick could work. Brunswick began by reviewing the material provided by the Secretariat, as well sourcing additional content, before developing a set of rallying cry indicator statements for Phase 1 of testing. Content was based around three main areas: enrolment in school, learning, and education outcomes. A total of 28 statements were developed at this stage.

Phase 1 of the project was in-depth qualitative research. This approach enabled Brunswick to explore reactions to a range of rallying cry ideas, to test variations and also to explore how ideas could be refined or improved. This process also gave participants the opportunity to propose alternative ideas. Three focus groups were conducted in London, Paris and Tokyo. These locations were chosen to ensure ideas were tested in different regions and languages.

Participants in the focus groups were 'policy influencers', defined as individuals who have current or recent professional involvement in policy issues. This included participants drawn from a mix of professions and roles, including government departments, the civil service, private sector and NGOs. This audience was chosen as it is an effective proxy for decision makers; Brunswick regularly conducts research with this audience.

Based on the most effective themes emerging from the focus groups, Brunswick then developed content for testing in Phase 2. Two types of content were developed (16 statements for each):

- Rallying cries – more emotional statements designed to work as standalone messages, or when combined with an indicator as supporting evidence.
- Rallying cry indicators – variations on indicator statements, based around key data points or metrics that are both measurable and scalable (to a local, national or global level).

Phase 2 of the project was quantitative research. An online survey was fielded in eight countries: UK, France, Germany, UAE, US, Japan, Morocco, South Africa. This ensured the survey was global in scope, included a range of languages, and included both donor and developing country partners. Morocco and South Africa were chosen as the partner countries as these are two markets where it is feasible to conduct online research and a robust sample size is achievable. In addition, Brunswick's previous experience has shown these to be effective proxies for other African countries (where online research is more difficult). The survey was fielded with a sample of 1,000 respondents in each country (2,000 in the UK and Germany). This gave a total of 10,000 responses globally. The survey was fielded with a nationally representative sample of the general public in each country (except in Morocco, where the sample was representative of the online population).

The general public are a key audience for the rallying cry. Inspiring support by using language that is easy to understand and powerful for both experts and the general public is important to provide cover for political funding decisions. The data can be segmented to view results among the 'media engaged' public (i.e. those that consume news from respected outlets on a regular basis), who are more likely to engage with the issue of global education and have opinions on its relative importance compared to other political or development priorities.

The survey presented respondents with a randomized selection of statements to react to. Respondents were asked to rate statements on the following metrics (using a seven-point agree/disagree scale):

a. Rallying cries: memorable / powerful / makes me care more about the issue of global education

b. Rallying cry indicators: easy to understand / memorable / compelling (i.e. makes a strong case for more action to improve access to education)

2. Results

Focus groups: The focus groups produced very productive discussions, with participants engaging with the issue of education generally and the statements tested.

- Of the three themes tested (enrolment in school, learning, outcomes), no single theme emerged as most effective. But a small number of individual statements within each theme resonated well.
- Statements focusing on all children generally resonated. Those focusing on girls varied in effectiveness – but some resonated very strongly, suggesting this does not limit impact if the content is right.
- Focusing on children was considered natural; statements that focused on teachers were felt to miss the main issue.
- The broad concept of children learning generally resonated well, as did literacy, which was considered clear and understandable as a concept.
- Sector terminology caused confusion: terms such as 'foundational learning', 'cognitive skills' and 'minimum proficiency levels' turned people off and limited effectiveness.
- Relatability of content was a common theme in the strongest performing statements – relatable to participants as adults, as parents or to their memories of being schoolchildren themselves.
- There was a strong preference across all three countries for statements that were simple, clear, and concise – both in terms of sentence structure and the amount of information included.
- Generally, statements with one simple and clear statistic resonated better than those with multiple sets of numbers.
- Statements that were more technical or number-heavy were criticized for being uninspiring and harder to understand or conceptualize.

Quantitative Survey Research: The most effective statements in the focus groups centered on the following themes: children out of school, literacy, class sizes, costs/investment, girls' outcomes. Rallying cry and indicator statements on these themes were then tested in the quantitative research.

- Results showed a high degree of consistency across all 8 countries in terms of the most effective statements (both rallying cries and rallying cry indicators).
- Results were also consistent across metrics i.e. the same rallying cry statements were rated as most memorable, most powerful, and most effective at making respondents care more about education.
- The data confirms the insights from the focus groups: it is simple and clear statements and indicators that are most effective.
- There was also alignment in terms of the themes that resonated best between the rallying cry statements and rallying cry indicator statements: children out of school, literacy, and education as an investment.

Outcomes: The testing indicates a strong preference for a rallying cry, supported by an indicator statement that can provide evidence of the challenge and progress against the objective of the rallying cry. This is based directly on the survey data, and the top performing statements across the key metrics.

The testing also reinforced that the most practically useful indicator statements are those which: i) are most clearly measurable (to track progress); ii) have long-term relevance; and iii) can be scaled nationally, regionally or globally.

Rallying cries: the two options

RC1: All children deserve to go to school

RC2: Education is the most important investment a country can make in its people

4.6 Indicator statements: the three options that can be used as a supporting indicator for either of the rallying cries

IS1: Close to 260 million children around the world are still out of school

IS2: 130 million girls around the world are still out of school

IS3: An estimated 52% of girls in developing countries cannot read proficiently by age 10