GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP for EDUCATION

CALL TO ACTION
Second Replenishment
June 25-26, 2014



Investing Urgently in Early Childhood Care and Education

Quality early childhood care and education (ECCE) helps to build stronger foundations, not only for children's own wellbeing but also for the long term socio-economic development of societies. Investing in quality early childhood programs leads to some of the highest rates of return to families, societies and countries. A simulation on increasing pre-school enrolment in 73 countries found benefits in terms of higher future wages of $6.4-$17.6 per dollar invested (Lancet). The simulation indicated potential long-term benefits which range from $11 to $34 billion. *Thus, investing resources in the youngest children is one of the most cost-effective financial and policy commitments a government and a society can make.*

During the early years of life, the brain grows at the fastest pace, making almost 700-1,000 connections per second. These early connections form the basis of a lifelong capacity to learn and adapt to change. Early brain development is best nurtured in quality child environments that are supportive, stimulating and safe. Young children, especially the poorest and most disadvantaged, who have access to ECCE services at the right time are more likely to be healthy, ready to learn, and stay longer and perform better in school.

Globally, the gross enrolment ratio in pre-primary education is only 48%, with rates as low as 15% in low-income countries and less than 17% in sub-Saharan Africa. Evidence shows that the most disadvantaged children – their disadvantage due to poverty, ethnic and linguistic minority status, gender discrimination, remoteness, disability, violence, and HIV/AIDS status – experience the most dramatic gains from good quality ECCE programs. *Yet it is exactly these children who are least likely to participate in these programs (Lancet).*

Key partners present in the GPE Replenishment in Brussels June 2014, made the case to **invest early and** smartly in Early Childhood Care and Education; to **invest equitably** to reach the poorest; to **invest in quality** to guarantee quality in ECCE interventions; to **invest in results** in early learning, and early childhood development.

Global Partnership for Education partners, donors, developing countries, the private sector and foundations and other supportive participants in the panel, endorse or commit to subscribe to a '**Call to Action for Early Childhood Care and Education'**:

- To increase access for girls and boys to quality ECCE, including at least one year of free and compulsory pre-primary education, with particular focus on the most marginalized children.

On behalf of my country or delegation, I endorse this Call to Action and commit to investing urgently in Early Childhood Care and Education:

Signed:

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Title:

_____

Representative of:

_____

Date:

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- To increase international and domestic investment in ECCE for Global Partnership for Education countries.
- To promote new and innovative partnerships that:
  - Leverage investments in ECCE from public and private partners;
  - Improve the availability and delivery of quality ECCE services.
- To strengthen the evidence-base of effective and quality ECCE programming and the development of ECCE indicators that support countries to monitor children's readiness to learn, the quality of learning environments.
- To ensure the inclusion of ECCE in the post-2015 development agenda and in the Global Partnership for Education's next Strategic Plan through:
  - The inclusion of a post-2015 target on ECCE, supported by appropriate indicators, under an education post-2015 goal.
  - The integration of ECCE as a cross-cutting issue in other post-2015 development goals related to child development.
  - The inclusion of ECCE as a Strategic Priority in the Global Partnerships for Education's 2015-2018 Strategic Plan.