

Canada's commitment to education welcome – but investment fails to reflect growing global need

June 13, 2021 -- The Grandmothers' Advocacy Network (GRAN), alongside members of the Canadian International Education Policy Working Group (CIEPWG), welcomes Prime Minister Trudeau's [commitment](#) to tackling the global learning crisis and addressing the stalled progress for education exacerbated by COVID-19. CIEPWG also acknowledges Canada's \$300 million renewal to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), as part of a joint pledge at the [Carbis Bay G7 Leaders' Summit](#). To help the GPE deliver on its five year strategy, Canada was being asked to increase its support to at least CAD\$500 million, in response to the growing global need. By not increasing its contribution, Canada is not stepping forward to meet the moment when the educational needs of the most vulnerable children are greater than ever.

More than a year into the pandemic, over half of all children are still out of school. Girls are at a particularly high risk of never returning to the classroom. An additional 250 million children and youth, including those in crisis and conflict, were already out of school before COVID-19. In the face of this global education emergency, Canada has missed an opportunity for bold leadership to address these challenges head on.

Canadian education actors are especially worried that today's announcement signals a de-prioritization of education from Prime Minister Trudeau. In 2018 the Prime Minister not only doubled Canada's commitment to the GPE, but also took extraordinary steps at the Charlevoix G7 Leaders' Summit to expand access to quality education for girls living in crisis and conflict. The Canadian-led [Charlevoix Declaration](#) resulted in millions of girls realizing their right to an education, setting them on a positive path toward hope and opportunity. CIEPWG has been working with the government to ensure that the progress made under Charlevoix is protected and is calling on Canada to fulfill its 2019 election promise to expand these critical investments.

Ultimately, Sunday's announcement is a consequence of Canada's persistently low investments in international aid, below the average of its peers. CIEPWG is deeply concerned that the lack of sustained increase to Canadian aid is directly harming children's access to quality education.

There is still time to do more. CIEPWG is supportive of Canada's continued focus on its global education campaign, Together for Learning. We are calling on Canada to follow today's words with the much needed – and previously promised – financial resources to implement the campaign to deliver quality education for refugee and displaced children and youth. In order to turn the tide on the global learning crisis, the government must maintain and increase its investments in global education as part of a global COVID recovery effort, with a focus on the most marginalized. Eyes will be on Canada to deliver on this promise and help build a better future where every child can realize their right to a safe, inclusive and quality education.

NOTES TO EDITOR:

The Canadian International Education Policy Working Group is a coalition of international development, humanitarian and advocacy organizations working to support policies and programs to improve access to safe, inclusive, quality education for all children and youth. It is currently co-Chaired by Right To Play International and UNICEF Canada.

CIEPWG members are CAMFED, Canadian Commission for UNESCO, Canadian Feed the Children, Canadian Lutheran World Relief, Canadian Teacher's Federation, Children Believe, CODE, Global Citizen, Grandmothers Advocacy Network (GRAN), ONE Canada, Plan International Canada, Results Canada, Right To Play International, Save the Children Canada, SOS Children's Villages, War Child Canada, UNICEF Canada, World Vision Canada and World University Service of Canada (WUSC).