

CIEPWG Statement in response to the Together For Learning Summit Outcome Document

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The Grandmother's Advocacy Network, alongside its partners within the Canadian International Education Policy Working Group (CIEPWG), welcomes the release of the high-level [outcome document](#) launched at today's [Together For Learning Summit: Engaging Displaced Youth to Transform Education](#). Led by the Honourable Harjit S. Sajjan, Minister of International Development, this document is the culmination of collaborative discussions between donors, Ministries of Education, civil society, multilateral organizations and foundations. Most importantly, it responds directly to the needs and recommendations of refugee and displaced youth themselves, as well as holding ourselves accountable to them. Canada is leading the way toward elevating the lived experiences of children and youth directly affected by conflict and crisis and meaningfully integrating their perspectives into the decisions that affect their lives.

Canada has been a long-standing leader in the area of global education. In 2018, Canada led the historic [Charlevoix Declaration](#), which leveraged CAD \$3.8 billion in funding from the G7 and other partners. Since then, Canada has continued to make education a top development priority, including its recent commitment to invest new resources in global education, with a focus on the most marginalized children including girls, refugees and internally displaced learners. This includes an initial Canadian investment of \$67.2 million announced during the opening session of the Summit.

As the world continues to grapple with concurrent and persistent crises, including COVID, conflict and climate change, the need to rally support for education in emergencies has never been more urgent. Prior to the pandemic, 75 million children were out of school in countries affected by crises. At the peak of pandemic, 1.5 billion additional learners had their education interrupted or completely halted for months and years. The recent attacks on Ukraine have focused global attention on the disproportionate burden of war placed on children. It is a grim reminder of the ongoing and forgotten crises around the world, as well as the work that needs to be done to uphold children's rights – including their right to an education and the protection of schools from attacks.

The commitments made at the Summit today meet a unique global moment, by addressing emerging and urgent issues such as the need to expand equitable access to remote and flexible learning options, including digital learning, as well as scaling-up mental health and psychosocial support within education programming to address trauma and promote the well-being of students and teachers. When children and young

people are out of school their mental health, learning and development suffers. Without an education in a safe and nurturing learning environment, children and young people lose a sense of belonging and are denied the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to reach their full potential. This is especially true for girls.

As we look ahead, we call on all those present at the Summit to consider how we can turn this renewed political momentum into tangible action. Recognizing the immediate and overwhelming needs, it is incumbent on all partners – including the Government of Canada – to increase investments in global education, including education for refugee and displaced learners. In order to achieve our shared level of ambition to both expand access and improve the quality of education leading to meaningful learning outcomes, CIEPWG calls on the Canadian government to fulfill its commitment to increase investments in ODA, as well as increase its bilateral assistance to education to at least 10 per cent in the upcoming federal budget.

For Canada to deliver on its own Feminist International Assistance Policy, as well as the commitments released today, Canada must increase its investments in education. The return on investment is too high to ignore. Education is the key that unlocks health, well-being, gender equality, peace and economic prosperity for the next generation of children, their communities, and the world.

The Canadian International Education Policy Working Group is a growing coalition of 20+ 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 Teachers' Federation, Canadian Lutheran World Relief, Children Believe, CODE, Fondation Paul Gérin-Lajoie, 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, UNICEF Canada, War Child Canada, Wellspring Foundation, World Vision Canada and World University Service of Canada (WUSC).