



Education for All

GRAN is advocating that the federal government increase Canada's commitment to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in the next replenishment.

Education is a fundamental human right that is unrealized in much of the developing world, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Sub-Saharan grandmothers have asked for more and better education for their grandchildren. Increased education funding for infrastructure (training of teachers and building of schools) will bring much-needed resources to their communities. A school often becomes a gathering place, making education a new and important community-wide priority.

In sub-Saharan Africa

- Globally, sub-Saharan Africa has the highest out-of-school rate for all ages.
- Before COVID-19, 97 million children and youth were out of school (51 million of whom were girls). Now 250 million more children are out of school, bringing the total number to 350 million.
- About 23 million out-of-school children are living in fragile and conflict-affected regions.
- There are 123 million women in SSA, of whom 64% are illiterate.
- Over 50% of refugee children are out of school.
- Half of all primary classes exceed 50 pupils.
- 17 million teachers will be needed to meet the needs of primary and secondary education by 2030.
- Only one in ten homes have access to the internet.

Children and youth face many barriers to accessing a quality education:

- Poverty and the cost of schooling – no money for school fees and uniforms;
- Lack of infrastructure – schools are too far away; classrooms are overcrowded; lack of resources;
- Lack of quality trained teachers;
- Water and sanitation – no access to toilets or clean water;
- Social and cultural norms – child marriage, housework, taking care of siblings, and fetching water;
- Violence, including exploitation by teachers, unsafe journeys to school, gender-based violence in school;
- Hunger and poor nutrition.

Girls and women face even more barriers, as do those with disabilities. See more at:

<https://www.one.org/international/blog/10-legitimate-reasons-for-girls-not-to-do-their-school-work/>

Impact of COVID-19

- The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to have a devastating effect on the African continent, exacerbating the inequalities already faced by vulnerable populations, particularly adolescent girls.
- School closures can lead to increases in gender-based violence, teenage pregnancies, child marriage, exploitation and other forms of abuse against adolescent girls.
- Research is showing that with school closures globally, up to 10 million secondary-school-aged girls may never return to the classrooms.

Read more about the impact of COVID-19 in sub-Saharan Africa:

<https://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/shattered-dreams-reeling-impact-covid-19-girls-education>

Education is key to development, and affects all 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Worldwide, education can lead to greater economic prosperity, better health outcomes, and greater gender equality. Education also reduces exploitation and violence and enables people to reach their full potential.

- If all students in low income countries acquired basic reading skills, millions of people would be lifted out of poverty. [SDG #1 No Poverty]
- A child whose mother can read is 50% more likely to live past age five. [SDG #3 Good Health]
- If all girls completed secondary school, there would be 64% fewer child marriages. [SDG #5 Gender Equality]
- With higher levels of education, people show greater concern about the well-being of the environment. [SDG #13 Climate Action]

See more at: <http://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/17-ways-education-influences-new-17-global-goals>

Canada's Role

- In June of 2017, Canada launched a Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) with a new vision for laying a foundation for positioning Canada as a leader on gender equality through its aid program. Although education is not a pillar of the FIAP, both Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Minister Karina Gould have acknowledged the underlying importance of education in achieving Canada's development goals.
- At the G7 summit in Charlevoix in June of 2017, Canada announced an historic investment of \$400 million toward education for girls and women in crisis and conflict situations.
- In the December 2019 mandate letter from Prime Minister Trudeau to Minister of International Development Karina Gould, one of the top priorities assigned was to: "Expand Canada's support for global education, including for the poorest and most vulnerable," with the further instruction to "Invest at least 10% of our bilateral international development assistance envelope on education; and lead an international campaign to ensure that all refugee and displaced children can get the education they need and deserve."
- Canada's total aid to education was \$442 million in 2018-2019 or 7.4% of total aid.

Global Partnership for Education (GPE)

Canada is a founding member and active partner of the Global Partnership for Education. The GPE works in over 80 countries. Thirty-eight of these countries are located in sub-Saharan Africa. A key objective of the GPE is to ensure that more girls enroll in school and receive a quality education. The GPE fosters an inclusive and participatory approach, bringing all partners at the country level together in a focused and coordinated way, with the goal to strengthen national education systems. Read more about the Global Partnership for Education at <http://www.globalpartnership.org/>

Also watch this inspirational video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVYr0OyCU0A>

Our Coalition

- In 2014 - 2015, GRAN joined a small coalition of Canadian CSO's who were successful in persuading Canada to double its commitment to the GPE (from \$15 million per year to \$30 million per year for four years, 2015-2018).
- In 2016, GRAN joined the newly formed **Canadian International Education Policy Working Group** (CIEPWG) who seek to influence the Government of Canada's policy approach to global education, as well as to increase the Government's financial commitments to improve access to inclusive, safe and quality education (SDG #4). Again we were able to move Canada to double its financial commitment (to \$60 million per year) to the Global Partnership for Education for the replenishment period of 2018-2020.
- **GRAN will continue to partner with CIEPWG as we advocate for increased funding for the Global Partnership for Education. Replenishment is scheduled for July 28-29, 2021.**

Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, including lifelong learning, is critical for prosperity, economic growth and achieving a peaceful, stable and secure African continent.