

**ALICE ALBRIGHT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS,
AND RELATED PROGRAMS
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

MARCH 3, 2015

Madam Chairwoman and members of the Subcommittee, I appreciate this opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee regarding the key role of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in addressing three central challenges facing children in the world's poorest countries who have a right to a quality basic education. I respectfully ask the Subcommittee to provide at least \$70 million, under the United States Agency for International Development's Development Assistance account, as the U.S. Government's fiscal year 2016 contribution to the Global Partnership for Education. I also request that the Committee provide at least \$800 million from various accounts in the bill for overall basic education funding.

The Global Partnership is the leading public-private partnership of governments, international organizations, civil society, teachers' organizations, the private sector and foundations dedicated to ensuring that every child is able to attain a quality basic education.

THE CHALLENGE OF FRAGMENTATION

The first challenge is fragmentation in the education sector and the multiplicity of actors and approaches that stretch the limited capacity and financial resources of the ministries of education in many developing countries. The GPE partnership-based business model is designed to bring all of the major actors in the sector together at national level to develop and finance implementation of a single national education sector plan.

GPE provides financing for this sector plan development process and requires the 60 countries eligible to secure education program support from GPE to have a plan approved by all partners in place before further financing is made available. USAID is often a member of the local education group that is at the center of this process. GPE also requires countries to commit their own domestic resources for education before they can secure our financing.

THE SECOND CHALLENGE: ACCESS TO A QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION

The second challenge is ensuring that children everywhere in the poorest countries have access to a quality basic education – that they can learn to read, write and to do their basic math – while in their primary school years so that they are well positioned to move up into lower secondary school. GPE and its partners have worked to cut almost in half the number of out of school children in our 60 countries over the past decade, from 110 million children in 2002 to 58 million in 2013.

The access challenge includes ensuring that girls are able to attend school and we are pleased to report that more girls are attending school than ever before. However, in some parts of the world they face very serious risks at school, even death, as a result of extremism. Access to a basic education is also a major challenge for children with disabilities and national education sector plans increasingly recognize the importance of addressing the needs of children with disabilities.

Although more children are in school and learning than ever before, the Global Partnership is concerned about the uneven quality of education in poor countries. Globally, some 250 million children who have attended at least four years of school cannot read and write or manage basic math.

Therefore, we have designed a new results based financing model that places increased priority on learning outcomes, as well as on increased domestic financing commitments by countries, and which conditions 30% of our funding on improved learning outcomes, equity and efficiency of programs. This new financing model is now rolling out across GPE's eligible countries.

THE THIRD CHALLENGE: GLOBAL FINANCING

The third challenge is a global financing challenge. Donor financing for education has dropped quite significantly over the past decade, by 15% over the last few years alone, although countries themselves are making major domestic financing commitments to education. In June 2014, GPE eligible countries committed \$26 billion over five years to their national education programs from early child development programs to tertiary education. GPE's donors, including private foundations, committed \$2.1 billion.

However, GPE still faces a financing gap of almost \$1 billion over the next four years.

There is an even more serious dearth of financing for education programs in countries facing chronic emergency or humanitarian crises, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Afghanistan. Donor financing for education in such settings has dropped to less than 1.5% of all emergency financing.

A majority of the world's out of school children reside in these fragile and conflict affected states and generations of them are missing out on the one chance they have to receive a basic education. As a result, GPE and its partners are currently exploring how we can work together to secure increased attention to and support for such countries.

I have visited nine GPE partner countries since my appointment two years ago as CEO of the Global Partnership for Education. More than half of these countries are fragile and conflict affected states: Afghanistan, Pakistan, South Sudan, Haiti and the DR Congo. GPE represents one of the few sources of financing for education in these countries and our support has made a key difference. In Afghanistan, millions of girls are now in school again due to support from GPE. In DR Congo, a massive country experiencing war in the east for more than

30 years, GPE has supported the development of a national education sector strategy and implementation plan and is providing the country funding to increase its children's access to a basic education.

In Haiti, which five years later, continues to recover from a devastating earthquake that leveled its education ministry among many other buildings and homes, the country is preparing to implement new support from GPE to enable the government to provide children access to education in partnership with low-cost private schools.

I am pleased to confirm to this committee that USAID is a close and important partner to the Global Partnership at global level where USAID sits on the GPE Board and participates in the development of the organization's policies, at technical level and at country level, where as a key bilateral donor to the sector, it participates in the local education group that must approve and that monitors the implementation of the national education sector plan.

We look forward to working with USAID as well over the months to come on the financing crisis facing countries experiencing chronic humanitarian crises.

FISCAL YEAR 2016 UNITED STATES SUPPORT FOR THE GPE AND BASIC EDUCATION

Madam Chairwoman, I urge the Committee to provide a fiscal year 2016 U.S. contribution to the Global Partnership for Education of \$70 million. I also urge you to support an overall level for basic education of \$800 million. Thank you for your consideration.