

Dear Decision Makers,

Amid mounting global crises, we are alarmed to see that the world is turning away from one of the greatest proven investments for peace, prosperity and equality: education.

While notable progress has been made in access to and completion of education globally, that progress is quickly eroding. Today, **more than [273 million children and youth](#) are out of school. This number has risen for the seventh consecutive year.**

There are also **[234 million](#) crisis-affected children and adolescents urgently in need of educational support.** Around the world, children are being uprooted from their homes, pushed out of classrooms, or left searching for pathways to education as conflict, economic and climate-driven shocks, and instability escalate. Those already facing marginalisation, including girls, children with disabilities, refugee children, and those affected by extreme poverty are being hit hardest.

At the same time, **teachers, the backbone of every education system, are being stretched beyond their limits.** Too often under-trained, under-supported and under-resourced, they are expected to sustain learning under impossible conditions with a deepening [global teacher shortage](#).

And yet, children, young people and students continue to raise their voices. In every context, including crisis settings, **education remains their [top priority](#).** Children, young people, students and their families understand the hope and opportunity that only education can provide.

But widening financing gaps are failing them - leaving their needs unmet and their right to learn and thrive unrealised.

We stand in solidarity with children, young people, students and teachers worldwide to urge decision makers to **act now and protect education** as the foundation for peaceful, healthy, equitable and prosperous societies.

Across contexts, countries are stepping up their domestic investment in education. New commitments submitted to the Global Partnership for Education show that to date 44 partner countries will mobilize an estimated \$238 billion in domestic resources for education between 2026 and 2030. **To sustain and scale this leadership, catalytic Official Development Assistance (ODA) through effective, country-led partnerships is essential.**

Education cannot remain a casualty of political inaction or competing priorities. It is a lifeline - one that underpins [long-term peace and security](#), climate resilience, economic growth, gender equality, and progress toward all of the Sustainable Development Goals.

2026 is a pivotal year to protect education. The two major global education funds - the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and Education Cannot Wait (ECW) - require ambitious and immediate investment to reach the children who need support most. At a time of shrinking budgets, investment in both ECW and GPE offers a cost-effective, high-impact way to give all children the opportunity to learn - whether through providing emergency education in times of crises, or building strong resilient education systems that will sustain investments over time. They must be fully supported and financed.

We are calling on decision makers to:

1. **Fully fund the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and Education Cannot Wait (ECW)** at levels that match the scale of today's education financing crisis ([\\$97 billion annual gap](#)), recognizing the two mechanisms are complementary and accelerate each other's impact.
2. **Protect and expand domestic and global education financing.** Even amid fiscal constraints, investment in education is critical to stability, recovery and long-term growth.
3. **Prioritize education financing that meets the diverse and intersecting needs of children, young people, students and teachers**, with specific attention given to gender equality, disability inclusion, refugee learners and those affected by extreme poverty.

This is a defining moment. At a time of growing global instability and deepening inequality, investment in education is not only a matter of justice and fairness, but also of long-term global peace, security and economic prosperity. Without bold investment now, decades of progress will be lost, and inequalities and instability will persist for generations. No Funding. No Learning. No Chance. The time to invest is now!

This letter is endorsed by over 190 organisations and coalitions, representing over 16,000 local, national, and global organisations united in this call to action.













