BUSINESS INVESTMENTS AND PUBLIC SECTOR RESOURCES FOR GLOBAL EDUCATION

The Education Crisis: Common Challenges
In 2000, the international community made a commitment that no country would fail to achieve the promise of universal education because of lack of resources. However, with less than a year to the 2015 deadline for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), funding for basic education continues to decline. The new 2030 Sustainable Development Goals agenda will likely reflect a wider education mandate to include goals and targets for pre-primary education and secondary education. To commit to achieving existing commitments and the full range of education targets, we must increase ambition and significantly scale-up available resources for investing in educational opportunity for children and youth. The business community benefits from the expansion of educational opportunity. From market growth and skilled labor to increased incomes and improved standards of living for consumers and employees, investment in education is essential for the business community at all levels.

As we work to keep the promises of the MDGs and look forward to the 2030 agenda, there is an increasingly important opportunity for business to work with the international donor community to scale up efforts in supporting every child and young person’s right to education.

Who are the International Donors?
Bilateral donor countries and multilateral agencies invested nearly $3 billion in basic education in developing countries last year.

- **Bilateral aid** is direct aid from a donor to government as part of the larger foreign aid budget. The three bilateral donors with the highest total aid for basic education include the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad).

- **Multilateral aid** is aggregated from various countries and channeled to developing countries through agencies such as the World Bank, UNICEF and the Global Partnership for Education, or regional development banks.

Business and Donor Agency Assets
There is potential for international donor agencies to collaborate with the business community to identify or create solutions to expanding educational opportunity to children and youth. Business and donors contribute a unique set of assets to these collaborations.

**Business Assets**
- Products and services (specific to industry, e.g. financial services, technology, etc.)
- Communications outreach
- Employee and consumer networks
- Supply chains and vendor relationships
- Political influence
- Innovations and technology
- Employment opportunities

**Donor Agency Assets**
- Financing and funding mechanisms
- Technical expertise
- Local operational partners
- Access to communities and political leaders
- Knowledge base of best practice
- Ability to scale successful interventions

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When Business and Donors Join Forces

As we move into the 2030 agenda, the Global Business Coalition for Education will aim to identify new opportunities to leverage the assets of business and donor agencies to rapidly expand education for children and youth. From co-financing and scaling pilots with successful results to engaging in policy discussions and linking education to employment, harnessing the assets of the business and development community can lead to: 1) scalability, 2) reduction in investment risk, 3) entry into new markets and 4) delivery of quality education for skills development.

Examples of Business Engagement with Donors

Scaling Programs that Work: DFID Girls’ Education Challenge (GEC)
The Girls’ Education Challenge (GEC) calls on NGOs, charities and business community to find better ways of getting girls in school and ensuring they receive a quality of education to transform their future.¹ Through the GEC’s open competition and brokering process, a $38M Strategic Partnership has been forged between DFID and Discovery Communications, with Discovery Learning Alliance as an implementing partner. This partnership – intended to increase enrollment, attendance and learning for marginalized girls, their families and communities in Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria – is now underway. Part of the investment supports 1,000 learning centers in schools with technology and video programming.² Past assessments of the intervention show a 10 to 20% improvement in students’ understanding of core subjects, and as much as 50% improvement in teaching effectiveness compared to similar, nearby schools.³ By working with the GEC, Discovery Learning Alliance is able to access resources and education expertise to scale what works and reach more girls.

Demonstrating Demand for Education: The Safe Schools Initiative
In Nigeria, the first Safe Schools Initiative was launched following the kidnapping of 276 Chibok schoolgirls. GBC-Education business leaders – with support from the United Nations Special Envoy for Global Education, A World at School and the Nigerian government – contributed $10 million to launch the initiative. Following their lead, an additional $20 million was contributed by the Nigerian government and international donors, resulting in a $30 million Safe Schools initiative and a United Nations multi-donor trust fund for Safe Schools. In the first phase of activities, Safe Schools interventions are now in place in many schools and 2,400 of the most at-risk students from three states hit hardest by Boko Haram’s terrorist activities have been enrolled in safer schools. By engaging high-level CEOs, business was able to highlight the need to target resources to the most marginalized and incentivize government to increase domestic funding for education. This demonstrates domestic demand for education, which is critical for both multilateral and bilateral donors to increase aid.⁴

² Ibid.
³ UNESCO, UNICEF, the UN Global Compact and the UN Special Envoy for Global Education (2013), The Smartest Investment: A Framework for Business Engagement in Education.