The need to provide education in emergency contexts is urgent. The education of 75 million children and young people is affected by crisis globally. The average length of refugee displacement, 17 years.

Business can drive a new, innovative wave of restoring education for youth in emergency contexts. Current efforts are too complex, uncoordinated, and inadequate, with a significant gap in delivery and financing. In 2015, humanitarian appeals reached just 12% of those children in need.

The risks of not investing in stability and rebuilding through providing education to millions of children and youth are clear. The new Education Cannot Wait: A Fund for Education in Emergencies, launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in May, will coordinate and strengthen financial and delivery architecture so that impact can be made at the onset of an emergency. A watershed moment now exists to build upon growing political will and deliver on the promise to provide education to all.

Through a coordinated and targeted approach, the Fund will help the private sector to engage, contribute, and prioritize investments, create shared value, and promote sustainable development and growth. As the leading convener of the private sector in education, the Global Business Coalition for Education is committed to supporting the Education Cannot Wait Fund.

**THE BUSINESS CASE TO INVEST**

Only by investing in education in emergency contexts can economies begin to grow again. Through education, talents are developed, societies are more stable and ready for business investment, and young people be prepared for the jobs of tomorrow. Education not only protects children and youth from exploitation in the short-term, and is a life-saving provision — it provides greater local and regional stability, links young people to employment, and spurs economic growth.
At the World Humanitarian Summit, GBC-Education pledged to mobilize $100 million in financial and relevant in-kind contributions in support of Education Cannot Wait from private sector partners.

To achieve this, GBC-Education commits to:

1. **Oversee a 24/7 Emergency Database:** Build a database of contributions and assets the private sector could deploy for education should an emergency take place in different regions of the world.
2. **Channel Corporate Contributions:** Assist in facilitating contributions to the Fund’s specific initiatives — both financial and in-kind.
3. **Convene Innovation Teams:** Address challenges through private sector innovation task teams which focus on finding solutions to specific challenges of coordination or delivery at the local level.

The Education Cannot Wait Fund is the first fund to prioritize education in humanitarian response. The Fund will unite new global and local actors to leverage additional and new resources to best ensure the education of children and youth caught in conflict, natural disaster, or health-related emergencies is not disrupted. The most vulnerable young people — refugees, or those internally displaced — will be prioritized.

The Fund will be initially hosted at UNICEF and will offer both rapid and medium-term assistance to responsible actors, channeled through existing financing mechanisms where possible.

For additional information on how you can engage with the Fund, please contact ecfwfund@gbc-education.org.
CASE STUDIES: HOW BUSINESS CAN SUPPORT

INNOVATION

The outbreak of the Ebola crisis forced five million children out of school in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. With schools being utilized as temporary hospitals, Ebola threatened to reverse years of educational progress in West Africa where literacy rates were already low and school systems were just recovering from years of civil war. Out of school indefinitely, rates of child labor, child marriage, and teen pregnancy skyrocketed with children left increasingly vulnerable and families forced to make difficult economic decisions. One year after the outbreak was first reported, many schools remained closed and a $5 million funding gap persisted in Liberia and Guinea, with the gap in Sierra Leone unknown due to a lack of transparency. The private sector — many with established operations in the area — could have been mobilized to immediately provide innovative education solutions like distance learning programs, made accessible through radio, TV, or mobile phone in students’ homes or temporary learning spaces, so that continuity of education was maintained.

BUSINESS LEADS

Acknowledging the lack of a framework to coordinate the private sector, ArcelorMittal created the Ebola Private Sector Mobilization Group (EPSMG), developing an innovative database of critical private sector assets available, allowing companies to donate vehicles, water tanks and protective equipment needed, and mobilizing $21 million in financial support to the response.

FINANCIAL AND IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

Conflict in Syria has forced 4.8 million persons out of the country and displaced 6.5 million internally. Over 600,000 thousand children remain out of school in Jordan, Turkey, and Lebanon, despite technical plans to place children in host country public schools approved by both the host government and the international community. Now in the fifth year of conflict, we risk losing entire generations of children to child labor, early marriage, violence, or extremism, falling short of realizing their full potential and becoming productive members of society solely due to a lack of finances or innovation. The private sector can help to contribute the financial resources required to fill the funding gap, channeled through innovative financing mechanisms like 1:1 matching funds to best leverage additional finances and spread risk. Business may also provide in-kind contributions and develop ways to deliver education at scale through technology or other original practices.

BUSINESS LEADS

RELX Group, as part of its partnership with the International Rescue Committee to support second language skills for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, has made a financial donation to target a key barrier to accessing quality education.

CORE ASSETS AND EXPERTISE

When a 7.8 magnitude earthquake devastated Nepal in April 2015, nearly 50,000 classrooms were left damaged or destroyed, leaving more than 1.4 million children out of school. Despite $4 billion in international aid raised, just 6% was earmarked for education. More than one year after the crisis, this lack of financing and coordination means that no schools or classrooms have been rebuilt by the government, with hundreds of thousands of children remaining out of school. The private sector could have been mobilized without delay to provide technical expertise, core assets and essential materials such as building supplies and construction know-how to assist in rebuilding.

BUSINESS LEADS

In the wake of the earthquake, Microsoft offered free Skype calls to and from Nepal, significantly decreasing communication costs, in addition to pledging a minimum of $1 million in monetary and in-kind donations to support relief efforts. The company also set up a fund to match employee donations, further leveraging their impact.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is GBC-Education?
GBC-Education brings the business community together to accelerate progress in delivering quality education and learning for all of the world’s children and youth. Since its launch in 2012, GBC-Education has grown to become the single forum connecting business to make a lasting impact on the lives of children and youth through education. GBC-Education members believe their core business assets, social responsibility, and philanthropy, when used in collaboration with government and other stakeholders, can be a powerful tool to expand education for all.

Why work with the Education Cannot Wait Fund?
The Education Cannot Wait Fund will provide clear and efficient channels for your business to contribute in a diversity of ways at the immediate onset of an emergency, multiplying your impact through innovative financing mechanisms like matching programs and spreading your risk across multiple parties. The Fund eliminates the lengthy search process for vetted partners and identifies where immediate impact can be achieved.

Will our investment have an impact?
We are not working with companies or in places where there are not clear metrics or results, and only in-kind contributions relevant to the emergency will be received. Some contributions companies can offer simply will not work and we are here to be candid about this so that the most impactful investments can be made. We will work with Education Cannot Wait to identify where corporate contributions can be most useful in specific emergency contexts.

Is GBC-Education pledging my money?
No. We are building a movement and working with all companies to generate impact. For the Syrian refugee crisis, we announced a commitment of $75 million from private sector and partners at the Supporting Syria and the Region conference in February, and have tracked and added to those commitments, now totalling over $95 million. There is reason to believe we can do this in other future crises and we want to be at the ready and best position business to be able to do their part through the Fund.

Working with the UN — how can that be quick?
That is our point. Education in emergencies has not been an immediate priority and children’s lives are at stake. We are taking stock so that we can react with the unique skills and expertise of the business community at the onset of an emergency, without bureaucratic delay.

What is an Innovation Team?
Innovation Teams will identify specific challenges and work to address them through the development of specific, relevant solutions. Business can contribute to those teams that are aligned to their expertise and skillset.