

G8 yet to make the grade

Reaction to the G8 Africa & Development Communique: Global Campaign for Education

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The Global Campaign for Education reacted today to the G8 communique which, despite warm words on education, offers little in the way of immediate commitments and resources to education systems squeezed by the financial crisis.

"Whilst the G8 state warm words on education, 75 million children wait outside the school gates until the finances are made real. Until the \$16 billion needed is made available, children continue to work anywhere but school. On behalf of the world's uneducated, I urge the G8 leaders to hurry up and meet their commitments", said Kailash Satyarthi, President of the Global Campaign for Education

Filling the FTI \$1.2 billion shortfall will be an important first step, if it is delivered. However, such promises have been left unfulfilled from previous Summits. Furthermore the statement fails to acknowledge the full amount needed to finance education. Despite the strong efforts of some countries, the G8 collectively is only giving a small fraction of the needed \$16 billion - \$2.5 billion.

The Global Campaign for Education welcomes the recognition of providing trained teachers, and endorsement of the International Teacher Task Force, but noted the omission of the UN estimate of an 18 million teacher gap.

We also welcome the G8 support for the education campaign the Global Campaign for Education is coordinating around the World Cup. We look forward to seeing how this translates into increased resources and commitment on Education for All.

"Italy has another chance this year to make the grade on education. We urge Italy to deliver on their promises of aid to deliver at the replenishment conference in November. The Pope has announced the importance of Education for All - now is the time to listen to him and all children out of school", said Elena Avenati, coordinator of GCE Italy

Progress since 2000 has helped get 40 million children into school, poor countries provide 80% of the resources, but aid to basic education has dropped in recent years to under \$4 billion per year, against a total of \$16 billion needed. GCE has developed a 'School Report' style table (grading OECD countries' performance on aid to education) that illustrates the huge underfunding on aid to education by the majority of the G8 countries. **The weakest performers in the G8 are Italy, the US, Germany and Japan, each giving less than 20% of their fair share of the money needed (see breakdown of finances at the end of this release).**

"The shortfall needed to finance Education for All, is a drop in the ocean of what rich countries bailed out to their banks in the last few months whilst the world's poorest, most vulnerable and most in need have been waiting for their bailout", said Muleya Mwananyanda spokesperson for the Global Campaign for Education

GCE believes that new momentum on education could be sparked by the creation of a Global Fund for Education in the near future. US President Obama has previously committed to give \$2 billion to such a fund and campaigners are keen that he fulfils this commitment and puts US energy into creating a global aid architecture that will really deliver for the world's children.

GCE also notes the increasingly strong links between the G8 and the G20. The campaign is looking to the next G20 as an opportunity for rich countries to ensure that resources flowing through the IMF will enable low-income countries to engage in robust stimulus packages, including increasing spending on education and health.

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