

15th -17th September 2008

CCF, Care and AIR Join Hands under Basic Education Coalition (BEC) to Lobby for More US Government Support to EFA Goals in Africa:

Between the dates of September 15 and 17, 2008 CCF, Care and AIR, under BEC joined hands to lobby both Congress and Senate in Washington to support the upcoming EFA bill. This bill has been co-sponsored by Sen. Hillary Clinton and another Republican senator. If enacted into law, it will profoundly increase the US government support (through new resources) to EFA goals, particularly basic education in the developing world.

We jointly did the lobbying through a briefing meeting with the congressional staff at Capitol Hill.

CCF and BEC later had separate individual meetings with senior staff of three Senators.

Find brief updates on these below:

1.0 Congressional Briefing and Lobby Event at Capitol Hill

Panelists: - Andiwo Obondoh (CCF) Pamela Young (CARE), Brad Strickland (American Institutes for Research), and Harry Patrinos (World Bank). The organizer and moderator was BEC Director, Cris Revaz.

Participants: - congressional staff, representatives from DoL, USAID and BEC member NGOs.

Theme: - Educating the Hardest to Reach Children

Objective: - to present problems facing basic education in Africa and further to show case CCF, Care and AIR work on promoting alternative basic education opportunities in Africa (Sierra Leone, Kenya and Zambia respectively) to justify need for more funding for basic education in the region.

Key outcome: - the three agencies made a strong case for increased support for basic education in Africa by USG.

2.0 Lobbying US Senators on the EFA Bill

Participants: - Andiwo Obondoh, Gilberto Mendez and Laura Henderson all of CCF and Cris Revaz for BEC

Senate offices involved: - (i) Meeting with Elizabeth Olson in the office of Senator Barack Obama (D-Illinois). Elizabeth sits on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee

and the Subcommittee on Africa; (ii) Meeting with Anh Nguyen in the office of Senator Ben Cardin (D-Maryland). Anh also sits on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Subcommittee on Africa; (iii) Meeting with Chris Homan in the office of Senator Richard Durbin (D-Illinois). Chris sits on the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations, whose jurisdiction covers Basic Education Funding.

Objective: - Showcase CCF education flagships in Africa (especially Zambia, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia and Kenya) to give the Senate a better idea of what education needs are like in Africa and the aims of *Education for All* bill. Ask for their support for the Education for All bill.

Key outcomes: - presentations on community schools (S/Leone), girls education (Kenya), school governance (Ethiopia) and ATLAS (Zambia) gave the Senate officers a strong picture of basic education issues and challenges in Africa. In all the three offices there were strong commitment towards the EFA bill and all promised to convince their respective senators to sign in.

In fact Senator Obama during the Clinton Global Initiative in New York, same week stated his full support for the bill as a result of the briefing he got from his staff after our lobby meeting at his office.

Brief compiled by Andiwo Obondoh
CCF Africa Region