



EDUCATION FINANCING ACTION PACK

WHY FIGHT FOR EDUCATION FOR ALL THIS JANUARY?

The new year is often seen as time of change and growth. Many of us resolve to make a positive change to our behaviour or habits, from eating less chocolate to joining a sports club or learning a new language. But imagine if you couldn't read this action pack, because your school didn't have any trained teachers, bathrooms, books, pencils or classrooms. How different would your resolutions be?

264 million children around the world don't have to imagine – this is their reality. And it's not good enough.

Education is proven to be the most effective way of empowering children and strengthening societies. It's not only a human right, but also a catalyst for social change. If everyone completed secondary education, an incredible 420 million people would be lifted out of poverty – cutting the number of people living in poverty worldwide by more than half ([UNESCO, 2017](#)).

But there's a problem. Tax dodging, global inequality, and low public spending drastically limit education budgets worldwide. This means hundreds of millions of children go without a quality education. In a world capable of technological innovation and luxury, this is not acceptable.

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) provides funding to governments in low-income countries for their education systems. GPE is currently running its Replenishment 2020, a three-year drive to increase its financing to US\$2 billion a year by 2020 and improve schooling for 870 million children in 89 countries. So this month let's all resolve to ensure that every child has a quality and free education.

Together we have enough money – it's time to demand change.



STEP 1: KNOW

To advocate for education for all in our communities and beyond, we first need to build our understanding of the issue. Here are a few pointers to get started!

What does quality education look like to you? What teachers, lessons and curriculum will a good school have? What about the additional aspects of schooling, like free meals or clubs? Why can't all schools provide this type of education? Sometimes, this may be due to the decisions of headteachers, local towns or national governments. Cultural, social and political aspects all play a part, but the largest factor is often money.

The UN's Education 2030 Framework for Action recommends that all countries spend 20% of their budget on education. In 2016, Pakistan invested only 6% of its budget on education - their public school system and pupils suffer as a result.

But what if your domestic budget is too small? Senegal exceeded this UN target in 2016 by 5%, but 25%, 30% or even 50% of a small budget is still a small amount. The question is: *why* are their budgets so small? Tax revenue is often denied to governments by avoidance, tax havens and unfair trade regulations.

This is a huge problem for children all over the world; to work out just how big, let's take a maths lesson! You can do this individually or with a group (why not write the equations on the board or a large piece of paper for others to work out?) to replicate a real maths lesson.

(All data can be found in [this table](#), published by the GCE in 2017)

TIME FOR A MATHS LESSON

Education is going through a worldwide funding crisis, leaving many children and young people behind. To see the magnitude of the problem, solve this equation:

If 61 million children of primary school age are out of school
AND

62 million adolescents of lower-secondary school age are out of school
AND

141 million young people of upper-secondary school age are out of school
AND

484 million children are in school but not receiving quality education...

How many millions of children and young people worldwide miss out on a quality education?

Answer: 750,000,000 – or three quarters of a billion

These statistics are even more shocking when broken down to regional and country levels. Almost 33 million or 54% of all primary school age out-of-school children live in sub-Saharan Africa. Just six countries - Nigeria (8.7 million), Pakistan (5.6 million), India (2.9 million), Sudan (2.7 million), Indonesia (2.6 million) and Ethiopia (2.2 million) - are home to a third of all children, adolescents and young people not in school.

For more information, see [this report](#) published by UNESCO in 2017.

It isn't enough to know about the crisis in education financing: we have to speak out and connect with people who also object to this injustice. Take a video of yourself, either alone or in a group, demanding education for all and supporting the GPE Replenishment. Begin with **"I believe every child has the right to a free and quality education, because..."**, and then explain why you think education should be available to all children, regardless of who they are, where they live or how much money they have. You could even write this phrase on a poster or whiteboard to hold whilst filming. Why not mention your own experiences at school or university, how you feel about education in your community, region or country, or interesting facts on education financing around the world?

If you're feeling creative, try editing the video with different music and visual effects. Then upload your film on YouTube and Facebook, as well as any other social media platforms you use, with the hashtags **#100Million**, **#FundEducation** and **#EducationNow**. Finally, engage your friends and family in the debate by asking them to like, share or comment on the video. Looking for inspiration? Check out the 100 Million campaign Global Secretariat's video [here!](#)

STEP 3: MOBILISE

The next step to raising support for free and quality education worldwide is inspiring others to demand change for the most marginalised children around the world. Once you've added your voice online, get out into the community and find out what your classmates, fellow students and neighbours think about education financing.

Set up a stand decorated as a 'shop' in a busy area, like your playground, a canteen, or the lobby of your local library (remember to ask permission first!). Stock your shop with 'products' like armed forces, alcohol, cigarettes, education, and cut out the money templates at the back of this pack OR use anything else to represent money (e.g. pencils/scrap paper). Then invite passers-by to play your game and make some hard choices:

a) Give each player three to five coins and ask them which product they would spend most money if they could control global budgets. Players can place as many or as few coins on the same product as they want.

FACT: Every month, humanity spends around US\$84 billion on alcohol and US\$28 on cigarettes (GCE, 2017). The USA has the world's largest military budget, spending an average of US\$51 billion per month in 2016 (SIPRI, 2017).

b) Tell your players how the world really spends its money. How do they feel? Are they surprised? Shocked? Angry? Ask them to pick three things you think a good school should have so every child receives a quality education. They might be books, trained teachers, toilets, computers, pens etc. If you want, make a note of their answers in a small poll and publish the results.

If it was hard to make this choice then you're facing the same dilemma as headteachers, local councils and governments across the world. But the quality of education shouldn't have to be a choice: the world has enough money and spends more on things that harm the world's children than supporting their right to an education.

STEP 4: INFLUENCE

As a *young person/student/pupil* in *constituency/area/region*, I am passionate about ensuring that all children and young people in our community have access to free and quality education. According to a recent report by UNESCO, 264 million children and young people worldwide are out of education. They are missing out on basic skills which will enable them to thrive personally and professionally, both now and in adult life, and find themselves at great risk of child labour or other harmful practices.

We know that the world is financially capable of providing free and quality education for all, and policy change is the first step to changing this situation. You, as a *legislator/politician/local leader*, are key in this fight against injustice. That's why this January *I/we* call on you to:

a) officially (re)affirm your commitment to the recommendations for education financing laid out in the UN's Education 2030 Framework for Action, and

b) publicly call on the national government to contribute to the Global Partnership for Education's Replenishment 2020.

I/we look forward to your response and hope to meet with you in the future to discuss your commitment to free and quality education.

We will only be able to provide free and quality education for all by putting pressure on leaders at community, national and international levels to make education financing a priority.

In our globalised world, it can sometimes feel like we have no power as individuals. But nothing could be further from the truth. Democratic governments are, ultimately, chosen by and for the people – they are obliged to respond to our concerns.

This is especially true in the case of local decision-makers. Members of parliament and town councillors have a responsibility to represent you, their constituents, in national decision-making processes. So this month, we've written a template letter you can send to your local parliamentarian to ask them to strengthen their commitment to education for all.

Modify the letter to best fit your community's situation and don't forget to add your own personal reasons for supporting free and quality education!



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