>> Please add organizations for sign-on at the end of the letter (will list alphabetically)

October X, 2022

Dear Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Graham, Chairwoman Lee, and Ranking Member Rogers,

We, the undersigned organizations, thank you for your steadfast commitment to fighting extreme poverty and supporting education for children in need globally, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and humanitarian crises. **As you work to finalize the FY2023 State and Foreign Operations bill, we urge you to provide at least $985 million for International Basic Education, including $140 million for the Global Partnership for Education and $35 million for Education Cannot Wait, as included in H.R. 8282, the House FY2023 State and Foreign Operations bill and accompanying report language. In addition, we support the House and Senate's (S. 4662) level of $30 million for the Vulnerable Children account.**

While support for these accounts is always important, the need for international education assistance has increased exponentially in the last two years. Now is not the time to regress on the U.S.' commitment to providing robust resources for the education of children in need. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, school closures disrupted the lives and education of more than 94 percent of the world's student population. 222 million children globally are currently affected by crises and in need of urgent educational support; this figure has nearly tripled from an estimated 75 million children in 2016.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been compounded by humanitarian crises, including those in Ukraine, Afghanistan, South Sudan, and Ethiopia. USAID's partnership and support has been critical to mitigating learning loss and adapting educational programming and resources such as the Returning to Learning Toolkit to promote equity, inclusion and safety. Even with these interventions, additional support is needed now more than ever. Around the world, girls, children and youth with disabilities, young people in crisis and emergency settings, and marginalized groups are facing interruptions in their education that could lead to devastating generational losses to come.

U.S. bilateral basic education programs focus on strengthening quality inclusive education, providing early learners with foundational skills, and preparing youth for long-term success. This programming is critical for countries to achieve sustainable economic growth, poverty alleviation, social stability, gender equality, and participatory democracy. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, USAID has mobilized over $900 million for education and reached more than 24 million learners through a variety of in-person and distance approaches. Efforts include partnering with ministries to safely and responsibly open schools, utilizing distance learning platforms (including radio and home learning kits), and providing psychosocial support and protection services, particularly for vulnerable and marginalized populations.
U.S. support for international organizations, including the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and Education Cannot Wait (ECW): Global Fund for Education in Emergencies and Protracted Crises, complements our bilateral programs and leverages additional resources to address ongoing education challenges. GPE is the largest global fund solely dedicated to transforming education in lower-income countries and operates as a unique, multi-stakeholder partnership. To receive GPE funding, governments must commit to making significant domestic investments in education. In 2020, GPE mobilized over $500 million for education grants to support the global COVID-19 response and ensure continued learning, school re-openings, and recovery. This funding has supported governments in 66 countries to sustain learning for 355 million children.

Education Cannot Wait delivers rapid, collaborative responses to the educational needs of children and youth affected by crises. In 2021 alone, ECW reached 3.7 million children and adolescents across 32 crisis-impacted countries and an additional 11.8 million children and adolescents were reached through ECW's COVID-19 interventions that same year, bringing the total number of children and adolescents

supported by COVID-19 interventions to 31.2 million. The ECW High-Level Financing Conference will be held in February 2023, and the FY2023 funding will be critical to ensure U.S. leadership on education in emergencies and crises around the world.

We look forward to working with you as the FY2023 appropriations process moves toward completion this year to ensure that strong funding is appropriated for the vital programs detailed above. We value the impact made by global basic education programs and **urge you to provide at least the House-approved level of $985 million for International Basic Education, including $140 million for GPE and $35 million for ECW, and the Senate-approved level of $30 million for Vulnerable Children in the final FY2023 State and Foreign Operations bill.** Robust funding will address critical international education needs and help mitigate the harmful effects of COVID-19 and other crises. Such investments should not come at the expense of other poverty-focused development and humanitarian assistance programs.

We greatly appreciate your consideration of our request, and look forward to working together to ensure quality, inclusive education for children and youth.

Sincerely,

Signed organizations (will be listed in alphabetical order)

1. Amal Alliance
2. APFDC - BENIN
3. Asdown Colombia
4. Association d'Aide à l'Education de l'Enfant Handicapé (AAEEH)
5. Basic Education Coalition
6. Brain Builders Youth Development Initiative (BBYDI)
7. ChildFund International
8. Childhood Education International
9. Disability Inclusive Development Programs and Services (DIDEPAS)
10. Education for All Coalition
11. First Focus on Children
12. Global Campaign for Education-US
13. Global Citizen
14. GlobalPartnersUnited
15. Independent Learning Organization Sierra Leone
16. Jesuit Refugee Service/USA
17. Light for the World
18. Magis Americas
19. PDRC International
20. Planet Aid, Inc.
21. Raees Child Education Initiative-RCEI
22. Red Regional por la Educación Inclusiva - Regional Network for Inclusive Education
23. RESULTS
24. Rights for Disability Development Foundation (RDDF)
25. RISE Institute
26. Save the Children
27. The Borgen Project
28. Youth and Women For Opportunities Uganda-YWOU