

## HEADS OF STATE CALL TO ACTION ON EDUCATION FINANCE AHEAD OF THE GLOBAL EDUCATION SUMMIT: FINANCING GPE 2021-2025

### Preamble

1. **We, Heads of State and Government that are beneficiaries of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) funding, ahead of the Global Education Summit to be held in London on 28<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021, co-hosted by Kenya and the United Kingdom, reaffirm our commitment to SDG 4** – to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all – and recognize the role the Global Partnership for Education plays in achieving this goal.
2. **We recognize** that education is a necessary foundation for achieving all development goals, in particular health, gender equality, poverty reduction, peace and security, shared prosperity, resilient economies and climate action.
3. **We note** with concern the disruptive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education, and recognize that even before COVID-19 closed the world's schools, over 250 million children were still out of school and more than half of those in school were not meeting minimum learning standards. We further recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the annual financing gap for education in low and middle income countries from US\$148 billion to almost US\$200 billion, placing the future of millions of learners at risk.
4. **We acknowledge** the economic strain that COVID-19 is putting on our national economies and budgets, and recognize that education is key to the pandemic response and to long term recovery. Without effective responses as students return to school, approximately \$10 trillion of lifetime earnings could be lost for this cohort of learners — because of missed learning opportunities due to school closures and subsequent drop-out by some learners.
5. **We recognize** that to maintain the education momentum generated in the last two decades of GPE support, and to ensure quality education that strengthens human capital and provides the skills and knowledge needed to seize the opportunities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we must address the holistic needs of all learners, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized.

### Our call to action to development partners

6. **We recognize** that GPE is the world's only partnership and fund dedicated entirely to helping children in lower income countries get quality education, and call upon world leaders, development partners and GPE beneficiaries to stand in solidarity and support the GPE replenishment campaign to raise at least \$5 billion for the next 5 years.
7. **We acknowledge** the role that bilateral and multilateral development partners as well as the private sector play in strengthening national governments' education strategies in beneficiary countries, and call upon them to align their support with national education plans.
8. **We welcome** the stronger support in the IMF's Executive Board for a meaningful new allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) to address long-term global liquidity needs. We urge development partners to voluntarily channel their SDRs, including from the new allocation, to benefit countries in need of liquidity support in these exceptional times, in particular to support education financing. In addition, we call for bolder and broader action on debt relief and treatment, beyond the G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative.

## Our commitment

9. **We recognize** that domestic financing is and will remain the most significant and sustainable form of funding for education. Noting that countries with successful education systems have allocated at least 20% of their annual expenditure to education, we commit to move towards and beyond 20% over the next 5 years, and pledge:
  - That countries which have spent more than 20% of their annual expenditure on education will continue to lead by example and protect this level of investment by maintaining education budgets at this level.
  - That countries which have previously spent below 20% of their annual expenditure on education will progressively increase their funding over the next 5 years towards the 20% threshold.
10. **We commit** to ensuring equity in access to quality education, and to making available resources reach the most marginalized children, especially girls. We commit to prioritizing gender equity, with a specific commitment to improving girls' education, and increasing investments for inclusion of children with disabilities or other historically excluded groups.
11. **We commit** to placing greater emphasis on improving learning outcomes in our education systems, and employing new techniques and methodologies that have been proven to yield better results for our students. **We note** the role of technology in improving learning outcomes and commit to leverage technology-supported learning to improve equity in access to education and to close the digital divide.
12. **We further pledge** to ensure efficient use of available resources for education by addressing systems inefficiencies, including high repetition and dropout rates, and inefficiencies in teacher management and distribution, and to improve accountability and transparency. Savings accrued from increased efficiency coupled with increased financing will be instrumental towards strengthening organizational capacity of our learning institutions and in so doing, improving on service delivery.
13. **We applaud** our teachers for their incredible commitment and resilience in sustaining teaching and learning during the pandemic. **We commit** to continue investing in strengthening their capacity, recognizing the instrumental role they play in determining learning outcomes.

## The way forward

14. We adopt this Call to Action, and raise our hands in solidarity to strengthen our education systems to secure a stable and prosperous future for our children.