

Education for All Act of 2010 (H.R. 5117) Frequently Asked Questions

The Education for All Act of 2010 was introduced by Reps. Lowey (D-NY) and Reichert (R-WA).

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While the U.S. has provided strong global leadership to help open classroom doors for children around the world, there are still 72 million primary school-aged children not in school, the majority of who are girls. International efforts are failing to mobilize the resources and commitments needed from both donor and developing countries to ensure that every child receives a quality basic education. Without new leadership and new direction, as laid out in the Education for All Act of 2010, 56 million children will still be out of school in 2015, which is the target date for achieving universal primary education. Moreover, many children who are in school by then won't have the resources they need to learn and excel. We need a bolder, bigger, and more effective global initiative for education.

Who supports the Education for All Act?

A broad range of U.S. civil society organizations, including major teacher unions (NEA and AFT) representing nearly five million teachers, strongly support the Education for All Act.

The Global Campaign for Education: GCE was founded in 1999 and brings together major non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and teachers' unions in more than 100 countries. RESULTS is a member of the leadership council of the U.S. Chapter of the Global Campaign for Education, which is a broad-based coalition of more than 30 non-governmental and religious organizations, teachers' unions, foundations and child advocates to promote the cause of universal basic education in the world's poorest countries.

The EFA Act is supported by GCE-US coalition members including:

- RESULTS/RESULTS Education Fund
- The ONE Campaign
- National Education Association
- American Federation of Teachers
- Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution
- United Methodist General Board of Church and Society
- Global AIDS Alliance
- National Peace Corps Association
- Global Action for Children
- Islamic Relief
- School Girls Unite
- Connect To Learn — A Global Education Initiative of The Earth Institute, Ericsson & Millennium Promise

Does the bill authorize funding?

The bill does not specify an authorization level, but authorizes “such sum as may be necessary” to carry out the provisions in the bill.

The U.S. currently contributes funding through bilateral programs for global basic education:

FY07: \$485 million	FY08: \$694 million	FY09: \$700 million
FY10: \$925 million	FY11: \$840 million (president’s request)	

Does the bill support bilateral and multilateral efforts?

Yes. The bill reinforces support of both bilateral and multilateral programs. It states that “the United States should contribute on a multilateral basis in a manner that leverages overall impact and best reinforces United States bilateral aid efforts, which should remain central to United States efforts in basic education.”

Regarding multilateral support, the bill specifically calls on the U.S. to support a multilateral education initiative, like the Fast Track Initiative or a new multilateral Global Fund for Education (GFE):

“A new multilateral initiative should be independent and governed equally by donors, developing country governments, and civil society based on the following principles:

- transparency with respect to financing, key policy decisions, and impact;
- coordination among governments, private sector, and civil society;
- mutual accountability between donors and recipients for achieving measurable results in access and quality;
- alignment with host country priorities; and
- predictable, long-term funding disbursed in a timely manner.”

Why call for a new Global Fund for Education?

In 2002, the Education for All Fast-Track Initiative (FTI) was initiated by the World Bank. The FTI is a partnership between donor and developing countries to ensure accelerated progress towards achieving universal primary education by 2015. Open to all low-income countries and supported by every major donor for education, the FTI has created bilateral (country-to-country) partnerships to support country-developed national education programs to ensure effective investments, measurable outcomes, and concrete results.

However, the FTI is failing to galvanize sufficient funding to support national education plans to achieve EFA — for 2010 alone, the FTI needs an estimated \$395 million to meet demand for countries coming forward this year for grants. Combined with recent declines in bilateral aid for education, the FTI shortfall underscores that the status quo financing architecture is clearly not sufficient to ensure all kids a quality education.

The Global Fund for Education should become the next generation of the FTI by building upon its demonstrated strengths, identifying areas that can be reformed, capitalizing on lessons learned, and leveraging new opportunities globally to meet the Education for All goals. By expanding the resources of

the FTI so that it can better support countries in need, such as fragile or conflict-affected states, a Global Fund for Education would better align aid with country-driven priorities, improve the impact of bilateral aid and make our investments in global education produce better results for vulnerable children around the world.

Why Is U.S. leadership needed?

The U.S. is seen as the global leader on development and both donor and developing countries take cues from our actions. U.S. funding also leverages funding from other donors (e.g., U.S. contributions to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria are match on a 2:1 basis), and developing countries are strongly compelled to initiate reforms and increase their own commitments once the U.S. is involved.

Given the impact of declining aid for basic education globally, 2010 will only be a year of transformative action for global education if the U.S. is fully committed to achieving Education for All and takes concrete steps to bring leaders together to create a new multilateral, multi-donor response to the education crisis — a new Global Fund for Education — that would increase global funding commitments, coordination, transparency, and accountability to achieve universal quality education.

Does the president support these goals?

Yes, President Obama is supportive of global education. In fact, during the presidential campaign in 2008, he stated his intention to sign the 2007 Education for All Act into law. He also pledged \$2 billion for a global education fund. This commitment was reiterated by Secretary of State Clinton during her confirmation hearings; as a senator, Secretary Clinton introduced the Education for All Act of 2007. At the September 2009 UN General Assembly meeting, President Obama announced he would come to the 2010 UN Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Summit with a plan to achieve the MDGs — which include Education for All.

How much money is needed to get all kids into school?

An estimated \$16 billion in aid is needed annually to reach basic education goals in the world's poorest countries.¹

Unfortunately, donor country funding commitments are stagnating. 2007 funding levels for basic education in low-income countries amounted to \$4.3 billion, a 22 percent decline from the previous year. More worryingly, these declines appear to indicate a trend which has continued through 2010. Half of all commitments to basic education come from just a handful of donors.

The poorest don't always receive what funding there is for education: although 80 percent of all out-of-school children live in low-income countries, they receive less than half of all education funding, and

¹ According to UNESCO's EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010, the financing gap is the average annual financing gap universal primary education and support for pre-primary and adult literacy in low-income countries that is calculated as the difference between the total investment required and the levels of domestic financing associated with all countries reaching "best effort" thresholds by 2015

nearly one-third of all education resources specifically for basic education went to middle-income countries in 2007.²

What would a new Global Fund for Education cost?

In 2010, donor countries should contribute funding to support universal quality education and catalyze a new multilateral initiative. An exact estimate of how much funding the GFE would need per year is unknown, as it would be needs-based and driven by applications from developing countries. But one of the most important contributions the U.S. can make right now is to provide the leadership to galvanize global support for this new, robust multilateral education initiative.

A new Global Fund for Education would be a multilateral organization that is created and supported by the entire global education community, including donor and developing countries, as well as multilateral organizations, the private sector, and civil society. It would continue to encourage and harmonize bilateral aid programs undertaken by FTI, while also fulfilling the promise of efficient disbursements of multilateral funding to countries with the greatest need.

Other donors, especially the Europeans, support the FTI, but are looking for an improved way to channel funding in order to increase aid commitments for education. The GFE is also an important opportunity to engage emerging bilateral donors, such as Korea and UAE, who would be compelled to give to a new education initiative, especially one they can support alongside the United States.

A Global Fund for Education should also involve private sector partners, including both corporations and private foundations, which are currently omitted from the FTI.

What should be the guiding principles of a GFE?

National Ownership: One of the great strengths of the FTI that should be a core building block of its evolution into the GFE is the focus on supporting comprehensive national education plans. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness states that developing countries commit to “exercise leadership in developing and implementing their national development strategies through broad consultative processes.” The FTI has been a model for ensuring national ownership of development plans; an expanded initiative on global education must be grounded in these country-driven education sector plans while seeking to expand the consultative process to include in-country civil society.

Participatory Governance and Independence: Participatory governance at both the global and the national level will be essential to the success of the GFE. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria ensures that civil society and developing countries have equal representation at the global level and are key partners in the country-level planning and proposal processes. The GFE should provide for equal representation in the governance structures for donors, developing countries, and civil society and mandate the participation of all stakeholders in the development of national education plans. There

² UNESCO. Aid Brief 2009: Recent Trends in Aid to Education. April 23, 2009. Available at: <http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/GMR/pdf/gmr2009/Final%20aid%20brief%20April%202009.pdf>.

should also be a Secretariat that operates independently of any individual international organization to ensure effective management and accountability for results.

Multilateral, Multi-donor, Multi-instrument: A strong and inclusive GFE must provide a framework for increased and improved aid mobilized through a variety of modalities, while at the same time seeking to enhance multilateralism with an increased share of resources flowing through multilateral channels. The GFE should harmonize the multiple development actors so all efforts have a greater impact together. Without enhanced multilateralism, it will be extremely difficult to ensure the rapid disbursement of resources to countries most at risk for failing to achieve universal basic education.

Adhering to Global Principles for Aid Effectiveness: Responding to the Accra Agenda for Action on Aid Effectiveness, the GFE will coordinate all aid — delivered through diverse channels — and focus on ensuring adherence to the broadly-accepted principles of aid effectiveness: strengthening country ownership; building effective and inclusive partnerships; and delivering and accounting for development results.

Increased, Longer-Term, and More Predictable Financing: The GFE will have to mobilize resources on a scale far beyond what has been possible so far. The engagement of higher-level political figures in the governance and replenishment processes will be vital. It is no less important that both national education strategies and donor commitments are integrated multi-year approaches so that countries can engage in resource-based planning and long-term predictable financing commitments become the norm. The financing target should be based on independent assessments at the individual country level by the UNESCO Global Monitoring Team or similar experts.

Accountability for Results: It will be essential to hold all stakeholders accountable for achieving results. At the country level, improved oversight and accountability of aid flows and monitoring of the learning outcomes as a result of these investments is a critical dimension of this challenge. So too is improved transparency and benchmarks for realizing donor commitments on financing for education. The GFE needs effective benchmarks for all stakeholders — donors, recipients, and implementers — and public disclosure of the results it is achieving.