

Civil society welcomes a positive step forward for education at the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Financing Conference

1-2 February 2018, Dakar, Senegal



The replenishment campaign of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) for 2018-2020 was co-hosted by Macky Sall, President of Senegal, and Emmanuel Macron, President of France.

The replenishment campaign of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) for 2018-2020 aimed to raise the funds needed to deliver GPE 2020, the partnership's strategic plan, and increase global education financing to ensure SDG 4 can be achieved. The campaign culminated in the GPE Financing Conference in Dakar which was co-hosted by Macky Sall, President of Senegal, and Emmanuel Macron, President of France.

Civil society organisations (CSOs), as with all other stakeholders, welcomed the positive outcomes of the GPE Financing Conference. The event was a significant high-level moment for education internationally with 10 current heads of state, 100 Ministers, and 1,200 participants, consisting of government officials, civil society, foundations, multilateral organisations, and the private sector, attending.

Donors pledged \$2.3 billion to the GPE fund, with further pledges to be confirmed. Even more impressive, however, was the fact that over 50 developing countries pledged a combined \$30 billion to their own national education budgets, taking the projected total till 2020 to \$110 billion. Further details about the respective country pledges can be found on the [GPE website](#).

While donor pledges will continue to remain very important in achieving the SDG 4 Goal and its targets (much more donor funding is needed), the pledges from developing countries signal the increasing importance of domestic financing in ensuring the sustainable funding needed for governments to meet their obligations to fulfil the right to education for all.

The Education Financing Conference consisted of an initial Partnership Day on 1 February where all stakeholders (donors, multilateral organisations, foundations, CSOs, private sector representatives), were involved in discussions on key education financing issues. This was followed by the Replenishment Day where government leaders in turn were able to announce their funding pledges for education in front of the full assembly of participants.



The Global Campaign for Education (GCE) facilitated a session that promoted the work of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF), entitled 'Civil Society Advocacy in Sustainably Financing Education'.

Civil society was prominent in the Partnership Day, with many CSOs presenting, facilitating, and participating actively in many forums. Key education issues were analysed with the lens of education financing. Issues included equity and inclusion, education for the future, with a focus on youth, education in emergencies, and improved and more equitable learning outcomes.

The Global Campaign for Education (GCE) facilitated a session that promoted the work of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF), entitled 'Civil Society Advocacy in Sustainably Financing Education'. GCE President, Camilla Croso, and GCE Global Coordinator, Chike Ayanwu, presented at the session, along with Cheikh Mbow, National Coordinator of Coordination des ONG et Syndicats pour la Défense d'une Education Publique de Qualité (COSYDEP). Additionally, ASPBAE CSEF Regional Coordinator,

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ASPBAE's Helen Dabu (R) presented on behalf of the Global Campaign for Education.

Bernie Lovegrove, summarised the key work of national education coalitions in the Asia Pacific and introduced four national coalition representatives to the forum - Chin Chanveasna, NEP Cambodia; Noopur, NCE India; Addie Unsi, E-Net Philippines; and Ram Gaire, NCE Nepal.

The Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA) made a presentation on '*Africa Funding Africa: Is Domestic Financing Myth or Reality*'. A number of Foundation and NGO representatives presented in a session entitled, '*Accountable Financing: What Does GPE*

Funding to Support Education as an Accountable Human Right Involve at a time of Growing Privatisation?'. ASPBAE's CSEF Deputy Coordinator, Helen Dabu, also presented on behalf of GCE.

Another session that gained strong interest was on '*Tax Justice and Education Financing*', organised by ActionAid, GCE, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), and the Global Alliance for Tax Justice. Panelists included Camila Croso, GCE President, and David Archer, Head of Program Development, ActionAid.

Camilla Croso, Chiekh Mbow (COSYDEP), and David Edwards, Secretary General, Education International, all presented in larger afternoon forums on issues related to equity and inclusion, and improving education systems, with a focus on teachers.

At the Replenishment Day itself, President Macron of France and President Macky Sall of Senegal lead the way with generous pledges. As part of a panel plenary in front of the 1,200 participants, GCE President, Camilla Croso, was able to present common civil society positions.

The concerted effort over the last two years, led by GPE, resulted in the mobilisation of \$32 billion for education that otherwise may not have been secured, so the process and the culminating Replenishment pledging event was important and successful in the achievement of SDG4, and CSOs can be pleased that collectively they played a strong and active role in this process.

The challenge now is to ensure that all the pledges are honoured, and that CSOs work to hold governments to account for them. Another challenge is that the contribution of donor countries did not reach the hoped for \$3.1 billion target of GPE, so CSOs will want to lobby donor countries for increased contributions to play their part.

Other challenges identified by CSOs moving forward is to advocate for increasing domestic tax revenue to enable increases in domestic education budgets. Additionally, CSOs will need advocate to ensure that, in GPE calculations, debt servicing is included when determining the percentage of the national budget that goes to education.

This write-up contains excerpts from the [GPE website](#).



ASPBAE's Bernie Lovegrove (L) at the GPE Financing Conference with national education coalition representatives from NEP Cambodia, NCE India, E-Net Philippines, and NCE Nepal.