



Total Reach, Total Learning: Education Beyond 2015

Preliminary messages from the Global Campaign for Education – U.S. Chapter

The Global Campaign for Education, U.S. Chapter (GCE-US) is a broad-based coalition of U.S. organizations that promotes access to education as a basic human right and mobilizes the public to create political will in the U.S. and internationally to improve education for the world's poorest children. Its members include 10x10, Association for Childhood Education Internationally (ACEI), AGE Africa, American Federation of Teachers (AFT), American Institutes for Research (AIR), Batonga Foundation, Brookings Center for Universal Education, Building Tomorrow, BuildOn, CARE, Center for Global Development, Child Labor Coalition, Children's Fund, Concern Worldwide – U.S., Connect to Learn, FHI360, GirlUp Foundation, Global Girl Media, IREX, Mali Nyeta, Inc., Mercy Corps, Mission EduCare, Model26, National Association for Education of Young Children, National Education Association (NEA), National Peace Corps Association, New Global Citizens, Nobility Project, ONE Campaign, Open Equal Free, Oxfam International, Plan International USA, Religious Action Center of Reformed Judaism, RESULTS Educational Fund, Save the Children, School Girls Unite, Simply Equal Education, United Methodist General Board of Church and Society, University of Maryland, U.S. Fund for UNICEF, World Education and Development Fund, World Learning, Women Thrive Worldwide.

www.gce-us.org
1730 Rhode Island Ave. NW Suite 400 | Washington, D.C. 20036

Introduction:

A Post-2015 Education Goal

The year 2015 marks the end of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As the world makes a final push to achieve the current MDGs, the international community is beginning to explore the framework for global development and poverty reduction goals beyond 2015. This brief is a result of a consultation process between the Global Campaign for Education-US (GCE-US) Secretariat and the broadly diverse 40 member organizations of its coalition that include education program implementers on both national and community based levels, teacher unions, advocacy organizations, think tanks, and faith-based institutions. This brief is meant to inform policymakers in advance of any decisions on the post-2015 agenda and goals. In summary, GCE-US calls for **an education goal that:**

- ✓ **Targets learning more broadly than literacy and numeracy alone.**
- ✓ **Increases learning inputs, namely trained teachers and learning materials, that are imperative to attaining this goal.**
- ✓ **Expands equitable access to pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary quality education.**
- ✓ **Supports national governments in upholding the right to education.**

These may be achieved through a post-2015 education goal such as:

Post-2015 Education Goal:

By 2030, all children and youth are receiving a quality pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary education.

Indicators of such an education goal should include:

Indicator 1: Proportion of children and youth –disaggregated for girls, children with disabilities, children of ethnic minorities, and children in fragile and conflict-affected areas – enrolled in pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary school and their attendance rates.

Indicator 2: Trained teacher-pupil ratios and textbook-pupil ratios.

Indicator 3: Proportion of children and youth demonstrating adequate abilities in all learning domains.*

** defined on page 8*

Education as a Human Right and an Urgent Global Priority

The right to education and the objectives within it must be a guiding force in the design of post-2015 goals. First established by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and more fully explicated by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other UN treaties, the right to education is a thoroughly developed system of objectives and obligations. These objectives include universal and free primary education, increasingly universal and free secondary education, adequate and appropriately trained teachers, and improved teaching and learning environments.

Moreover, as the world envisions global challenges beyond 2015, certain cross-cutting issues come into focus. Economic stability and youth unemployment, security and conflict, climate change and environmental sustainability – education is at the center of all of these leading global challenges and their solutions. While the development of social sectors is interrelated, education plays a particularly critical role.

Economic stability and employment:

- Young people who have not completed secondary school are more likely to be unemployed than those who have acquired a secondary school qualification.¹
- One extra year of education increases a person's wages approximately 10 percent. For girls, the rate of return for one additional year of primary education is as high as 15 percent.²
- Every \$1 spent on a person's education yields \$10-15 in economic growth over that person's working lifetime.³
- An additional average year of schooling boosts gross domestic product (GDP) by 0.37 percent annually. When learning outcomes are also substantially improved, the impact on annual GDP growth is up to 2 percentage points.⁴

Health

- Children of mothers with a full primary education are 40 percent more likely to survive to age 5.⁵
- The largest contributing factor to reducing child malnutrition has been the education of women – even more so than direct food aid.⁶

¹ OECD (2009). OECD Labour and Employment Ministerial Meeting – Tackling the Jobs Crisis. Paris.

<http://www.oecd.org/employment/ministerial/43765276.pdf>

² Psacharopoulos, G. (1994). Returns to Investment in Education: A Global Update. Latin America and the Caribbean Region: The World Bank.

http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/1993/01/01/000009265_3961003230826/Rendered/PDF/multi_page.pdf

³ UNESCO (2012). EFA Global Monitoring Report 2012: Youth and skills: Putting education to work. Paris: UNESCO.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002180/218003e.pdf>

⁴ Hanushek, E. A., Jamison, D. T., Jamison, E. A., and Woessmann, L. (2008). Education and Economic Growth. *Education Next*, Spring 2008, 62–71. <http://taubcenter.org.il/tauborgilwp/wp-content/uploads/Hanushek-Taub-Presentation2.pdf>

⁵ GCE-US (2010). Investing in Education Saves Lives. http://www.results.org/uploads/files/GCE_-_Education_and_Health_06_15_10.pdf

⁶ Ibid.

- In sub-Saharan Africa alone, 700,000 HIV cases could be prevented each year if all children received a primary education.⁷

Security and conflict:

- Every additional year of schooling reduces an adolescent boy's risk of becoming involved in conflict by 20 percent.⁸
- According to one study, a country that has more than 87 percent of its children in school can decrease the risk of conflict by nearly 75 percent.⁹
- Eight out of the 10 countries with the lowest primary enrollment rates in the world experienced some form of conflict between 1990 and 2005.¹⁰

Climate change and environmental sustainability:

- Quality education impacts factors that affect sustainability, including poverty, reproductive health and population growth.¹¹
- Evidence shows that a better understanding of scientific knowledge is associated with greater environmental awareness.¹²
- Critical thinking and problem-solving skills help learners make informed decisions about how to adapt to a changing environment.¹³

If international development targets beyond 2015 are to address the world's greatest challenges, the global community must commit to improving education by including an education goal in the post-2015 agenda and providing adequate financing to achieve this goal.

The Greatest Global Need in Education:

Learning as the Focus of Education Beyond 2015

While learning may seem inherent to education, lessons from the current education MDG have taught the world that one does not necessarily follow the other. With a focus on access, the current MDGs have contributed to the increase in primary school enrollment rates from 82 percent in 1999 to 89 percent in 2010, with much greater gains in sub-Saharan Africa (58 percent to 76 percent).¹⁴ Nevertheless, many are still out of school, and dropout rates remain high. Further, global and regional learning assessment initiatives have called attention to the

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Save the Children (2009). Rewrite the Future: Three Years On.

http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/docs/Rewrite_the_Future_Three_Years_On_hires_1.pdf

⁹ Thyne, C. L. (2006). ABC's, 123's, and the Golden Rule: The Pacifying Effect of Education on Civil War, 1980–1999. *International Studies Quarterly* 50, 733–754. <http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/thyne-ISQ-06.pdf>

¹⁰ GCE-US (2010). Building Peace and Security through Education. http://c1293232.r32.cf0.rackcdn.com/Global_Security_no_citations.pdf

¹¹ Adams, A. M. (2012). The Education Link: Why Learning is Central to the Post-2015 Global Development Agenda. Center for Universal Education at Brookings.

<http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2012/12/education%20post%202015%20adams/12%20education%20post%202015%20adams.pdf>

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ UNESCO (2012). EFA Global Monitoring Report 2012: Youth and skills: Putting education to work. Paris: UNESCO.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002180/218003e.pdf>

reality that, far too often, the completion of a primary level education is not resulting in the acquisition of the expected knowledge, skills, and aptitudes. The latest estimates indicate that of the 650 million children of primary school age, 120 million (18 percent) do not reach grade four and an additional 130 million (20 percent) who are in school are not learning the basics.¹⁵ Improving the quality of education is the key to curbing dropout rates and achieving learning outcomes, thereby giving meaning to enrollment and completion.

Principles of Formulation:

Key Principles of a Global Learning Goal

As the post-2015 learning goal is developed, GCE-US urges the authors to follow these principles:¹⁶

- **Learning must be broadly defined:** Much attention in the post-2015 education discussions has focused on a narrow view of learning – as testing in reading and mathematics. This view must be expanded. First, a quality education is much broader than immediate literacy and numeracy outcomes. Second, testing is only a thermometer. It can indicate an outcome success or failure but not address the cause of the failure, which relates to inadequate resources, inputs, processes, and out-of-school inequalities.

In the push for literacy and numeracy as the primary indicators of learning, other early grade school subjects – such as history, social studies, geography, health, and science – have been de-emphasized or even eliminated in some countries. Schools need to foster broader cognitive and personal development, including critical and higher order thinking, problem-solving, civic-mindedness, self-discipline, leadership, and more. Selecting only one or two outcomes, like literacy or numeracy, to emphasize and measure distorts education processes and leads to inefficient and ineffective decisions on learning inputs. Learning to read is of course important, but it must be approached in the context of local school-to-work needs and the broad school curriculum.

- **Inputs to learning must be provided:** The conversation about a learning goal for 2015 and beyond is currently dominated by considerations of how to measure progress towards such a goal. This is a necessary conversation: countries and the world need to know if improvements in learning are taking place as desired. However, while the post-2015 discussion centers on how to assess and measure learning outcomes, there is a notable silence as to the inputs required to actually improve them. The post-2015 goal can be outcome-oriented, but inputs must be given equal consideration: the desired outcomes will not be achieved without the correct inputs. Certain key educational

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ These principles largely build on some of those initially recommended by GCE-US member Dr. Steven J. Klees of the University of Maryland as found in Klees, S., Ph. D. (2012, September 27). Principles for a post-2015 EFA and education MDGs. Global Campaign for Education – U.S. Chapter. <http://www.campaignforeducationusa.org/blog/post/principles-for-a-post-2015-efa-and-education-mdgs>.

inputs are incontestable and should be the focus of global efforts toward improving learning. These include:

- **Teachers as Professionals:** Quality education requires skilled teachers with access to ongoing professional development. At the primary level, 1.7 million additional teachers are needed to deliver Universal Primary Education by 2015. In total, 114 countries have primary teacher gaps, and the gap in Africa alone is nearly 1 million teachers.¹⁷ A post-2015 learning goal must pay explicit attention to teachers. Teachers must be treated as respected professionals, adequately compensated, trained, and provided the support necessary to effectively do their jobs. This includes appropriate pre-service training as well as routine in-service training to ensure that teachers are not only up-to-date on the most recent curriculum content and pedagogy but also provided professional development opportunities to retain their investment in their field. Trained-teacher-per-pupil ratios may be helpful indicators in monitoring progress in this area and a learning goal as a whole.
- **Supplying teaching and learning materials:** Many schools are lacking the most basic of teaching and learning materials – textbooks, notebooks, science kits, pens, even chalk – and this has an impact on learning outcomes and the value of the education imparted and received at those schools. Increasingly, access to and familiarity with computer and mobile technologies and the internet are critical components of a quality education. With the increase in enrollment, many countries have successfully put children into rooms; it is now time to put students in classrooms. Adequate and appropriately trained teachers sufficiently supported with teaching and learning materials are the primary means to converting rooms to classrooms. As the provision of learning materials are being monitored, book-pupil ratios may act as a valuable indicator.
- **Access to pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary education must be equitable:** Although progress has been made on access to primary education, at least 10 percent of primary school age children are not in school – 61 million children. Out-of-school children are on the rise in sub-Saharan Africa, increasing from 29 million in 2008 to 31 million in 2010. Additionally, 71 million teenagers are out of secondary school and are not developing the critical skills necessary for employment.¹⁸ We are thus still far from meeting the original pledges made in the MDGs concerning primary education, and even further from providing such access to early childhood and lower secondary education. Access must remain a focus of global efforts.

Further, while access and enrollment on the aggregate has increased since 2000, it is evident that mass inequalities exist just below the surface. Girls, ethnic minorities,

¹⁷ UIS as in GCE & EI (2012). Closing the Trained Teacher Gap. Johannesburg: GCE.

http://www.campaignforeducation.org/docs/reports/ECNAT%20Report_RGB.pdf

¹⁸ UIS (2012). UNESCO eAtlas of Out-of-School Children. <http://www.app.collinsindicate.com/uis-atlas-out-of-school-children/en-us>

children with disabilities, and children in fragile and conflict-affected areas have in particular been largely left out of the primary school access success stories generated by the current education MDGs. One-third of the world's children out of primary school are children with disabilities, and 28 million of the 61 million out of school children (46 percent) live in fragile or conflict-affected countries.¹⁹ One-half (31 million) of all children out of primary school are in sub-Saharan Africa, and one out of four girls in the region are not accessing basic education.²⁰

Moving past 2015, continued efforts in the area of access should be expanded beyond primary education into pre-primary and lower secondary education, and the monitoring of progress on universal access at national and regional levels must be disaggregated to pay specific attention to girls, ethnic minorities, children with disabilities, and children in fragile and conflict-affected areas.

- **Governments must be supported to uphold the right to education:** National governments bear ultimate responsibility for providing free, public education to their people. Thus, education development efforts should be driven by the government, and international assistance for education development should strengthen government systems and support national education plans. Concerted international efforts to improve education worldwide should focus on strengthening public education systems.

All of the principles outlined above – adequate and appropriately trained teachers, improved teaching and learning environments, universal and free primary education, and increasingly universal and free secondary education – are stipulations of the right to education under the UN system that are to be progressively realized by national governments. Implementation of a post-2015 learning goal must support national governments to responsibly uphold the right to education to their citizens.

A Post-2015 Education Goal:

All Children and Youth Learning

While the above principles are numerous, a single, concise global goal can nevertheless be articulated. This goal need not include all aspects of the above principles as some of them may more appropriately speak to indicators of a goal. It is clear that, if anything, a quality basic education in which learning transpires for all children is the collective priority of education stakeholders around the world. With basic education consisting of pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary school, the following goal may be articulated:

¹⁹ UNESCO (2011). EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011: The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education. Paris: UNESCO. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001907/190743e.pdf>

²⁰ UIS (2012). UNESCO eAtlas of Out-of-School Children. <http://www.app.collinsindicate.com/uis-atlas-out-of-school-children/en-us>

Post-2015 Education Goal:

By 2030, all children and youth are receiving a quality pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary education.

When this goal is unpacked, its ambition becomes clear:

“By 2030”: The goal is to be achieved by all countries by the year 2030.

“all children and youth”: The goal applies to all people ages 0 to 24, and given current issues around marginalized access to education, “all” implicitly connotes girls, children with disabilities, children of ethnic minorities, and children in fragile and conflict-affected areas.

“quality”: The basic education provided to children and youth is to meet certain quality standards, as explicated by the indicators below. Among other things, “quality” here is in direct relation to improved learning outcomes.

“pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary education”: The goal focuses explicitly on basic education, defined as pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary school.

Indicators of a Global Goal on Learning:

Measuring Success at All Levels

The suggested minimum indicators for this goal are as follows. These indicators speak to different aspects of achieving the above goal, and all must be monitored to ensure success:

Indicator 1: *Proportion of children and youth –disaggregated for girls, children with disabilities, children of ethnic minorities, and children in fragile and conflict-affected areas – enrolled in pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary school and their attendance rates.*

Indicator 2: *Trained teacher-pupil ratios and textbook-pupil ratios.*

Indicator 3: *Proportion of children and youth demonstrating adequate abilities in all learning domains.**

** defined on page 8*

Indicator 1: Proportion of children and youth – disaggregated for girls, children with disabilities, children of ethnic minorities, and children in fragile and conflict-affected

areas – enrolled in pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary school and their attendance rates:

The first step to guaranteeing a quality education for all children is to ensure access to it. But as we have learned from the current education MDGs, we must be careful as to how that is measured. Net enrollment alone has proven to be a poor indicator of access as it is typically recorded once, at the beginning of the year: enrollment can be high while attendance may be low. Thus both enrollment rates and attendance rates are necessary in evaluating if education is being continually accessed.

We have also learned that measuring access in the aggregate can easily mask inequity. Thus indicators of enrollment and attendance should be further disaggregated to particularly track that of marginalized populations, including, at least, girls, children with disabilities, children of ethnic minorities, and children in fragile and conflict-affected areas.

Indicator 2: Trained teacher-pupil ratios and textbook-pupil ratios:

We have also learned that access alone is not enough, and in efforts to improve learning outcomes, we must ensure that children are accessing quality learning environments. While inputs to learning are innumerable and their individual impacts on learning still being researched, some incontestably contribute to the learning process. Available and adequately trained teachers and sufficient textbooks are minimal inputs to learning that must be further developed and monitored.

Although an input indicator may at first seem incongruous with an outcome-oriented goal, the special nature of learning merits ongoing measurements of this level. Remaining silent on inputs may result in the measuring of learning outcomes without any clear steps taken to actually improve them. However, there are concrete steps that can immediately be emphasized to improve learning, such as guaranteeing available and adequately trained teachers and abundant textbooks.

Indicator 3: Proportion of children and youth demonstrating adequate abilities in all learning domains:

Finally, after ensuring that all children are accessing a basic education and that this education meets certain standards in terms of learning inputs, learning itself must be measured to verify that access to a quality basic education is resulting in children and youth acquiring the desired knowledge, skills, and abilities. This is a complex undertaking, and UNESCO and the Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution have convened a Learning Metrics Task Force to establish a set of learning competencies and how they should be measured. Thus far, the Task Force has identified seven domains of learning:

- Physical well-being
- Social and emotional

- Culture and the arts
- Literacy and communication
- Learning approaches and cognition
- Numeracy and mathematics
- Science and technology

With the global momentum toward a post-2015 learning goal and the Learning Metrics Task Force positioned to be the primary contributor to defining learning competencies and their measurement, the learning domains identified by the Task Force offer the clearest basis for measurement. However, given recent worldwide emphasis on literacy and numeracy in particular, many of these learning domains are at risk of being left behind. With the monitoring of any learning goal or indicator, progress in all learning domains – relative to the level of education – must be measured.

All three of the indicators must be monitored together; one or two alone will not suffice. They have been intentionally designed to together ensure the accomplishing and measuring of the recommended goal. The above indicators marry demand-side progress with supply-side progress to achieve results:

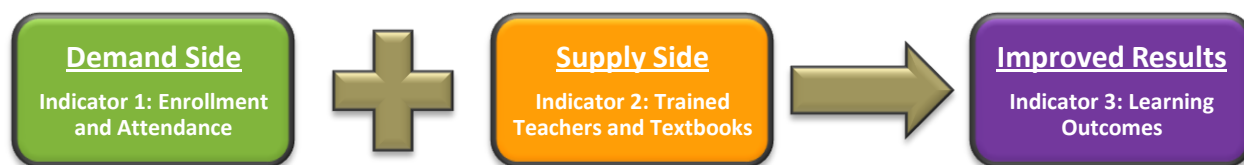


Figure 1: The interrelation of all three indicators

A Comprehensive Framework:

A Post-2015 Goal and Indicators that Embody the Right to Education

It may also be noted that the recommended goal and indicators directly address what is known as the “core content” of the right to education as found in Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. Commonly expressed as the 4-A framework, the core content of the right to education divides education into the functions of availability, accessibility, acceptability, and adaptability:

availability: functioning educational institutions and programs have to be available in sufficient numbers in a country, through a public educational system and allowing private parties to establish non-public schools;

accessibility: educational institutions and programs have to be accessible to everyone, without discrimination on any ground, also including physical and economic accessibility;

acceptability: the form and substance of education, including curricula and teaching methods, has to be relevant, culturally appropriate and of good quality and in accordance with the best interests of the child; this includes a safe and healthy school environment;

adaptability: education has to be flexible, so that it can adapt to the needs of changing societies and communities, and respond to the needs of students within their specific social and cultural context, including the evolving capacities of the child.²¹

While it is impossible for any goal or handful of indicators to address all components of the right to education, the indicators described above speak in some way to all aspects of the core content of the right to education. Enrollment and attendance in basic education for all children and youth – particularly girls, children with disabilities, children of ethnic minorities, and children in fragile and conflict-affected areas – addresses part of the accessibility and adaptability of education. Adequate numbers of trained teachers and textbooks are functions of the availability of education as well as its acceptability. And learning outcomes correlating to the quality of education being provided further speak to its acceptability.

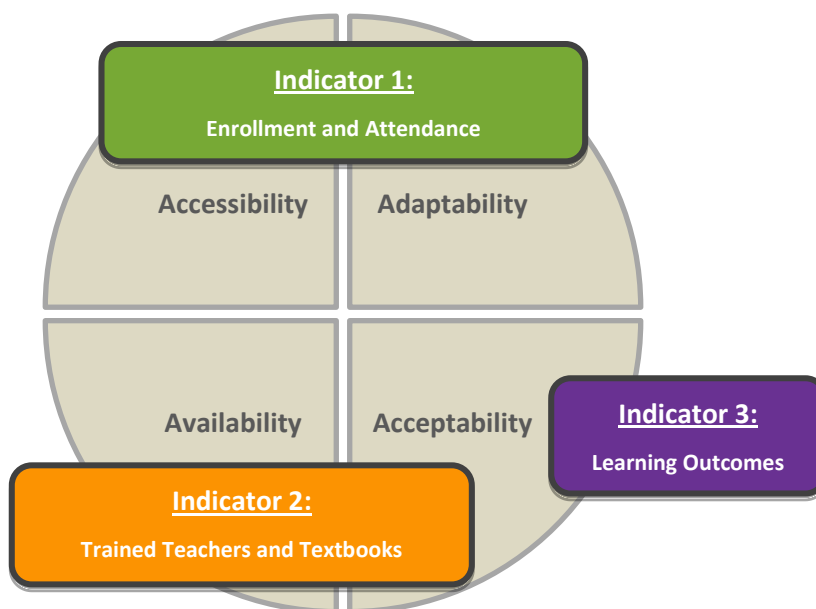


Figure 2: Indicators and the 4-A framework

Leveraging Results:

Building on Current Global Efforts

²¹ Coomans, F., Ph.D. (2007, June). Identifying the key elements of the right to education: A focus on its core content. CRC Day of General Discussion. Geneva, Switzerland. <http://www.crin.org/docs/Coomans-CoreContent-Right%20to%20EducationCRC.pdf>

Finally, it is worth noting how this particular post-2015 education goal and its indicators leverage current global initiatives to improve education worldwide:

Education for All: The suggested post-2015 education goal builds on four out of six of the current Education for All goals,²² namely Goal 1 (Expand early childhood care and education), Goal 2 (Provide free and compulsory primary education for all), Goal 5 (Achieve gender parity by 2005, gender equality by 2015), and Goal 6 (Improve the quality of education).

Education First: The United Nations Secretary-General's new education initiative, Education First,²³ has three priorities: expand access to education, improve the quality of learning, and foster global citizenship. A post-2015 global goal that targets the quality of all levels of basic education for all children will clearly leverage the efforts of Education First. Indicator 1 focuses on access, and Indicator 3 monitors outcomes in all learning domains. The principle of broader learning allows room for global citizenship – not just literacy and numeracy – to be measured.

Global Partnership for Education: The Global Partnership for Education's (GPE) 2012-2015 strategic plan²⁴ sets out five objectives dealing with (1) education in fragile and conflict-affected states, (2) girls' education, (3) literacy and numeracy, (4) teacher training, and (5) education financing. With Indicator 1 monitoring education access of children in fragile and conflict-affected areas and girls, the proposed post-2015 goal will contribute to objectives 1 and 2 of GPE. Indicator 2 directly supports GPE's objective 4, and Indicator 3 will measure, among other things, literacy and numeracy, as in GPE's third objective.

World Bank: The World Bank's Education Strategy 2020, Learning for All,²⁵ will be bolstered by a post-2015 global goal on learning as well.

USAID: Goal 1 of USAID's new education strategy²⁶ targets early grade reading, and Goal 3 concentrates on access to primary education in crisis and conflict environments. Likewise, Indicator 1 seeks to achieve uninterrupted education in conflict-affected states while Indicators 2 and 3 aim to improve the learning environment and measure learning outcomes, including reading.

Global Campaign for Education: The Global Campaign for Education (GCE) has launched a new campaign, Every Child Needs a Teacher,²⁷ calling for the trained teacher gap (1.7 million) to be filled. Indicator 2 addresses this need by ensuring appropriate trained teacher-pupil ratios are a focal point of a global education goal beyond 2015.

²² UNESCO (2000). The Dakar Framework for Action. Paris: UNESCO. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001211/121147e.pdf>

²³ United Nations Secretary-General (2012). Education First. New York: United Nations.

http://www.globaleducationfirst.org/files/EdFirst_G29383UNOPS_lr.pdf

²⁴ GPE (2012). Strategic Plan 2012-2015. http://www.globalpartnership.org/media/docs/library/GPE_Strategic_Plan_2012-2015_English.pdf

²⁵ World Bank (2011). Learning for All: Investing in People's Knowledge and Skills to Promote Development. Washington, DC: World Bank.

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/ESSU/Education_Strategy_4_12_2011.pdf

²⁶ USAID (2011, February). USAID Education Strategy. Washington, DC: USAID.

http://transition.usaid.gov/our_work/education_and_universities/documents/USAID_ED_Strategy_feb2011.pdf

²⁷ GCE & EI (2012). Closing the Trained Teacher Gap. Johannesburg: GCE.

http://www.campaignforeducation.org/docs/reports/ECNAT%20Report_RGB.pdf

