

CIVIL SOCIETY SIGN-ON LETTER IN SUPPORT OF EDUCATION FOR ALL

December 19, 2008

Dear President-Elect Obama,

We, the U.S. community of global education advocates, applaud the dedication you have shown to providing every child with a quality basic education. We are heartened by your public commitment to supporting the Education for All Act and to providing \$2 billion to a Global Fund for Education to eliminate the global education deficit. By recognizing that the world's economy, health and security are intimately linked with education, you have shown the will to address the root causes of poverty, disease and war by investing in Education for All. We fully support your drive to give children around the world the chance to learn by making Education for All a priority for your Administration during your first term.

At this time of fiscal crises, it is even more imperative that we provide the safety net of knowledge to the world's poorest children and save them from paying with their lives for our financial mistakes. In Africa, the chance of a child living beyond age five increases by 40 percent if the mother received five years of primary education. Education also improves the health of families and reduces vulnerability to HIV—if all children had a seat in a classroom, 700,000 new HIV infections could be prevented each year.

Investments in education also leverage huge long-term dividends that are critical for economic growth and stability. We have seen that a single year of primary school increases the wages people earn later in life by 5-15% for boys and even more for girls, and that increasing the number of women in secondary school boosts per capita income growth in a nation. We also know that literate women are more likely to participate in political meetings and to send their children to school. Economic and political stability depend on educational attainment, and it is the foundation of a peaceful society—a gift which America has the power and influence to give to the world's poorest children and to future generations.

By investing \$2 billion in FY2010 in order to begin meeting the annual financing levels called for in the Education for All Act, America will signal its reengagement with the world and its dedication to sustainable development, soft power and most importantly to the right of children to complete a quality basic education. This investment will put the U.S. back on track for committing \$3 billion to universal education by 2012. We stand with you in this endeavor and look forward to working with you throughout your administration to achieve Education for All.

Sincerely,

Africa Action

American Federation of Teachers

Americans for Informed Democracy

American Institutes for Research

American Jewish World Service

Christian Children's Fund

Communities Without Borders

Global Action for Children

Global AIDS Alliance

Global Campaign for Education, U.S. Chapter

Global Kids, Inc.

Heifer International

International Centre on Child Labour and Education

International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS

International Youth Foundation

LIFE for Relief and Development

LitWorld

Maasai Girls Education Fund

National Council of Jewish Women

National Education Association

New Rules for Global Finance Coalition

Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism

RESULTS

School Girls Unite

United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society

Union for Reform Judaism

Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations

Worldfund

US Fund for UNICEF