

# EDUCATION: THE FOUNDATION FOR A PEACEFUL FUTURE



Student Newane Binicia completes a math exercise at the blackboard at the Boyali 2 school in the village of Boyali, Central African Republic as part of a GPE-funded remedial education program. GPE/Eduardo Soteras

Education is critical for building peace and security. The quality and inclusiveness of learning today shape the resilience of societies and the opportunities of tomorrow. The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) supports partner countries to strengthen their education systems to prevent conflict, promote stability and foster peace. As both a fund and a partnership, GPE provides urgent support in times of crisis to ensure children continue to learn and communities recover and rebuild.

## THE CHALLENGE

- ▶ A **global learning crisis** is leaving entire generations without the skills to build stable, prosperous societies. In low- and middle-income countries, 7 in 10 children cannot read a simple story by age 10, putting this generation at risk of losing **US\$21 trillion** in potential lifetime earnings.
- ▶ Despite the scale of the crisis, **education** remains one of the least funded humanitarian sectors, receiving **just 3% of global humanitarian financing** as of 2021.
- ▶ Countries with widespread **education inequality** and economic stagnation face **greater risks of conflict and instability**. High education inequality also substantially increases the risk of violent conflict.
- ▶ **Conflict** is a significant **driver of lost learning**. In 2021, 449 million children—1 in 6 worldwide—lived in areas affected by conflict with **127 million children out of school** as a direct consequence.
- ▶ Education systems in states experiencing fragility often have low investment, challenges with governance and exclusionary policies that **perpetuate instability**.

## EDUCATION FOR MORE PEACEFUL AND STABLE SOCIETIES

Education is a key force for stability. Research by GPE and the Institute for Economics and Peace shows that quality education reduces conflict risk and strengthens social cohesion. Countries with higher secondary school completion rates experience fewer conflicts. Greater female school completion, especially at the primary level, correlates with country stability. Education also promotes economic growth and social equity, addressing the root causes of conflict. More years in school lower the likelihood of violence and higher secondary completion rates are linked to shorter conflicts and lasting peace.

Beyond reducing violence, education that meets the needs of every girl and boy fosters understanding, tolerance and cooperation. Each additional year of schooling decreases the chance of voluntary recruitment into armed groups by 13%. Education further equips young people with the skills to secure jobs, support their communities and to build fairer, more peaceful societies.

*"Without education, there is no growth. Without growth, there are no jobs. Without jobs, there are no opportunities. Without opportunities, there is poverty, instability and displacement."*

Laura Frigenti, GPE CEO

*“Young people have high ambitions for the future. They must be equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to adapt to the rapidly changing landscape of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, thrive in their communities, secure good jobs and build fairer and more peaceful societies.”*

Laura Frigenti, GPE CEO

## GPE APPROACH

Education is a precondition for stable, secure societies. Investing in education is the smart thing to do. Global leaders have a choice for this generation of young people who are out of school: support their access to quality education so they can contribute to solutions for challenges at home and abroad; or continue to exclude them and deepen the simultaneous humanitarian, economic, security and learning crisis around the world.

Building on 20 years of experience, GPE's unique financing and partnership approach focuses on transforming education systems at scale so that every girl and boy learns the skills and knowledge they need to thrive and build resilient societies. GPE collaborates with international organizations to ensure efforts to keep children learning are not duplicated, promoting coordination between humanitarian responses and support from development partners during crises.

Through GPE:

- ▶ **More than \$11 billion** raised for education and 372 million children reached.
- ▶ **\$435 million** in cofinancing unlocked for education in countries experiencing fragility and conflict.
- ▶ **106 million more children** in school in partner countries impacted by fragility and conflict.
- ▶ **\$857 million** accessed by partner countries to mitigate the impact of crises on education, including armed conflict, displacement, health emergencies and natural disasters.
- ▶ **\$277 million in accelerated funding** accessed for temporary shelters, classroom construction, teacher salaries and school meals, supplies and grants.

## ENSURING CHILDREN KEEP LEARNING

GPE supports partner countries to respond to crisis, using innovative financing to increase the volume and impact of donor contributions for education. In **Ukraine**, GPE has provided \$28 million in grants with over \$25 million in cofinancing from UNESCO, Google and Microsoft Corporation. Partnerships with the private sector have been instrumental in ensuring children keep learning in Ukraine, with Microsoft and Google working with the government and UNICEF alongside GPE to set up 39 digital learning centers. Emergency support in Ukraine (totaling over \$53 million) has gone toward distance learning, education reforms and training for teachers in school safety and student psychosocial support.

In **Sudan**, a \$10-million grant is being used to reopen schools, create safe learning spaces and expand access to digital learning. Over 200,000 children now have access to inclusive education despite conflict.

GPE also promotes long-term recovery. In **Haiti**, a partner country since 2008, a GPE Multiplier grant of \$19 million unlocked \$57 million in cofinancing from the World Food Programme, the Inter-American Development Bank and Education Above All to support the country in achieving its 10-year education and training plan (2020 to 2030) that includes revising the national curriculum and using school feeding programs to enroll at least 30,000 children who are out of school and experiencing food insecurity.

The **Central African Republic** has experienced multiple political, economic and security crises over the last decade that have impacted education quality and financing. Since becoming a partner country in 2008, the Central African Republic has received over \$100 million in GPE grants to keep children from dropping out of school and support quality teaching. A remedial education program funded by a \$31.6-million GPE grant and implemented by the World Bank has reached over 100,000 primary school students to strengthen their reading, writing and math skills and included training for teachers, school managers, district heads and inspectors.