



House of Commons  
International Development  
Committee

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**DFID's work on  
education: Leaving no  
one behind?**

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**First Report of Session 2017–19**

*Report, together with formal minutes relating  
to the Report*

*Ordered by the House of Commons  
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## International Development Committee

The International Development Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Department for International Development and its associated public bodies.

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The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No. 152. These are available on the internet via [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk).

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Committee reports are published on the Committee's website and in print by Order of the House. Evidence relating to this Report is published on the relevant inquiry page of the Committee's website.

### Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Fergus Reid (Clerk), Rob Page (Second Clerk), Jake Barker, Faten Hussein, Emma Makey and Louise Whitley (Committee Specialists), Zac Mead (Senior Committee Assistant), Zainab Balogun and Paul Hampson (Committee Assistants), Dong Hyun Kim (Inquiry Assistant) and Estelle Currie (Media Officer).

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## Summary

Education is a fundamental human right which underpins the improving of lives and the eradication of poverty. Despite this, and the aspirations of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) on global educational opportunities, 263 million children and young people remain out of school around the world, and another 330 million are in school but are estimated not to be learning the basics.<sup>1</sup> Some witnesses described this as a 'crisis'.<sup>2</sup>

In 2015 the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were agreed, with Goal 4 addressing global education. One of the central aims of the SDGs is to "leave no one behind", yet to achieve this in education will require a substantial increase in finance, access and quality.

DFID is recognised as a world leader on many aspects of the promotion of education in developing countries. The Department is currently undertaking a policy refresh in this area, and this Report aims to feed into the consultation process of this to help steer the Department to a more effective implementation of SDG4.

UNESCO states that globally, education funding remains substantially below the target level that would be required to meet the ambition of SDG4, estimating the annual shortfall at around \$39 billion.<sup>3</sup> We recognise the Department's continuing commitment to global education, as well as the fact that in the past it has prioritised education in a way other donors have not. However, in order to meet SDG4, spending on education by all donors needs to increase.

The Government has an opportunity to continue leading the way in meeting this challenge. Through its commitment to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the only multilateral fund for education, there is an opportunity to encourage other donors to increase spend in this area. With the next round of funding replenishment approaching, we believe the Department should give the full amount requested by GPE and use its soft power to encourage others to increase their own support.

Without an educated population, a country cannot progress out of poverty. It will not have basic modern marketplace skills, let alone doctors, teachers, lawyers or other professions. The groups most likely to be out of education are the very poorest, girls, disabled children,<sup>4</sup> and those affected by conflict and emergencies. DFID should focus on these groups in order to "leave no one behind". DFID's Value for Money framework should be structured to enable investment in the foundations of development and targeted at the most marginalised groups.

1 The Education Commission, [The Learning Generation: Investing in Education for a Changing World](#) (2016) p. 2, 13

2 For example [Q81 HC639](#)

3 UNESCO, [Pricing the right to education: The cost of reaching new targets by 2030](#), *Policy Paper 18* (2015)

4 Note on terminology: We recognise that there are differing views on the most appropriate definition of disability. Internationally, people-first language reflecting the social model tends to be preferred by disabled people's organisations, for example [Disabled Peoples' International](#). An example is 'people with disabilities' as used in the [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#). In this Report, we use the terminology viewed by UK disabled people's organisations as best reflecting the [social model](#) of disability, as well as human rights charities like [Amnesty International](#). As such, this Report will predominantly refer to 'disabled people' while recognising and respecting other terms and the right of people to self-define.

Girls' education is vitally important, and DFID is doing commendable work in this area through initiatives like the Girls' Education Challenge. It is important for DFID to continue this work, as well as taking on board criticisms of the programme raised in the report of the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI)'s report on "UK aid's support to marginalised girls".<sup>5</sup> The Department should continue to fund innovate programmes to learn what works well in reaching and educating girls.

Disabled children face many barriers to education, both physical and otherwise. A lack of training for teachers and coherence in responding to the needs of this group shows how much work needs to be done to include more disabled children in education. DFID has made great strides with its *Disability Framework*, but now needs to ensure that disability is thoroughly addressed in its global education policy refresh.

In June 2017, UNHCR reported that "over the past two decades, the global population of forcibly displaced people has grown substantially from 33.9 million in 1997 to 65.6 million in 2016, and it remains at a record high".<sup>6</sup> This includes 22.5 million refugees, half of whom are under 18.<sup>7</sup> Over half of the world's registered refugees of school age are not in school; amounting to 3.5 million children not learning.<sup>8</sup> Children caught up in crises should not be denied their right to an education. Humanitarian crises are also becoming more protracted, and DFID's response should reflect this.

DFID's support to private sector schools is controversial, and we recognise that the Department does give the vast majority of its support to public education initiatives. Where DFID has supported private sector providers, it has seen some learning gains, but there are questions as to the sustainability of this model. There is a lack of research into the added value from private sector schools, and research into this area should be supported. Where evidence-based research on low-fee schools does exist, the Department should review the findings.

A child's attendance at school does not necessarily equate to them learning, and as such, the quality of education is obviously also important. Equity between different groups needs to be addressed, and once in school, children should be prepared with transferable skills needed for work. The allocation of DFID's resources between levels of education should be addressed, as the current spend on early years education is very low. More money should be spent on early years education to lay a solid foundation for the development of young children and have greater gains later in their lives.

It is imperative that education programmes are informed by the local context in which they are operating in order to be effective. DFID's education advisers are key to achieving this, but are currently lacking in some countries in which DFID works. Where possible, the Department should maintain an education adviser in each country in which it has a bilateral programme.

5 ICAI, [Accessing, staying and succeeding in basic education – UK aid's support to marginalised girls](#)

6 UNHCR, [Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2016](#) (2017), p. 5

7 UNHCR, [Figures at a Glance](#), accessed 21 August 2017

8 Save the Children, [Losing out on Learning: Providing refugee children the education they were promised](#) (2017), p. 6

If learning outcomes are to be improved, it is essential that more investment is made in data and research, to find out where the weaknesses are and how they can best be tackled. DFID should continue to support research in this area, as well as data collection methods, to understand more about how it can best fulfil SDG4.

# 1 Introduction

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## Our Report

1. Our predecessor Committee commenced an inquiry into DFID's work on global education, and undertook the bulk of the evidence-gathering, in the last Parliament. Following the announcement of the 2017 General Election, that Committee sent a letter to the then Secretary of State for International Development, the Rt Hon Priti Patel MP, outlining its major findings.<sup>9</sup>
2. As a result of this election, the Committee's membership changed significantly. Given recent developments in the sector, and based on the evidence that our predecessor Committee received, we agreed to take evidence from the new Minister responsible for DFID's work on global education and publish a formal report.<sup>10</sup>
3. We heard evidence from the Rt Hon Alistair Burt MP, joint Minister of State in DFID and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, in October 2017 and considered the evidence presented to the predecessor Committee. Half the current Committee were not involved with the framing, evidence-taking nor informal activity of this inquiry from its inception.

## Background

4. Education underpins effective efforts to improve lives and eradicate poverty. It is also a fundamental human right. Article 26 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that:

Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.<sup>11</sup>

5. Education is not just an end in itself. Education can reduce poverty, with the potential for 420 million people to be lifted out of poverty by achieving a secondary education and improving their employment prospects.<sup>12</sup> It also has a major impact upon public health. Children of educated mothers are more likely to be vaccinated and less likely to suffer from malnourishment, and a child whose mother can read is 50 percent more likely to survive past the age of five. If mothers completed primary education, maternal deaths would be reduced by two-thirds, saving 189,000 lives.<sup>13</sup> Education can boost economic growth of a country as well as future income of an individual. Each additional year of schooling

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9 [Letter to the Secretary of State for International Development, concerning DFID's work on education: leaving no one behind? \(31 July 2017\)](#)

10 [Oral Evidence: DFID's work on education: Leaving no one behind? HC367](#). Note: Where questions from this evidence session are referenced, they will be in the format Q (number). Where oral evidence gathered during the predecessor inquiry is referenced, it will include the original reference number, HC639. All written evidence referenced in this Report was collected during the predecessor Committee inquiry, with the exception of a written memorandum provided by DFID following our evidence session with Minister Burt.

11 United Nations, [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), Article 26

12 Global Partnership for Education, [The Benefits of Education](#)

13 *Ibid.*



is estimated to raise average annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth by 0.37%.<sup>14</sup> Educating girls is likely to reduce child marriage and help combat HIV/AIDS.<sup>15</sup> Where the enrolment rate for secondary schooling is 10 percentage points higher than the average, the risk of war has been estimated to be reduced by around three percent.<sup>16</sup> Taking such factors together, it seems clear that education has the potential to not only impact each and every child, but also the wider world, building a healthy, prosperous workforce of the future. Public health is positively affected, reducing the burden of healthcare costs and future epidemics. Education is a human right, which ultimately unlocks the capacity for other human rights to be held, defended and enjoyed.

6. Considerable progress has been made since the Millennium Development Goals were agreed in 2000,<sup>17</sup> but a phenomenal 263 million children and young people remain out of school and another 330 million are in school but are judged not to be “learning the basics”.<sup>18</sup> This presents an enormous challenge. Not only should access to education be increased but, for the benefits of schooling to be realised, learning outcomes for children and young people around the world should be dramatically improved.

7. Poor education systems and low levels of attainment cannot be remedied overnight. It is a long-term challenge. The priority given to immediate impacts from money spent on development—whether evacuating people from disaster stricken areas, containing the spread of a disease or digging a well—is understandable. Education, however, is vulnerable to disruption. Humanitarian crises are also becoming more and more protracted, and a major challenge is coming up with the foundations for a long term solution to the children that otherwise will miss out on their right to an education in such circumstances.

8. In 2015 the Sustainable Development Goals included an ambitious new agenda for global education, which addressed this substantial challenge. SDG4 has a broad remit, committing signatory countries to improve access, quality, equity and lifelong learning (see Box 1). The Goals overall also commit countries to ‘leave no one behind’ and to ensure even the poorest and most marginalised communities are able to learn. Success will require a huge leap in progress, only achievable with political will, strong and inclusive education systems and long-term, sustainable funding from governments. For many low and lower middle-income countries, achieving Goal 4 will require significant support from donors such as the UK. However, as discussed above, there is no easy fix. As Alice Albright (CEO of the Global Partnership for Education) told us, this “is going to be a generational approach ... We have to be in this for the long game”.<sup>19</sup> This presents a challenge for governments and donors alike, as they often have to justify expenditure and demonstrate results to their electorates in a short space of time. This puts education at risk of being deprioritised in favour of areas where there are more visible early results, such as combatting epidemics or infrastructure projects.

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14 *Ibid.*

15 *Ibid.*

16 Global Partnership for Education, [The Benefits of Education](#)

17 Since the year 2000, the number of children in preschool, primary, and secondary school has increased globally, by 20 percent or 243 million students, from 1.224 billion in 2000 to 1.467 billion in 2013. (Education Commission)

18 The Education Commission, [The Learning Generation: Investing in Education for a Changing World](#) (2016) p. 2, 13

19 [Q1 HC639](#)

**Box 1: Global Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning**

By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and Goal-4 effective learning outcomes

By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university

By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship

By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, nonviolent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all

By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries

By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states

Source: UN, [Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) (September 2015)

9. The current context for progress on education is particularly challenging. In June 2017, UNHCR reported that “over the past two decades, the global population of forcibly displaced people has grown substantially from 33.9 million in 1997 to 65.6 million in 2016, and it remains at a record high<sup>20</sup>, including 22.5 million refugees—of which half are under 18.<sup>21</sup> Famine still looms over Somalia, South Sudan, Yemen and north-east Nigeria with 1.4 million children facing an imminent risk of death, and more than five million

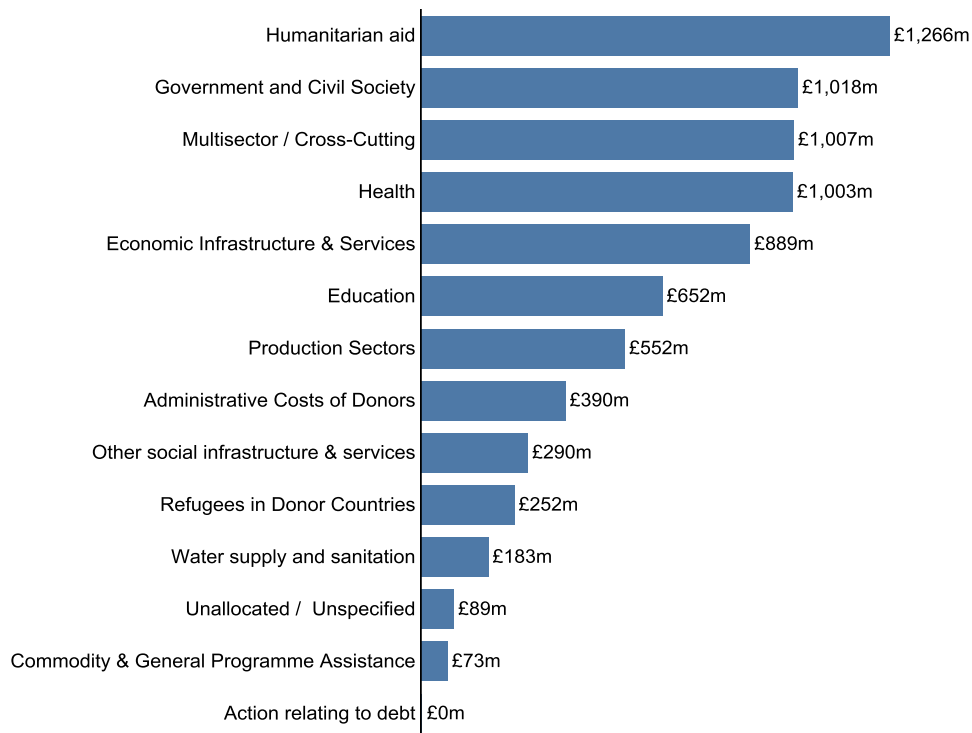
20 UNHCR, [Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2016](#) (2017), p. 5

21 UNHCR, [Figures at a Glance](#), accessed 21 August 2017

threatened with malnourishment.<sup>22</sup> Disasters, such as the recent flooding in Nepal, India and Bangladesh, continue to put lives at risk, displacing families from their homes and children from schools.<sup>23</sup> However, despite all of the problems suffered by the victims of such crises, the evidence shows overwhelmingly that education remains a high priority for children and families in crisis. Recent studies reflecting the voices of 8,749 children showed that 99% of children in emergency situations see education as a priority.<sup>24</sup> Ensuring access to a safe, quality education for all children is vital, and so these challenging circumstances demand attention and action.

10. DFID has traditionally been a leader on global education, described in evidence as “perhaps the most respected bi-lateral voice in the global education space”.<sup>25</sup> The available figures show that the Department has dedicated less of its budget to education than to other areas such as disaster relief, health and government and civil society (see Chart 1 below). In order to support the achievement of the Global Goals—as the UK has committed to do—the Department needs to demonstrate a long-term, sustainable commitment to support access to inclusive, quality education in all its partner countries. The role of education in underpinning all other aspects of development should make it a top priority for the UK. Within that, DFID’s clear commitment to the poorest makes a focus on the most marginalised children the most appropriate policy response.

**Chart 1: Broad Sector breakdown of UK Bilateral ODA, 2015 (£millions)<sup>26</sup>**



22 UNICEF, “[Children paying a disproportionate price as famine looms across Somalia, South Sudan, north-east Nigeria and Yemen](#)”, Statement by UNICEF Deputy Executive Director, Justin Forsyth (18 July 2017)

23 Plan International, “[South Asia floods put thousands of children at risk](#)” (18 August 2017)

24 Save the Children, [What do children want in times of emergency and crisis? They want an education](#) (2015) p.1

25 The Brookings Institution ([EDU0052](#))

26 Statistics taken from [UK Statistics on International Development 2016: Figure 16](#), (2016), p. 36

## The Inquiry

11. Our predecessor Committee launched its inquiry entitled “DFID’s work on education: Leaving no one behind?” on 20 July 2016, with a particular interest in:

- DFID’s priority and funding for work on global education and the balance of spending between early years, primary, secondary and tertiary levels.
- The channelling of DFID’s education funding and the effectiveness of interventions through multilateral organisations (e.g. Global Partnership for Education, the World Bank), implementing partners, centrally managed programmes and direct support to government education budgets.
- Examples of best practices and innovation in global education programmes.
- Ways to support efforts to secure access to primary education for the most marginalised children.
- The role and support for low-fee schools, including private schools, in improving access to education in developing countries.
- DFID’s support for efforts to improve learning outcomes, particularly literacy and numeracy.
- DFID’s work supporting countries in developing more effective education systems, including high quality teacher education and leadership training.
- DFID’s work on tertiary education, including technical and practical education.
- DFID’s cooperation with UK Higher Education institutions in its work.
- DFID’s support for efforts to eliminate inequalities in access and quality of education on the basis of gender, disability, indigeneity, and for children in vulnerable situations, including emergencies.

12. During the inquiry, our predecessor Committee received 73 pieces of written evidence from a diverse range of stakeholders and heard from 23 witnesses across six oral evidence sessions. The Committee also visited the Middle East and East Africa to observe how education programmes supported by DFID were being implemented in a number of different contexts.

13. This Report is timely. The former Secretary of State confirmed in August 2017 that DFID would “review and refresh” its education policy paper. She stated that:

We intend to build on our experience and draw on the most up to date evidence... This is an opportunity to look again at how best to meet the needs of the most marginalised children, how we will drive a focus on standards and quality and the role of results based finance in delivering on these.<sup>27</sup>

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27 [Letter from the Secretary of State for International Development, concerning DFID’s work on education: Leaving no one behind? \(31 July 2017\)](#)

## 2 Financing global education

14. In 2015 the international community and industry leaders came together to form The International Commission for Global Education Opportunity (now known simply as the 'Education Commission'). This was set up to build on the aspiration of the Sustainable Development Goals, and estimated that on current trends there would be a \$1.8 trillion funding shortfall across middle and low income countries compared to the resources needed to be meeting SDG4 on education by 2030.<sup>28</sup> Responsibility for providing this additional funding rests primarily with national governments. However, for many countries—particularly low-income countries—sources of external financing, such as international aid, remain vital for national public expenditure as well as specific projects and disaster relief.

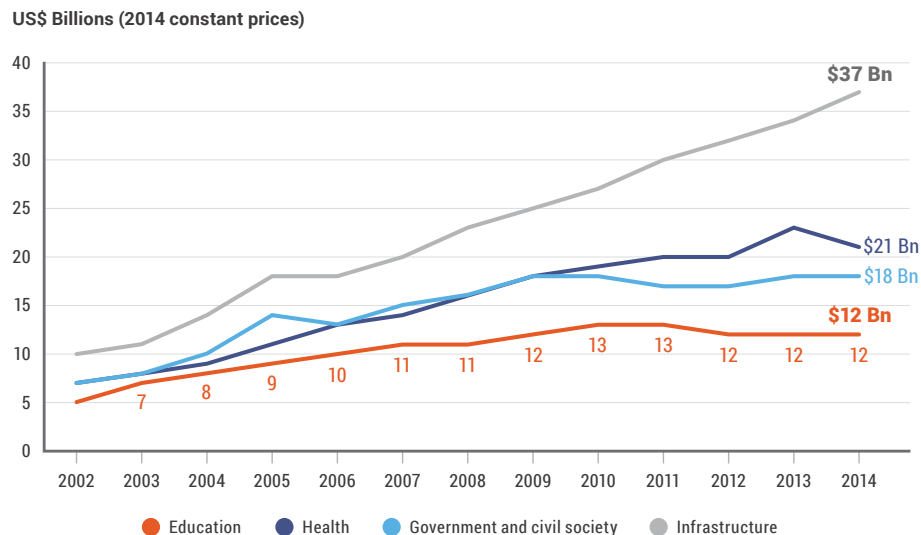
### UK aid to education

15. Recent figures show that there has been a clear decline in the proportion of international aid spending on education since 2011 and that, overall, international aid for education remains much lower than aid allocated, for instance, to government and civil society, health, and infrastructure (see chart 2). As the UN Special Envoy for Global Education, Gordon Brown, told the previous Committee, even if one takes all aid agencies together:

The average expenditure per child in low and middle-income countries on education through aid ... is less than \$10 per head per year.<sup>29</sup>

The Education Commission report stated that, "Education has not been a top priority for international actors, whether official donors, or charitable organizations".<sup>30</sup>

**Chart 2: Trends in sectoral ODA (Official Development Assistance)<sup>31</sup>**



Source: Education Commission analysis based on OECD-DAC (2016). Note: Includes only sector-allocable direct aid, with no sectoral attribution of budget support.

28 The Education Commission, [The Learning Generation: Investing in Education for a Changing World](#) (2016) p. 21

29 Q81 HC639

30 The Education Commission, [The Learning Generation: Investing in Education for a Changing World](#) (2016) p. 110

31 The Education Commission, [The Learning Generation: Investing in Education for a Changing World](#) (2016) p. 22

16. UK aid to education is spent through bilateral and multilateral channels and by other Government departments as well as DFID. For this reason, it can be difficult to discern exactly how much aid the UK is spending on global education at any particular time. Following a Westminster Hall debate in July 2017, Minister of State for International Development, Rory Stewart OBE MP, outlined the levels of spending from 2011 to 2015 (see table 1) in a letter. It is clear from these figures that, although levels of spending are inconsistent year-on-year, there has been an overall reduction in the percentage of ODA spent on education between 2011 and 2015. Spending in 2015 was particularly low at just 7.17% of all UK aid. In contrast, that same year the Government spent close to 13% of UK aid on health.<sup>32</sup>

**Table 1: Breakdown of UK Net ODA spend on Education**

UK ODA (£'000)	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
UK Bilateral ODA—Total	5,259,832	5,559,707	6,720,865	6,822,491	7,664,216
UK Multilateral ODA—Total	3,368,791	3,242,212	4,717,853	4,877,981	4,593,232
UK ODA—Total	8,628,623	8,801,919	11,438,718	11,700,472	12,257,448
UK Bilateral ODA—Education	649,177	620,581	905,375	820,922	651,529
DFID Bilateral ODA—Education	572,733	498,894	797,042	698,845	508,540
Other Gov Departments Bilateral ODA -Education	76,444	121,687	108,333	122,076	142,989
UK Multilateral ODA—Education imputed shares	225,485	155,192	203,451	281,958	227,181
UK ODA—Education	874,662	775,773	1,108,826	1,102,880	878,710
as % of UK total ODA	10.14%	8.81%	9.69%	9.43%	7.17%

Source: [Letter to the Chair of the International Development Committee from Rory Stewart OBE MP, Minister of State for International Development](#) (8 August 2017)

32 Calculations made using [UK Statistics on International Development 2016: Table A7: UK Bilateral ODA: by Sector & Table A9: Imputed UK Share of Multilateral Net ODA by Sector](#) (17 November 2016)

17. Giving evidence to the previous Committee in March 2017 on education spend, the Minister responsible at the time, Lord Bates, cited the increasing pressures on DFID's humanitarian budgets and the need—in light of this—“to look very carefully at everything we spend”.<sup>33</sup> He did, however, state that spending “will be around the current level”.<sup>34</sup>

18. Minister Alistair Burt clarified these figures a little when we questioned him. According to the Minister, the lower spend on education in 2015 was due to the sequencing of payments to multilateral funds, and that when averaged over a period of time, this figure is “close to” 10%.<sup>35</sup> Over the period between 2013 and 2015, we were told, the total amount spent on education through bilateral funding was “11% of total DFID ODA”.<sup>36</sup> When asked if this spending would be cut, Minister Burt stated that he could not say that spending amounts would not vary year on year, but that education was “a priority”. In addressing what this spend would look like in future, Anna Wechsberg, Director of Policy and Global Partnerships at DFID, said that “I do not think we are expecting the 2015 figure to be the start of a trend downwards”.<sup>37</sup> We accept that the 2015 figure seems to have been an anomaly due to funds not being spent in a linear manner, and are pleased to hear that this is not expected to be the start of a downwards trend. As a result, we expect to see a higher percentage in 2016 statistics released in November which bring the Government closer to a 10% figure of all UK ODA.

19. In recent years, however, the amount of aid spent by other Government departments on global education has almost doubled, increasing from £76m in 2011 to £143m in 2015 (see table 1). The majority of this increase happened between 2011 and 2012, when the amount spent by departments other than DFID on education increased from around 9% of UK ODA education spend in 2011 to around 15% in 2012. This percentage has remained relatively stable since 2012, when the Government ring-fenced the aid budget in order to meet the 0.7% GNI target.<sup>38</sup> In three of the five years between 2011 and 2015 (2012, 2014 and 2015) an increase in education expenditure by other government departments coincided with a decrease in DFID's bilateral education spending. A proportion of this spending is administered by the FCO and through cross-departmental funds such as the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) and the Prosperity Fund; a trend Lord Bates told us was likely to “gather pace”.<sup>39</sup> In terms of what this money is spent on, a senior DFID official told us that it mainly went towards scholarships in the British Council and tertiary education.<sup>40</sup>

20. These cross-Government funds were described as having a very “different geography” to DFID; for example, the Prosperity Fund operates primarily in middle-income countries, such as India, China and Brazil, where DFID has phased out its programming.<sup>41</sup> As one DFID official told the Committee, “We [DFID] are much more focused on the poorest

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33 [Q222 HC639](#)

34 [Q221 HC639](#)

35 [Q3](#)

36 [Q3](#)

37 [Q8](#)

38 Institute for Fiscal Studies, [The IFS Green Budget: February 2012](#) (2012), Chapter 7

39 See [Letter from Rory Stewart regarding education in Tunisia and development in North Africa](#) (11 January 2017); ICAI, [The Cross-Government Prosperity Fund: A rapid review](#) (February 2017) p. i (objectives) & 12 (Concept notes submitted and approved by sector); HMG, [Conflict, Stability and Security Fund Annual Report 2016/17](#) (July 2017) p. 18; [Q223 HC639](#)

40 [Q17](#)

41 [Q225 HC639](#); ICAI, [The Cross-Government Prosperity Fund: A rapid review](#) (February 2017) para 2.7 & 2.8

places”.<sup>42</sup> Minister Burt told us that DFID was working with other Departments to “instil best practice on ODA reporting, value for money and accountability”, and that DFID were available to help advise on education spend by these departments.<sup>43</sup> He stated that he did not think that these cross-Whitehall funds were moving away from “general development principles”.<sup>44</sup> However, each Government Department remains ultimately in charge of its own budget. We will be examining whether the spread of ODA spending across Government could divert vital education funding away from DFID, and in turn away from the UK’s commitment to the world’s poorest countries and most marginalised people.<sup>45</sup> There were also legitimate concerns in evidence about the ability of other Government departments to spend ODA effectively, resulting in our predecessor Committee’s recommendation to have all UK aid spending overseen and coordinated by DFID.<sup>46</sup> This raises questions about the efficacy of global education spending administered by Government departments other than DFID.

21. Evidence to the inquiry noted that the UK “has prioritized aid to education” and “should continue to set the example”.<sup>47</sup> Amongst the wealthiest donors that make up the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), the UK is the fourth largest bilateral donor to global education, behind Germany, France and the United States (see chart 3). This is particularly significant due to the sheer scale of the US aid budget (around \$31 billion in 2015<sup>48</sup>) and the fact that a large proportion of Germany and France’s contributions to global education are spent on scholarships to their own universities.<sup>49</sup>

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42 [Q225 HC639](#)

43 [Q13](#)

44 [Q18](#)

45 International Development Committee, [Definition and administration of ODA inquiry launched](#) (2017)

46 International Development Committee, Seventh Report of Session 2016–17, [UK aid: allocation of resources](#), HC 100, para 98

47 Manos Antoninis ([EDU0045](#))

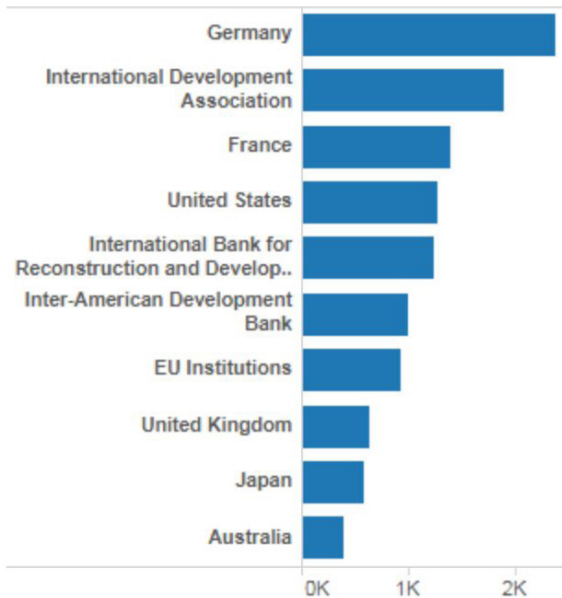
48 OECD, [Aid at a glance: Total DAC and DAC Members](#), accessed 24 August 2017

49 [Q220 HC639](#)



Chart 3: Education-related aid by OECD DAC members<sup>50</sup>

Commitments, USD millions, constant 2014 prices for All 2015



22. However, the Global Campaign for Education highlighted that the UK could be doing more, whilst other organisations, including the Malala Fund, specified that the UK should be allocating 15% of all aid to education.<sup>51</sup> The United Nations Special Envoy for Global Education told the Committee: “Britain is spending too little on [global] education, at 7% [as a percentage of total UK ODA] or around that. It is far too small, given the challenges we face.”<sup>52</sup>

23. Of course, it is not just a question of how much aid the Government allocates to global education, but how it ensures this is spent effectively to ensure more children and young people have access to inclusive, quality education. In evidence to the Committee, Minister Burt focused on results and how money was being spent, rather than giving us assurances on any maintenance or increase in education spend. He told us that “it is not just about numbers now; it is about what children are being taught”.<sup>53</sup> The Minister would not give a percentage for future spend on education, but stated that “you will see us continually trying to ensure that we can justify what we are spending, and how it is best and most effectively used”.<sup>54</sup>

24. This is a commendable aim, and it is of course imperative that the Department get the best results from taxpayers’ money. To achieve the improvement in quality which the Minister rightly focused on in evidence to the Committee will require additional expenditure. In order to improve teacher retention, expand the quality of education for disabled children and teaching in rural areas, greater spend will be needed, alongside the effective implementation of this spend.

50 OECD, [Education-related aid data at a glance](http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?QueryId=58197), accessed 24 August 2017 (original source: OECD DAC CRS <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?QueryId=58197>)

51 Global Campaign for Education UK ([EDU0009](#)); Malala Fund ([EDU0066](#)) para 3.4; [Q88](#) HC639

52 [Q89](#) HC639

53 [Q3](#)

54 [Q3](#)

25. As outlined above, in order to achieve the wide aims of SDG4 more money needs to be spent overall, as well as being spent effectively. The evidence we received clearly highlighted a funding gap in education as a whole, as well as in specific areas of education. The Government now has a chance to prove its commitment to education and to achieving SDG4. Education is vital to lift people out of poverty, prepare them for future job markets, and as a safeguard against poor health and hygiene, yet the amount spent on education by the Department is far behind that on health, another vital priority. It seems right that aid to education be increased. DFID should be constantly striving to give better, as well as giving more.

26. Although it is asserted, and logical, that resources invested in education yield a return in terms of other targets, for instance for public health and for prosperity, DFID does not appear to have a means of quantifying this. If such a methodology was part of the department's Value for Money framework it would provide an evidential basis for decisions over funding decisions between sectors (making them more transparent). For example, if an extra £1 is spent on educating a child, it is unclear to us how much added value this has in terms of a child's health, chance of escaping poverty, or future career. The Department should consider how best it can assess this, and work towards a methodology as part of its Value for Money framework to ascertain the added value of investment in education. DFID does not appear to have an evidence-backed plan as to whether education spend should increase or decrease from year to year, from country to country or across the various channels at its disposal year on year. If education is a "priority" as Minister Burt told us,<sup>55</sup> there should be some safeguards on how much will be spent each year, with a set minimum target in place.

27. This strategic weakness is complicated by the transfer of an increasing proportion of ODA spending on education, in particular to other Government departments. The programmes and funds administered by other Government departments do require DFID's focus on the poorest and most marginalised.

**28. The Committee recognises that in some circumstances it is right and necessary to allocate education-focused aid to middle-income countries, for example the considerable financial commitments made to Jordan and Lebanon to support the education of Syrian refugees. However, generally it is low and lower middle-income countries that require the most support for education. As the UK's spending on support for global education is transferred to other Government departments with a different geographical focus and other priorities, the Government should ensure that resources are still being focused on those children and young people who most need it.**

**29. The Committee recognises DFID's continuing commitment to education, and the fact that it has in the past prioritised aid to education in a way other donors have not. However, if SDG4 is to be achieved, all donors should considerably increase the amount of aid allocated to global education, which has lagged behind other sectors for many years. For this reason, the Committee would like to see the amount of UK ODA allocated to education increase over the course of the next spending review period. The Department is commendable in striving to improve the value for money of the amount it spends on education. However, in order to achieve the ambitions of SDG4, the total amount should be increased.**

30. *Between 2012–2015, the UK spent an annual average of £966 million on education.<sup>56</sup> We expect to see a significant increase in this figure over the next spending review period. The specific amount should be determined by the new approach to DFID's Value for Money framework that we recommend below.*

31. **DFID has not demonstrated a clear understanding of the inter-relationship of education spending with other sectors. If it is serious about achieving value for money on everything spent, it should work towards a better understanding of this area.**

32. *The Department should develop a clear and transparent methodology for determining and justifying the allocation of education funding in terms of its potential 'added value'. This is likely to enable better informed decisions over the programmes it funds and the mechanism to which resources are committed.*

### Encouraging greater domestic spending

33. Currently, many countries across the world spend far less on education than they should, according to recognised international recommendations. For example, a key recommendation from the *Education 2030 Framework for Action*, which provides guidance from UNESCO to countries for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4, was to allocate at least 4–6% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 15%–20% of public expenditure to education. The UK currently sits behind many other OECD countries for public expenditure on education, although is higher than others (see chart 4 below). In 2014 (the latest available OECD figures), the UK spent 12.5% of public expenditure on education, allocating 4.8% of GDP.<sup>57</sup> The *Education 2030 Framework* states that in 2012, countries allocated 13.7% of public expenditure to education on average, and the least developed countries needed to reach or exceed the upper end of this framework in order to achieve SDG targets.<sup>58</sup>

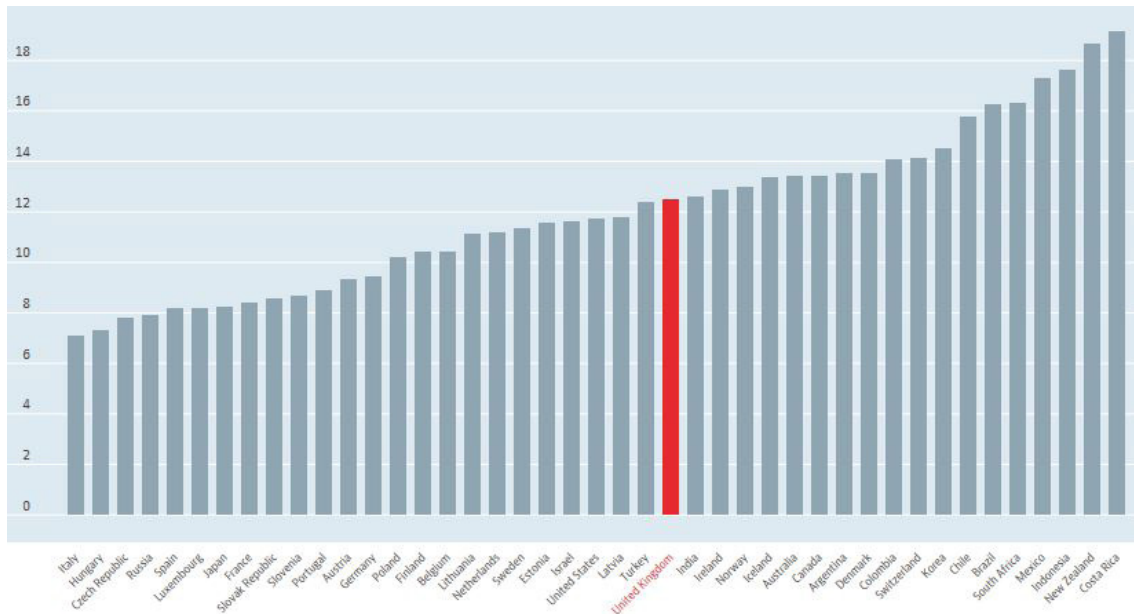
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56 [Letter to the Chair of the International Development Committee from Rory Stewart OBE MP, Minister of State for International Development](#) (8 August 2017)

57 OECD, [Education Spending](#)

58 UNESCO, "[Education 2030](#)", p. 67

**Chart 4: OECD public spending on education: Primary to tertiary, % of public spending (2015 or latest available)<sup>59</sup>**



34. Development aid will not therefore close the gap on its own. Increasing domestic spending by developing countries is essential to ensuring all children are able to attend school and learn. UN Special Envoy for Global Education, Gordon Brown told the Committee that:

Even if we increased overseas development aid spending and funding by other countries who do not, like Britain, meet the 0.7%, and even if we devoted 15% of all aid to education ... there would still be a funding gap in education, such is the crisis we face.<sup>60</sup>

The Springfield Centre, which designs market systems approaches to development challenges and provides independent advice to DFID, similarly told the Committee:

ODA for education is significant, but not when compared to the task of educating well over 1bn young people. DAC countries spend 7.3% of total ODA on education. Developing countries spend an average of 4% of their budgets on education but that still means that ODA spending on education as a proportion of total spending on education in developing countries is less than 4%.<sup>61</sup>

35. Even in countries more money is being spent, Kevin Watkins, CEO of Save the Children, warned the Committee that, "...education financing in most low-income countries is very heavily skewed towards more advantaged children and away from less advantaged children".<sup>62</sup> He cited the example of Kenya, where he stated more money was being directed towards areas where children are in school and away from the more disadvantaged areas of the country in the north, where children drop out after two or three years.<sup>63</sup>

59 Statistics taken from [OECD Data](#)

60 [Q87](#) HC639

61 The Springfield Centre ([EDU0001](#)) para 7

62 [Q57](#) HC639

63 [Q57](#) HC639

36. The Global Partnership for Education (GPE), in particular, works by creating incentives for developing country partners to: develop financially sustainable education sector plans; increase national budget allocations; and improve the quality of education expenditure outcomes. GPE's results-based funding model, adopted in 2014, stipulates that in order to receive the first 70 percent of GPE grants, each developing country partner must meet several key requirements, including committing greater domestic resources to education.<sup>64</sup> This partnership model was also recommended at a micro-level by education and training charity, Raise the Roof Kenya, who strongly advocated local cooperative arrangements to avoid "creating parallel systems which...are largely unsustainable".<sup>65</sup> According to GPE's latest results report, 78% of GPE partner countries have maintained their education budget at or above 20% of public expenditure, or increased their education budget in 2015.<sup>66</sup>

***37. The UK Government should, wherever possible, use its influence with partner countries to encourage greater domestic spending on education. It should also support countries in their efforts to target domestic spending towards the most marginalised and disadvantaged children.***

## Financing multilateral mechanisms for education

38. Alongside its bilateral aid programmes, the Government channels a portion of its ODA spend through multilateral bodies. In 2015, the UK provided £4,473 million in core contributions to multilaterals, amounting to 36.9% of UK ODA.<sup>67</sup> These institutions present some key delivery channels for UK aid spend on education, and the key organisations are outlined below.

### *The Global Partnership for Education*

39. The Global Partnership for Education (GPE), mentioned above, is a multi-stakeholder partnership and funding platform comprised of developing countries, donors, international organisations, civil society, teacher organisations, the private sector and foundations. It aims to strengthen education systems in developing countries and is the only multilateral organisation which focuses solely on education. It currently works in partnership with 65 developing countries and has a focus on strengthening education systems, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected states which receive around 50% of GPE's annual disbursements of funding.<sup>68</sup> The UK is currently GPE's largest donor, having pledged £300 million to the organisation at its last replenishment.<sup>69</sup> Of this £300 million, two tranches of £50 million were linked to performance and were only received on completion of a 15 indicator results framework.<sup>70</sup> DFID also placed a cap on its funding to GPE to ensure that the UK would only provide a maximum of 15% of the total pledged by donor governments. We understand that the cap was intended to create an incentive for GPE to diversify its funding and to encourage other countries to contribute more.

64 GPE, [GPE's Engagement on Domestic Financing for Education](#) (2016), pp. 2–3

65 Raise the Roof Kenya ([EDU0060](#))

66 GPE, [GPE Results Report 2015/2016](#) (2016), p. 39

67 DFID, [Statistics on International Development 2016](#), Table 2, p. 12

68 Global Partnership for Education ([EDU0009](#)) para 16

69 [Q5 HC639](#)

70 GPE have now satisfied the criteria of the results framework and both tranches of funding have been released.

However, GPE did not manage to secure sufficient funding from other donors for DFID's full £300 million offer to be drawn down. Therefore in this replenishment, DFID will have provided £210 million to GPE; £90 million short of its original pledge.<sup>71</sup>

40. Evidence to the inquiry demonstrated widespread support for GPE, recognising the important role that it plays in supporting governments to develop domestic education sector plans. DFID's significant influence—as GPE's largest contributor—also appears to have had a positive impact on the organisation, pushing forward necessary reforms to make the organisation more efficient and increasing its focus on fragile and conflict-affected states and gender equality.<sup>72</sup> GPE received the highest score possible in last year's Multilateral Development Review for its alignment with UK development objectives, and we recognise the important part GPE has to play in improving education systems around the world.

41. Ahead of the next replenishment in early 2018, civil society organisations, led by the Global Campaign for Education and the Send My Friend to School campaign, have called on the UK Government to pledge \$500 million (£381 million) to GPE for the period 2018–2020,<sup>73</sup> with a total replenishment target of \$2 billion a year in 2020.<sup>74</sup> GPE also expects to unlock a further \$900 million through the use of a new 'GPE Multiplier' financing window to incentivise countries to leverage additional funding through external sources.<sup>75</sup> In her recent letter to us, the former Secretary of State made it clear that DFID will take a similar approach to that followed the previous replenishment; linking the UK's contribution to reform and results.<sup>76</sup> However, she did not mention whether the UK would retain the 15% cap on its contributions.

42. We questioned Minister Burt on this, and he stated that DFID was “leading by example”<sup>77</sup> and “wholly supports a successful replenishment for GPE”.<sup>78</sup> He did not, however, provide us with details on when the Government would announce its contribution to GPE's replenishment, or how much it would be giving, although he declared that the UK would be encouraging other donors to increase funding.<sup>79</sup>

43. The amount that GPE are asking for from DFID in the next replenishment round would mean a £81 million increase on the amount that the Department pledged in the last round, before inflation is taken into consideration.<sup>80</sup> DFID's funding to GPE is spread out over the four year replenishment period, so this would involve an extra £20.25 million each year for four years (covering 2019–2022), equivalent to 0.16% of UK ODA in 2015.

**44. As recognised in the Multilateral Development Review 2016, GPE's focus on fragile and conflict-affected states is well aligned with DFID priorities and we recognise DFID's influence in ensuring and maintaining this.**

71 Global Partnership for Education, [The United Kingdom](#), accessed 24 August 2017

72 Global Partnership for Education ([EDU0003](#))

73 Send My Friend to School, [The Missing Piece of the Puzzle: Financing a Learning Generation: The UK's contribution to the Global Partnership for Education 2018—2020](#) (June 2017)

74 Global Partnership for Education, [Fund Education, Shape the Future: Case for Investment](#) (2017), p. 9

75 GPE '[GPE Multiplier](#)'

76 [Letter from the Secretary of State for International Development, concerning DFID's work on education: Leaving no one behind?](#), (31 July 2017)

77 [Q23](#)

78 [Q20](#)

79 [Q20](#)

80 At exchange rates correct as of 14 November 2017

45. *Given that the Global Partnership for Education has improved its performance and has a unique approach to improving the education systems in developing countries, DFID should agree to the full financial contribution requested by GPE at the next replenishment. The UK should also announce its intentions early, to encourage other donors to step forward.*

46. *We expect DFID to link its contributions to performance conditions, which we believe is right. However, DFID should take all necessary steps to ensure that any cap on contributions, as a percentage of total commitments, is an effective tool to encourage other donors (rather than a barrier to GPE receiving the full financial amount promised). To act as an incentive to other donors, the UK's commitment, and the percentage cap, should be announced as soon as possible.*

### *The European Union*

47. A substantial proportion of the UK's multilateral ODA expenditure on education is spent through the European Union (EU). As DFID's evidence to the Committee stated:

According to the latest available data, the UK's core contribution to the EU in 2015 was circa \$1.39 billion. About 4% (\$55,023,708) was spent on Education.<sup>81</sup>

This will need to be considered well before the UK leaves the EU if levels of funding to global education are to be sustained. If it is no longer possible to deliver this funding through the EU post-Brexit, DFID should consider ways that the resources can be re-routed, either through different multilateral organisations or through UK bilateral funding streams. The UK's departure from the EU should not result in funding being diverted away from key areas of development work, such as education.

### *Innovation: The International Financing Facility for Education*

48. One of the key recommendations from the Education Commission's Learning Generation report was to increase and improve financing for education. In order to achieve this, the report called for a "financing compact between developing countries and the international community."<sup>82</sup> The Education Commission expanded upon this in April 2017 with a proposal to create an International Financing Facility for Education (IFFEd), a partnership between developing countries, international financial institutions and public and private donors to mobilise new financial resources for low- and middle-income countries. The facility would create new funding streams by creating attractive, low-interest financing packages for lower-middle-income countries. Through private and public donors, it would pool donor funds to act as guarantees for multilateral banks to borrow more money from capital markets.<sup>83</sup> By 'buying down' loans to middle- and lower-middle income countries, these effectively become credits or grants and as a result inject more capital into the World Bank.<sup>84</sup> The Education Commission states that this

81 DFID (EDU0072) p. 1

82 The Education Commission, [The Learning Generation: Investing in Education for a Changing World](#) (2016) p. 100

83 The Education Commission, [Progress Report 2016–2017, Delivering the Learning Generation](#) (2017), p. 22

84 [Q88 HC639](#)

initiative could mobilise over \$13 billion annually in additional resources for education by 2020.<sup>85</sup> This initiative is now endorsed by more than 30 international organisations and over 145,000 individuals around the world, including the UN Secretary General.<sup>86</sup>

49. IFFEd would help to fill the increasing finance gap in global education funding. As the Education Commission points out, even if ODA as a share of donor GDP increases from about 0.3 percent today to 0.5 percent, and if allocation of spending to education rises from 10 percent to 15 percent of total ODA spending, “there will still be an external financing gap in low—and middle-income countries of about \$10 billion by 2020 and more than \$20 billion by 2030”.<sup>87</sup>

50. ***DFID should support the new International Financing Facility for Education (IFFEd), as an additional mechanism for leveraging funding into the provision of global education.***

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85 The Education Commission, [A Proposal to Create the International Financing Facility for Education](#) (2017)

86 The Education Commission, [Progress Report 2016–2017, Delivering the Learning Generation](#) (2017), p. 7

87 *Ibid.* p. 2



### 3 Improving access to education

51. The Millennium Development Goals focused narrowly on improving access to primary education in developing countries. This contributed to a considerable increase in the net enrolment rate at primary schools across the developing regions, up from 83% in 2000 to 91% in 2015.<sup>88</sup> However, despite progress, today 263 million children are still out of school. This includes 61 million children of primary school age, 60 million of lower secondary school age, and 142 million of upper secondary school age.<sup>89</sup> These out of school children are likely to be the most marginalised: the very poorest; girls; disabled children, and those affected by conflict and emergencies. Kevin Watkins described this as “the last-mile challenge”.<sup>90</sup> In evidence to the Committee earlier this year, Lord Bates emphasised DFID’s commitment to those children and young people most at risk of being ‘left behind’:

We are focusing our efforts on the most marginalised and the most hard to reach, that is what we believe our remit is. We are looking increasingly at refugees and displaced persons, we are looking at people with disabilities and we are looking at girls as being our primary focus in where our education spending is.<sup>91</sup>

#### Girls and young women

52. Girls constitute half of the school age population. Despite this, girls are more likely than boys to remain completely excluded from education. According to UNESCO, 15 million girls of primary school age will never have the opportunity to learn to read and write in primary school.<sup>92</sup> Girls and young women are less likely to be in school than their male counterparts, with 130 million girls presently out of school.<sup>93</sup> Although the headline numbers of boys and girls out of school are similar, global averages mask regional differences and other factors where girls are more likely than boys to be out of school and remain excluded from education.<sup>94</sup> In 80 countries, according to the World Bank, progress on educating girls is severely lagging behind that of boys.<sup>95</sup> In Sub-Saharan Africa, 75 percent of girls start school, but only 8 percent finish secondary school.<sup>96</sup> The poorest girls are also the most likely to be out of school, further reducing their chance of escaping poverty by achieving an education.<sup>97</sup>

53. Girls’ education, in particular, is vital to achieve many of the Sustainable Development Goals, due to all of the drivers behind Sustainable Development Goal 5, to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. According to UNICEF, educating girls has a ‘multiplier effect’ in bringing a multitude of other benefits, such as better health of girls

88 UN, [The Millennium Development Goals Report](#) (2015) p. 24

89 UNESCO, [Leaving no one behind: How far on the way to universal primary and secondary education?](#), Policy Paper 27/Fact Sheet 37 (2016), p. 2

90 [Q54 HC639](#)

91 [Q226 HC639](#)

92 UNESCO, [Leaving no one behind: How far on the way to universal primary and secondary education?](#) (2016), p. 5

93 Malala Fund ([EDU0066](#)), para. 1.2

94 UNESCO, [Leaving no one behind: How far on the way to universal primary and secondary education?](#), Policy Paper 27/Fact Sheet 37 (2016), p. 2

95 Quoted in Brookings, [What works in girls’ education: Evidence for the world’s best investment](#) (2016), p. 78

96 Brookings, [What works in girls’ education: Evidence for the world’s best investment](#) (2016), p. 73

97 Research for Equitable Access and Learning (REAL) Centre, University of Cambridge ([EDU0023](#))

and of their future children, the development of the wider community, helping children in emergencies with psychosocial issues, and even helping defend against HIV/AIDS.<sup>98</sup> It also leads to smaller and more sustainable families, reduces rates of child marriage, increases women's political leadership and reduces harm to families from natural disasters and climate change.<sup>99</sup> Lucy Lake, Chief Executive Officer of The Campaign for Female Education (Camfed), told us that education provides an opportunity to “close the loop...in recognising that today's young girls are tomorrow's mothers”, who will be largely responsible for the care, education, nutrition and health of the new generation.<sup>100</sup>

54. However, even when girls are in school, some are still held back from reaching their full potential by attitudes within their communities. One example is social stigma surrounding reproductive health issues. Recent statements from John Magufuli, President of Tanzania, warning schoolgirls that once they become pregnant, they will be expelled from school, highlight this as an ongoing issue.<sup>101</sup> A policy imposing a blanket ban on young mothers returning to their education after giving birth seems not only abhorrent but also perverse given the proven role of educational attainment in raising standards of infant and child health (not to mention reducing the incidence of teenage pregnancy). DFID, and other relevant UK Government departments should seek to engage with Tanzania on this issue pursuing a rethink of the legislation that enables such a policy to be enforced.

55. Gender inequalities in the school environment, along with school-related gender based violence, can make girls feel unsafe in school.<sup>102</sup> Exposure to violence is always to be deprecated but in particular can damage the development of a child's brain, severely compromising mental development.<sup>103</sup> Within developing countries, it is important to challenge social stigma surrounding gender based violence and girls' health, especially reproductive health, and to embed programmes within communities. Evidence submitted suggested that to do so, particular attention should be paid to key transition points, where girls are most at risk of dropping out of school, whether between school stages or reaching an age at which they may be expected to marry or work.<sup>104</sup>

56. Our evidence indicated that more work needed to be done to identify ways to get those girls most at risk of losing out on an education back into school and maintaining their participation. DFID have also led the way here, investing in research and innovative programming, including the Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) fund.

### **The Girls' Education Challenge**

57. In 2012 DFID launched the Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) fund, a major initiative to get more marginalised girls into school. The programme aims to improve “the learning opportunities and outcomes for up to one million of the world's most marginalised girls”.<sup>105</sup>

98 UNICEF, [The State of the World's Children 2004](#) (2004), pp. 45–53. See also UNICEF, [The State of the World's Children 2016](#) (2016), p. 49

99 Brookings, [What works in girls' education: Evidence for the world's best investment](#) (2016), Chapter 2

100 Q190 HC639

101 BBC News, 'John Magufuli's pregnant schoolgirl ban angers Tanzanian women'. Published June 2017

102 Plan International, ICRW, [Are Schools Safe and Equal Places for Girls and Boys in Asia—Research Findings on School Related Gender Based Violence](#), (2015)

103 World Vision International, [Counting Pennies: A review of official development assistance to end violence against children](#) (2017), p. 4

104 See for example Research for Equitable Access and Learning (REAL) Centre, University of Cambridge ([EDU0023](#))

105 DFID, [Girls Education Challenge: Project Profiles](#), accessed 25 August 2017

It has so far disbursed £300 million to 37 individual projects across 18 countries. The evidence received from civil society organisations was overwhelmingly positive about the Girls' Education Challenge, (although we are aware that many of the organisations are involved in projects funded through the scheme).<sup>106</sup>

58. The Campaign for Female Education (Camfed) programme in Tanzania, provided a model for tackling barriers to girls reaching secondary school in developing countries. As part of the Girls' Education Challenge programme, Camfed has provided support to over 40,000 marginalised girls, as well as over 24,000 less marginalised girls, over 48,000 marginalised boys and over 29,000 less marginalised boys across 201 secondary schools in Tanzania.<sup>107</sup> The Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) recognised this programme, 'A New "Equilibrium" for Girls', which also runs in Zimbabwe, as a strong example of success in focused targeting of marginalised groups in a sustainable way.<sup>108</sup>

59. However, ICAI's overall report, on 'UK aid's support to marginalised girls', gave the Girls' Education Challenge fund an 'amber/red' rating, the second lowest rating in these reviews. ICAI found that DFID "needs to strengthen the coherence of its approach to tackling the marginalisation of girls in national education systems".<sup>109</sup> The report highlights issues such as poor design of programmes, a lack of expertise in girls' education among delivery partners, and difficulties in implementing programmes in challenging environments as some of the reasons for this score, and ultimately suggests three key recommendations for DFID to improve this programme (See Box 2 below).

60. Some of the witnesses to the inquiry did indicate that this criticism was a little severe, however. Pauline Rose told our predecessor Committee that she thought ICAI's rating to be harsh, stating that some of the actual design of the GEC had been "a bit lost in translation".<sup>110</sup> When Alistair Burt appeared before our current Committee, he stated that the Department also felt that ICAI's criticisms were "a bit rough", but that DFID was responding to these criticisms and reporting back to ICAI.<sup>111</sup>

61. In DFID's own midpoint evaluation of GEC, the Department did recognise some of the issues highlighted by ICAI's work, and seemed to be taking criticisms on board in future work.<sup>112</sup> The second stage of the Girls' Education Challenge is in the process of being approved, and £100 million has already been announced. Minister Burt told us that DFID is currently reviewing quality and standards and considering lessons learned in the first phase, as well as issues highlighted by ICAI. According to the Minister, DFID will be reporting to ICAI on this in December, but that the Girls' Education Challenge remains "a fundamental focus" of DFID's work on education.<sup>113</sup>

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106 See for example Results UK ([EDU0016](#)), para. 8; Camfed International ([EDU0053](#)), para. 3.1

107 Camfed International ([EDU0053](#))

108 Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI), [Accessing, staying and succeeding in basic education – UK aid's support to marginalised girls \(2016\)](#)

109 ICAI, [Accessing, staying and succeeding in basic education – UK aid's support to marginalised girls](#)

110 [Q196 HC639](#)

111 [Q37](#)

112 DFID, [What we are learning about learning: A summary of insights at the midpoint of the GEC \(2017\)](#)

113 [Q35-Q37](#)

**Box 2: ICAI Recommendations**

DFID should develop country-specific strategies for marginalised girls' education, based on detailed knowledge of the barriers in each context and learning from successful interventions. Its strategies should combine policy dialogue, system building and targeted interventions, and identify opportunities for cross-sectoral working.

In its delivery plans and monitoring of programmes with objectives around girls' education and marginalisation, DFID should introduce measures to ensure that this focus is not lost during implementation.

DFID should specify how to approach value for money analysis when targeting marginalised groups and harder-to-reach groups, emphasising equity as well as cost-effectiveness.

Source: ICAI, [Accessing, staying and succeeding in basic education—UK aid's support to marginalised girls](#) (2016)

**62. *In light of SDG5 and the recognised multiplier effect of, specifically, girls' education in developing countries, we believe that DFID should continue to fund the Girls' Education Challenge into its second phase, demonstrating how it has used learning from the first phase to inform new ways of working. DFID should also continue to use these innovative programmes to learn more about 'what works' to ensure that the most marginalised girls have access to quality education, using this learning across the organisation and sharing it with other donors and development practitioners, looking into opportunities for scaling successful models.***

**63. *DFID should seek to fund some programmes in the second stage of the Girls' Education Challenge that focus on reducing the incidence of 'drop out' at transition points in girls' development and education. The Department should also consider how it can best integrate the tackling of school related gender-based violence in programmes that it funds.***

## Disabled children

64. According to the World Bank, fifteen percent of the global population experience some form of disability, which can increase the risk of poverty through lack of employment and education opportunities, lower wages and increased costs of living with a disability.<sup>114</sup> Despite this, the Millennium Development Goals, which established a unifying set of development objectives for the international community, made no mention of disability. This is a failure that cannot be ignored. In order to reach the most marginalised in society, disabled people simply cannot be overlooked in this way. Disability is however mentioned in several of the SDGs, which is a positive step in the right direction.

65. It is difficult to estimate how many disabled children are out of school, due to varying definitions and insufficient data. However, recent analysis by the Education Commission estimates that, in low and middle-income countries, around half of all disabled children of primary and lower-secondary age are out of school. This amounts to approximately

33 million children.<sup>115</sup> In some developing countries, the figures are even worse, with an estimated 90% of disabled children out of school, according to UNICEF.<sup>116</sup> As Julia McGeown told us, disability is “the biggest reason why children are out of school”.<sup>117</sup>

66. Evidence to the inquiry has highlighted systemic barriers to education for disabled children. Written evidence from Handicap International, for example, states that disabled people are often disproportionately affected by natural or man-made crises. Physical barriers are also a serious issue for many disabled people, whether through lack of decent transportation, arrangements for access or in the inclusiveness of school environments like toilet facilities.<sup>118</sup>

67. A lack of adequate training for teachers on how to teach children with special educational needs further compounds these problems, and mean that even when disabled children do manage to attend school, they face further challenges in being included in lessons.<sup>119</sup> Even when the solution is as simple as a pair of glasses for children with poor vision—as in the work that the charity ‘Clearly’ are doing<sup>120</sup>—more needs to be done to include disabled children in the learning process when they do in fact attend a school.

68. Much of the evidence we received generally agreed that DFID was doing commendable work in the area of disability, by for example publishing its first *Disability Framework* in December 2014, as well as an update to this a year later. The development of such a strategy was originally recommended by our predecessor Committee.<sup>121</sup> Minister Burt provided a promising example of work that DFID was doing through the Inclusive Education Programme in Punjab in Pakistan, where the Department screened 7,000 children, mainstreamed mildly disabled children into 464 schools, and trained 11,000 teachers.<sup>122</sup> The previous Committee saw some commendable work that Leonard Cheshire Disability was delivering, with DFID funding, when it visited Kenya in March 2017.

69. However, it seems there is still much to be done in this area in order to ensure that disabled children are not ‘left behind’. Some of the evidence received called for a more strategic approach in this area. Leonard Cheshire Disability called for the Department to develop a “coherent and progressive” education strategy that meets the needs of the most marginalised groups, including disabled children.<sup>123</sup> The British Council stated in their written evidence that, whilst DFID has focused on girls’ education it “has had less focus on children with disabilities and special educational needs in terms of their programming”.<sup>124</sup>

**70. DFID has shown leadership on education for girls and young women in recent years. The Department should now use its influence in the same way to shine a light on the needs of disabled children. It has made great progress with the Disability Framework, but needs to now ensure this is being implemented across all DFID programmes.**

115 The Education Commission, *The Learning Generation: Investing in Education for a Changing World* (2016) p. 142

116 UNICEF, *Global Initiative on Out-of-School Children: South Asia Regional Study* (2014) p. 6

117 [Q193 HC639](#)

118 Handicap International ([EDU006](#)) para 16

119 See for example Leonard Cheshire Disability ([EDU033](#)), para 13

120 Chen, J., ‘[Time to tackle the huge economic losses from poor vision](#)’, *Financial Times*, (2017)

121 DFID, *Disability Framework—One Year On* (2015). See also International Development Committee, Eleventh Report of Session 2013–14, [Disability and Development](#), HC 947

122 [Q33](#)

123 Leonard Cheshire Disability ([EDU033](#)), para 4

124 British Council ([EDU0027](#)) para 11.2

71. *DFID should use its policy refresh to launch a reinvigorated strategy to support access to quality education for disabled children. We believe that this is a vital area of work for DFID, and hope to undertake a separate inquiry into DFID's work on disability in our future programme of work.*

## Education in emergencies

72. In recent years, DFID has had to adapt its working practices to respond to numerous humanitarian crises and the largest displacement of people the world has ever known. We understand what an incredible challenge this continues to be for the Department and are proud of the phenomenal impact of UK Aid on the lives of children and young people caught up in emergency situations.

73. Over half of the world's registered refugees of school age are not in school. This amounts to around 3.5 million children.<sup>125</sup> The mean duration of refugees and IDPs in exile is 10.3 years according to the World Bank. About two million people have been in exile between 10 and 34 years. At the lower end of the scale, 8.9 million "recent refugees" have spent around four years in exile.<sup>126</sup> Whichever figure is used, this is not a short term situation. When we questioned the former Secretary of State for International Development recently on the Department's priorities, she stated that DFID needed to look at the long-term implications of crises like this.<sup>127</sup>

74. The availability of funding for education in humanitarian emergencies, however, has been unpredictable in the recent past. It is important that there are mechanisms in place to assess the need and make an appropriate allocation of funding for education in these situations. This is an area where value is being added by the "Education Cannot Wait" fund, and DFID's support for the "No Lost Generation Initiative" (a commitment to action by humanitarians, donors and policy to support children and youth affected by the Syria and Iraq crises).<sup>128</sup> However, an even more coherent approach is necessary. The UN Special Envoy for Global Education, Gordon Brown, told us:

We cannot forever continue with this situation where the only way we fund humanitarian aid, whether it be for education, health, shelter or food, is through a begging bowl. We have no assessed contribution system. We have no guaranteed funding. We have no year-to-year promises that you can hold people accountable for.<sup>129</sup>

75. Children in crisis-affected communities often struggle with a range of social, emotional and mental health barriers which prevent them from attending or remaining in school and this can affect their cognitive development.<sup>130</sup> As such, they have different mental health needs to take into consideration when designing teaching programmes. In order to help meet these needs, several organisations have begun to design teaching programming with this in mind. A recent initiative by Save the Children, UNHCR and

125 Save the Children, [Losing out on Learning: Providing refugee children the education they were promised](#) (2017), p. 6

126 World Bank, [How many years do refugees stay in exile?](#) (2016)

127 [Q12 HC485](#)

128 No Lost Generation, ['About #NoLostGeneration'](#)

129 [Q101 HC639](#)

130 3EA, [IRC Healing Classrooms Retention Support Programming Improves Syrian Refugee Children's Learning In Lebanon](#), (2017) p. 3

Pearson (a public assessment service to schools and corporations), set out to identify, document and promote innovative ways of effectively reaching refugee children, outlined in a recent synthesis report.<sup>131</sup> One example in particular is the work of the International Rescue Committee (IRC) on how non-formal, “complementary” education programmes can bolster refugee children’s ability to succeed in formal education systems.<sup>132</sup> This, alongside IRC’s innovative work with Sesame Street to help support children’s education in refugee camps<sup>133</sup>, present just some methods of engaging with crisis-affected communities.

76. The proportion of humanitarian funding that goes towards education is currently 1.8%.<sup>134</sup> When considering that many emergencies are becoming protracted crises<sup>135</sup>—with temporary solutions setting the scene for how thousands of displaced people are to live for many years—this investment seems low. It is encouraging that DFID’s recently published Humanitarian Reform Policy reflects a new approach to such circumstances, agreed at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, and commits to “investing in education and other basic services, jobs and livelihoods” and promoting new initiatives, such as ‘Education Cannot Wait’.<sup>136</sup> Nevertheless, specific proposals for this element of its humanitarian strategy have yet to be outlined by the Department.

### *Education Cannot Wait*

77. DFID played a leading role in the development of the Education Cannot Wait (ECW) fund. This is a new global fund for education service provision in emergencies and protracted crises launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016. The fund acknowledges the importance of education to the futures of children and young people caught up in emergencies and their chances of recovery. It has generated considerable international support, raising \$90 million—including £30 million from the UK, as the largest founding donor—and expects to reach 4.5 million children in its first two years. Evidence to the inquiry was overwhelmingly supportive of DFID’s work helping to establish the fund and the UK’s substantial financial commitment.<sup>137</sup> The former Secretary of State’s position on the high-level steering group also means that the UK will continue to play a central role in the fund as it becomes fully operational.

**78. Humanitarian finance suffers from being short-term and unpredictable. However, as we have seen in recent years, crises—such as the war in Syria—are becoming increasingly protracted. This creates situations and environments that are likely to persist and define how many people will live for many years. The ‘temporary’ solutions established at the outset should therefore be designed with this in mind. If education provision is ignored then the futures of the children caught up in them are at risk and the chances of long term recovery, and the avoidance of repetition, will be reduced.**

**79. *As part of its policy refresh, DFID needs to establish a long-term, integrated strategy for supporting education in emergencies, especially in long-term crises, through bilateral***

131 Save the Children, UNHCR, Pearson, [Promising Practices in Refugee Education: Synthesis Report](#) (2017)

132 3EA, [IRC Healing Classrooms Retention Support Programming Improves Syrian Refugee Children’s Learning In Lebanon](#), (2017)

133 International Rescue Committee, [‘The IRC & Sesame Workshop: rescuing children’s futures’](#) (2017)

134 Malala Fund ([EDU0066](#)), para. 4.3

135 DFID, [Saving lives, building resilience, reforming the system: The UK Government’s Humanitarian Reform Policy](#) (2017), pp. 4–6 and pp. 16–18

136 Ibid.

137 For example, see [Q33](#) HC639, Plan International UK ([EDU0004](#)) para 18

*and multilateral channels. The aim should be to make establishing effective foundations for getting the affected children back into structured learning environments a priority alongside clean water, food, sanitation and shelter.*

## Early years education

80. In low income countries, 46% of public education resources are allocated to educate the 10% most educated students.<sup>138</sup> 85% of children in these countries have no access to pre-primary education, compared to the 82% in high income countries able to access this entry level of education.<sup>139</sup> Global spend on early years, or pre-primary,<sup>140</sup> education is low. The World Bank, for example, which accounts for 43% of all ODA spending on pre-primary education, only commits 2.7% of its total education portfolio to this area.<sup>141</sup> DFID's expenditure on early years (pre-primary) education is low in comparison to its investments in other stages of education, accounting for under 0.6% of its bilateral education budget.<sup>142</sup>

81. Numerous submissions to the inquiry encouraged DFID to invest more in pre-primary learning programmes, citing evidence of its impact on improving children's later educational attainment levels.<sup>143</sup> As UNICEF told the Committee, early years education can, "increase the likelihood of primary school attendance, decrease grade repetition and dropping out" and "improve school readiness which in turn results in better primary school outcomes, particularly for poor and disadvantaged students".<sup>144</sup> The organisation argued that "DFID should support efforts to strengthen governments' ability and commitment to deliver quality pre-primary education at scale as well as encourage program partners to continue to innovate and develop models that are needed to reach the most marginalised children and families".<sup>145</sup>

82. Minister Burt conceded that early years education "had not been funded well in the past". He told us that:

The recognition of the importance of early years' education, building on that first 1,000 days and everything you do with the child at the earliest stage, is very important. It has not been funded well enough in the past. It has been an area that has been neglected. It does bring the highest returns in the future, and the returns are greatest for the most marginalised children, including those with disabilities and those living in conflict and emergencies.<sup>146</sup>

138 UNICEF, [The Investment Case for Education and Equity](#) (2015), p. 58

139 TheirWorld, [Bright and Early: How financing pre-primary education gives every child a fair start in life](#) (2017), p. 11

140 Both 'early years' and 'pre-primary' are defined as the initial stage of organised instruction, designed to introduce very young children to a school-type environment. It can loosely be defined as the period of a child's life from 3–6 years old, when a child's brain is developing but before they are enrolled in primary education. See TheirWorld, [Bright and Early: How financing pre-primary education gives every child a fair start in life](#) (2017)

141 TheirWorld, [Bright and Early: How financing pre-primary education gives every child a fair start in life](#) (2017), p. 28

142 Latest [Development Tracker figures](#) show that DFID spends £3m of its £544m bilateral education budget on early childhood education, accessed 23 August 2017

143 For example, see: Manos Antoninis ([EDU0045](#)) para 5; Global Campaign for Education UK ([EDU0009](#)); [Q188 HC639](#)

144 UNICEF ([EDU0058](#)) p. 5

145 UNICEF ([EDU0058](#)) p. 5

146 [Q54](#)



However, he was clear that early years education would receive more attention in future plans. He told us:

Do we take it seriously? Yes, we do. I am not sure about where the budget is going but, as part of in-country programmes, it now has a very high priority.<sup>147</sup>

83. A senior Education Adviser at DFID, Ian Attfield, agreed that “you get the biggest bang for your buck if you invest in pre-primary education”.<sup>148</sup> He went on to argue that there may be areas where DFID’s contribution to early years education is under-represented in official figures, as “traditionally most pre-primary classes are run out of the primary schools”.<sup>149</sup> Further written evidence from DFID went into more detail on this, using the example of the EQUIP-T programme in Tanzania which includes support for school readiness programmes. This is a programme Committee members were impressed with during their visit to Tanzania, and this further evidence from DFID shows the impact the programme has already exhibited alongside the low cost (just £0.15 per child per day) of its implementation.<sup>150</sup> Early years schooling can mean that children are more likely to stay in school, learn better throughout their school education and have better health and higher incomes later in life, yet it has been neglected in terms of funding.<sup>151</sup> As UNICEF have stated, “a child’s brain is built, not born”.<sup>152</sup> In order for children to reach their full educational potential, it is essential to look further at pre-primary education.

**84. The benefits of pre-primary education for later learning are proven and there is a real drive from stakeholders for DFID to invest and do more in this area. Although other donors and organisations, such as USAID and the World Bank, are active in supporting early years education, aid funding for pre-primary remains low. It seems clear that there is the space, and desire, for DFID to contribute to work in this area.**

**85. DFID should find more effective methods of monitoring its sub-sectoral spend, particularly in early years education where it claims its support is under-represented by the figures available. This will enable the Department to assess what work it is currently carrying out in this area, and where it can add most value or leverage in other resources.**

**86. DFID should invest more in pre-primary education, bilaterally and multilaterally. It should work alongside donors and organisations already active in this area, such as the World Bank and USAID, to determine where the UK could make the most effective contribution.**

## Value for Money

87. UNICEF’s evidence to the inquiry pointed to potential pitfalls in DFID’s Value for Money assessments when targeting the hardest to reach children:

DFID should also look to ensure that its Value for Money (VfM) assessments at a programme level are focused on maximising impact, given available

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147 [Q54](#)

148 [Q249](#) HC639

149 [Q249](#) HC639

150 DFID (EDU0072)

151 TheirWorld, [Setting New Targets for Success](#) (2017), p. 3

152 UNICEF, [Early Moments Matter for every child](#) (2017), p. 1

resources and not just about minimising costs at the expense of quality or of access by hard-to-reach children. DFID's interventions will struggle to successfully reach the most marginalised children if its VfM calculations do not recognise that the hardest to reach out-of-school children will require more complex and often more expensive policy responses.<sup>153</sup>

88. ICAI's report on DFID's work on marginalised girls also highlighted value for money as an area of improvement, stating that "DFID has yet to adapt its education Value for Money framework to reflect its commitments on tackling marginalisation".<sup>154</sup> The report said there were limitations in DFID's use of a payment by results framework in some of its work through the Girls' Education Challenge.<sup>155</sup> When we questioned Lord Bates on this, he stated that DFID was looking to change a number of areas in reaction to ICAI's review.<sup>156</sup>

**89. *DFID should use its education policy refresh as an opportunity to clarify its value for money approach in this area, ensuring it is fit for purpose when targeting the most marginalised children.***

### Expanding provision: the role of non-state education providers

90. In line with Global Goal 4, national governments should be striving to provide free, inclusive and quality education to all its citizens. DFID, as a donor, should in turn be supporting partner countries to achieve this aim. However, many country governments lack the resources—and in some cases the political will—to accomplish this, especially in the short-term. As a result, in a number of DFID's priority countries, non-state providers have stepped in to fill the gap in education provision, including an increasing number of low-fee private schools.

91. In countries like Nigeria, DFID states that "the private sector is essential for children to have the right to education, and for universal access to be achieved".<sup>157</sup> In her recent letter to the Chair, the former Secretary of State for International Development reiterated her support for non-state provision in areas like Lagos where the state is unable to provide education for its very large population. DFID explains in its evidence that it is supporting private and low-fee schooling where these circumstances exist, including in Kenya, Nigeria (through the DEEPEN—Developing Effective Private Education Nigeria—project some members of the predecessor Committee engaged with during their visit to Lagos earlier this year) and Pakistan. DFID has also provided funding to low-fee chains in Uganda (PEAS), Ghana (Omega) and Nigeria (Bridge International Academies). Minister Burt told us:

Will we go on supporting low-cost private education in places where children would not otherwise get an education? Yes, we will. Is it the answer to everything? No, it is not.<sup>158</sup>

153 UNICEF ([EDU0058](#))

154 ICAI, [Accessing, staying and succeeding in basic education – UK aid's support to marginalised girls](#) (2016) para 5.4

155 ICAI, [Accessing, staying and succeeding in basic education – UK aid's support to marginalised girls](#) (2016) para 4.72

156 [Q177](#) HC639

157 DFID ([EDU0054](#)) p. 8

158 [Q44](#)

92. Understandably, donor support for low-fee private schools is controversial. Where the requirement for parents to pay a fee acts to reduce access to education for the poorest and most marginalised families, this is a source of concern. These families remain DFID's priority for assistance. However, where governments have proven unable or unwilling to provide education sometimes support for low fee private schools is the only option available to parents. The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) encouraged a "pragmatic approach to engagement with the non-state education sector".<sup>159</sup> The Springfield Centre similarly told the Committee:

Discussing whether low-fee schools should be eligible for support is a question raised abstract of context and intended impact... Education systems, and indeed all systems, are comprised of functions and rules, which are performed by different players in different contexts; public, private, and third sector, small, medium, and large, each with institutional histories and reasons why those systems operate in the ways that they do. One size does not fit all when trying to increase enrolment, attendance, and attainment within these systems.<sup>160</sup>

93. Around 95% of DFID's education funding goes to government run schools.<sup>161</sup> However, with the Department's commendable focus on value for money, it is important to consider all of the Department's spend in this area. As the latest *Global Education Monitoring Report* (published yearly by UNESCO) states, private actors, given their influence in education, "must be held to account effectively".<sup>162</sup>

94. Despite its 2014 literature review, DFID still lacks evidence in this area.<sup>163</sup> As ICAI noted in its review of marginalised girls' education:

One of the key choices is between working with national education systems or private sector providers. While DFID does both, for the time being it lacks the evidence to make informed judgments as to what combination offers the best value for money in which contexts.<sup>164</sup>

95. An ongoing trial on Public-Private Partnership in Liberia, in which the management of some public schools in the country have been outsourced to the private sector, has shed a light on some possible outcomes from low-fee schools. The Partnership Schools for Liberia (PSL) trial was announced in January 2016 for a three year trial period, in which eight private organisations have been contracted to manage 93 pre-primary and primary public schools. The Liberian Government spends around \$50 per pupil per year, and the private operators could have access to up to an extra \$50 in addition, as well as providing their own funding on top. The programme has been externally evaluated through a randomised controlled trial which measures the performance of these privately run schools against

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159 ODI ([EDU0029](#)) para 11

160 The Springfield Centre ([EDU0001](#)) para 21

161 [Q44](#)

162 UNESCO, [Global Education Monitoring Report Summary: Accountability in Education: Meeting our commitments](#) (2017), p. 30

163 University of Birmingham, Institute of Education, Overseas Development Institute & DFID, [The role and impact of private schools in developing countries](#) (April 2014)

164 ICAI, [Assessing, staying and succeeding in basic education – UK aid's support to marginalised girls](#) (2016) para 4.73

control schools under government management.<sup>165</sup> The Year One results, which have recently been published, show some learning gains through private contractors' schools, but often with a large price tag attached.<sup>166</sup> Although there was a range of money spent on the schools, some operators spent considerably more than the \$50 per pupil average spent by the government on schools. The ex post numbers that operators self-reported as expenditure on top of the Liberia Government costs ranged from \$40–\$663 per pupil (including start up costs), raising questions about the sustainability of this model.

96. A recent study commissioned by DFID found that there was moderate evidence of private school pupils achieving better learning outcomes compared to state school counterparts, as well as moderate evidence that girls are less likely to access private schools. The study also found that evidence on the ability of private schools to reach the poorest and most marginalised was weak.<sup>167</sup> This type of research is important, and should help the Department make decisions on its support to private partners.

97. It was brought to our attention during this inquiry that even in 'free' government schools in developing countries, there are often 'hidden costs' associated with education.<sup>168</sup> When the predecessor Committee visited schools in Kenya and Uganda, for example, members found that in state schools, pupils were still expected to pay for school uniforms, meals, and even in some cases water and electricity costs.<sup>169</sup> It is important therefore to take this into consideration when discussing government schools. When considering support to education in other countries, it is worth considering the text of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights referenced at the beginning of this Report: "Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages".<sup>170</sup> In light of this, it is understandable that the vast majority of DFID's support goes to publically provided schools, and we envisage that this will continue.

98. ***DFID should work where appropriate to support governments to regulate private schools where it has the expertise and resources to do so.***

99. ***More research should be done on how the private sector could be used to improve free, government funded schools. The results of the PSL trial in Liberia are welcome, and it is encouraging that trials like this are creating useful data. This data should be assessed carefully when the Government is deciding if/how to support private operators.***

### **Case study: Bridge International Academies**

100. During the Committee's inquiry, DFID's links to one particular low-fee private school chain—Bridge International Academies—caused particular controversy. Aware of the support provided to Bridge from DFID, as well as the investments they received via CDC (the public limited private equity company owned entirely by DFID) and the International Finance Corporation (the investment arm of the World Bank, in which the UK owns shares), the predecessor Committee visited Bridge schools in three countries—Nigeria, Kenya and Uganda—and sought oral and written evidence from the company itself.

165 Center for Global Development, [Can Outsourcing Improve Liberia's Schools? Preliminary Results from Year One of a Three-Year Randomized Evaluation of Partnership Schools for Liberia](#) (2017)

166 Devex, [Early results: Did private outsourcing improve Liberia's schools?](#) (2017)

167 Aslam, M. '[Non-state education provision; access and quality for the marginalised](#)', K4D Helpdesk Report (2017)

168 [Q231 HC639](#)

169 [Q257 HC639](#)

170 United Nations, [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), Article 26

**Box 3: The UK Government and Bridge International Academies**

CDC made a direct investment of US\$6 million in Bridge International Academies in January 2014.<sup>171</sup>

At the same time, the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank Group—in which the UK holds shares—invested US\$10 million in Bridge International Academies.<sup>172</sup>

In April 2014 DFID, through its Impact Investment Fund, managed by CDC, invested \$15 million in Novastar Ventures, a venture capital fund which invests in Bridge International Academies.<sup>173</sup>

In October 2014 DFID—through an Innovation Fund—provided grant funding of £3.45m to Bridge International Academies in Nigeria, as part of its DEEPEN (Developing Effective Private Education Nigeria) programme. This was “a ‘start up’ grant [...] to share the risks for Bridge’s entry into the Lagos market”.<sup>174</sup>

Source: Various (See footnotes)

101. Bridge teachers use a tablet pre-loaded with lesson plans to teach classes aligned with the national curriculum of each country, ensuring consistency of learning across classrooms. In places where resources are scarce the quality of teaching is generally poor, elements of Bridge’s model are innovative, impressive and scalable. The company operates in highly populated areas where school places are highly contested (e.g. Lagos, Nairobi) and in these areas it is undoubtedly expanding access to education to certain children in its areas of operation. It was clear from our visits that there was certainly a demand for Bridge schools from parents who could afford to pay.

102. However, despite the tablet model, members of the predecessor Committee who visited Uganda felt that the quality of teaching was still variable and was notably poor in the Ugandan Bridge school. Significant concerns have also been raised throughout the inquiry about the company’s relationships with country governments. In Uganda, all Bridge schools have been threatened with closure by the Education Minister after inspectors reported that children were being taught in “substandard facilities and unsanitary conditions”. Bridge’s operations in Kenya are still being threatened due to an alleged lack of compliance with government regulations. Concerns have also been raised about the higher cost of fees in Bridge schools.

171 [“CDC supports expansion of Bridge International Academies with US\\$6 million investment”](#), CDC Group, 21 January 2014

172 [“IFC supports expansion of primary education with investment in Bridge International Academies”](#), International Finance Corporation, 21 January 2014

173 [“JPMorgan Chase joins DFID and CDC to announce \\$20m combined investment in Novastar Ventures”](#), The Impact Programme, 7 April 2014

174 DFID, 2014, [Annual Review: Developing Effective Private Education Nigeria \(DEEPEN\)](#); DFID, 2016, [Annual Review Summary Sheet: Developing Effective Private Education Nigeria \(DEEPEN\)](#)

103. Bridge was one of the operators involved in the PSL trial in Liberia mentioned above, and spent by far the most amount per pupil compared to any other operator. It spent \$663 per pupil, including start-up costs, almost \$400 more than the next highest spender in the trial. Although DFID does not fund Bridge in Liberia, the results from this trial and sustainability of Bridge's work in Liberia should at the very least be taken into consideration by the Department when assessing its support for Bridge elsewhere.

104. We put these concerns to Minister Burt, who told us that in relation to low-fee schools:

There should be a debate on the specifics. Is good quality education being provided? Is it being provided honestly and fairly, both to those who are providing it, as teachers and their salaries, and to those who are benefiting from it? It seems to me that the judgment should be made on that rather than generically 'is this a good or a bad thing?' Bridge seems to have slightly crossed that divide.

105. It is clear that Bridge is a contentious partner in achieving the aims of SDG4. Further information on its work in areas like Liberia would be welcome in order to assess its effectiveness. Of course, positive outcomes have been seen in the Liberia trial, with students in partnership schools scoring 0.18 standard deviations higher in English and mathematics compared to students in regular public schools, the equivalent of an extra 0.6 years of school. Teachers in PSL schools were also 20 percent more likely to be in attendance and teaching in schools during a random spot check, although the Government did assign 37 percent more teachers to PSL schools than non-PSL schools, as well as offering the first choice of better-trained, new graduates to PSL schools. Undoubtedly, there were some gains for education in PSL schools averaged across the eight operators in the trial, including Bridge. However, the Department should also take the concerns of its critics into account when providing support to the company.

***106. DFID should take further steps to satisfy itself that the model of educational provision offered by Bridge International Academies offers an effective educational return on the ODA committed to it. This should include assessment of whether the model is sustainable, cost-effective and scalable but also whether it could be modified or adapted to improve outcomes when compared to other operators and other models.***

## 4 Improving the quality and equity of education

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107. Attendance at school does not necessarily mean that a child will be actively learning, so it is important to acknowledge the quality of education rather than just counting numbers of students. The latest *World Development Report*, published yearly by the World Bank, addresses this issue, stating that “schooling is not the same as learning”. What is thus needed is a greater focus on improving the quality of education as well as learning outcomes, in order to ensure that every child is not only attending a school, but benefiting from an education.

108. This is a huge challenge, and testament to this is the fact that this year’s *World Development Report* focuses solely on this issue for the first time. The report gives three immediate causes of the shortfall in learning that it states is causing a “learning crisis”: children arrive unprepared to learn; teachers often lack the skills or motivation to teach effectively; inputs often fail to reach classrooms or affect learning; and poor management and governance can undermine schooling quality. In order to address these challenges, it presents three policy responses needed: assessing learning, acting on evidence, and aligning actors. In assessing how best to achieve SDG4, DFID should consider looking to these suggested policy responses to help frame its decisions

109. Equity is another huge problem, with many interventions merely continuing to reach more privileged children and leaving the most marginalised behind. In low-income countries in 2010–2015, for example, for every 14 adolescents in the poorest fifth of the population who completed lower secondary school, 100 adolescents in the richest fifth did. As Kevin Watkins told us, the focus now should be on setting equity targets that “turn the spotlight on the real barriers to accelerated progress”. These targets, Mr Watkins argued, could be one of the “great services” that DFID could provide in this area in dialogue with country governments. Measuring learning, according to the World Bank, can improve equity by revealing areas of exclusion that otherwise would be hidden.

### Allocation of resources

110. DFID currently allocates around 44% of its education funding to basic education, 19% to secondary and 6% to tertiary education. Witnesses to the inquiry generally thought the balance was about right, although much of this was qualified with the fact that DFID should spend more on basic and early years education in future. Alice Albright emphasised to the Committee the importance of investing in basic education to give all children the opportunity to succeed:

We think about education...as a staircase. The idea is that the staircase is wide enough and not so steep that every kid can start at the bottom, regardless of whether or not they are a girl or a boy or have disabilities or live in a remote area...and get to the top of the staircase and be able to then jump off and lead a productive life.

UN Special Envoy for Global Education, Gordon Brown, also expressed concern that some countries had got out of primary education too early, “before we had completed our commitment to get every child to school”.

111. It is important that children receive the skills necessary to enter the job market as part of their education. Lucy Lake, Chief Executive Officer of Camfed, emphasised that there is a real need to ensure schools are giving children the relevant skills required to enable them to make the progression into employment and entrepreneurship. In this way, children are able to explore a number of pathways to earning a living wage. Gordon Brown agreed with this sentiment, stating that in Africa and Asia in particular, economies are changing rapidly, and some jobs that people are being trained for are often becoming redundant in a changing market economy. It was important, he said, to help children “learn how to learn”. Vocational skills are increasingly important for changing economies, and education systems should be equipped to deal with this change.

### Improving education systems

112. In its report on DFID's work on marginalised girls, ICAI criticised DFID for not pursuing “system wide change” on girls' education. It stated that the Department needs to strengthen the coherence of its approach and combine policy dialogue, system building and targeted interventions in order for strategies to be successful. The Springfield Centre also emphasised the importance of focusing on a system-wide approach if DFID is to see impact on a larger scale: “In seeking to change the education system, rather than the quality of a school, or learning outcomes or enrolment rates of a cohort of pupils, a systemic approach to education inherently sees scale of impact as one of its priorities.”

113. Supporting teachers is a key aspect of improving education, as they are ultimately the frontline practitioners involved. The Research for Equitable Access and Learning Centre states in its evidence that, in order to ensure marginalised children such as disabled children are not excluded from the classroom, it is vital that teachers are equipped with skills to teach in diverse classrooms. The Bond Disability and Development Group similarly states that training teachers helps strengthen their understanding of disability. It recommends that DFID should “help to ensure teachers have the training and resources needed to ensure that teachers are competent and equipped in inclusive education methodologies”.

114. The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) focuses on strengthening education systems, so is a useful tool for DFID to achieve this. GPE's CEO, Alice Albright stated:

When we make decisions, it is not the G7 and the donor community telling the developing countries what to do. It is all of us sitting around the table deciding as a group, including the countries...how we ought to be reforming education systems. When we think about our governance, it has to keep that concept front and centre. Because education is so much about local delivery, if GPE begins to move in the direction of doing something such that the countries feel put upon and do not embrace it, we are not going to win.

115. UKFIET, an education and development forum, told us:

It is vital that decisions about educational investments by Britain should be developed in clear partnership with Southern governments and civil societies and should reflect their national priorities at their core. Timescales of interventions need to be extended in order to facilitate genuine partnerships and increased effectiveness.



## Politically informed programming

116. Politics matters. ODI told us:

DFID's support to countries on improving learning outcomes will need to be carefully adapted to the context in which they are working and take a systems approach that integrates an understanding of the political incentives, opportunities and barriers.

117. The Springfield Centre told us:

What is needed is a pragmatic and analytical approach cognisant of local social, economic and political realities, seeking locally appropriate, sustainable solutions to achieve impact at scale.

118. This is true of development in general, and education is no exception. A "one size fits all" approach cannot meaningfully improve education systems, although it is possible to learn lessons from certain contexts, which can be transferred to other countries and programmes. However, it is important that DFID are cognisant of country differences and build these into education programmes.

119. Key to ensuring this kind of approach are DFID's education advisers. Most countries with a DFID country office will have an education adviser, but in recent years they have been moved out of some countries (for example in Kenya, where this post has been replaced with a regional adviser) and in some countries they are now shared (as in Zambia and Malawi). Following the oral evidence we heard from Minister Burt and DFID officials, the Department wrote that:

The education cadre has grown in recent years and now totals 43. Education advisers have also been redeployed around the organisation to respond to new and emerging challenges; such as the large scale-up of work around Syria.

120. There is clearly concern that DFID's capacity to manage large-scale education programmes is limited. The British Association of International and Comparative Education told us: "We would also welcome a restrengthening of capacity within DFID itself to directly manage large grants to education." By ensuring more consistency across the board, DFID's education advisers can help with this process.

**121. If DFID is to be effective in supporting partner countries to improve education systems, it should have a strong understanding of the context in which it is working. A thorough understanding of the political, social and economic circumstances of each of DFID's priority countries should be at the centre of its education programming decisions.**

***122. To ensure programming is politically informed, DFID and Foreign and Commonwealth Office teams in country should be working closely together on education. To take full advantage of the range of knowledge and expertise within country teams, DFID's governance advisers, as well as education advisers, should be instrumental in planning bilateral engagement on education.***

123. **DFID's country-specific education advisers are essential to ensuring UK support to education is tailored to each country context, coordinating with other donors, international organisations and NGOs, and—most importantly—developing strong relationships with country governments. If DFID is to support systems reform in the countries it works in, these interlocutors with their intricate knowledge of countries' education systems—from the national to the local level—are essential.**

124. *Where possible, DFID should maintain an education adviser in every country where it has a bilateral aid programme.*

## Data and research

125. If learning outcomes are to be improved, it is essential that more investment is made in data and research, to find out where the gaps lie and how they can best be addressed. DFID has increased its spend on education research over the past five years, and this budget has grown from £500,000 in 2012 to nearly £11 million now. Minister Burt told us that “we think we have established a leadership role in the international community's efforts to raise the rigour, availability and use of education research”. This is a welcome position, and should be followed as an example by global partners in order to achieve SDG4.

126. DFID's support for the *Global Education Monitoring Report* through its support to the UNESCO Institute of Statistics' Global Alliance to Monitor Learning, as well as for research programmes like the Research on Improving Systems of Education (RISE) programme are positive examples of DFID's work in this area. These will make a huge contribution to improving education throughout the world, and should continue.

127. **The Committee welcomes DFID's considerable investments in research and data on global education. While access and learning outcomes are still poor, the Department's investment in baseline data and evidence on what works to improve education is absolutely vital.**

128. *DFID should continue to support research on education, such as the RISE programme. It should also continue to support vital data collection, through the Global Education Monitoring Report and others.*

## 5 Conclusion

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129. The world faces an enormous challenge in trying to meet SDG4 and ensure access to quality and inclusive education for all. The number of out of school children of primary school age dropped from 99 million in 2000 to 60 million in 2007, but progress has stalled since then. Huge numbers of children are also in school but not learning, with six out of ten children and teenagers in the world failing to reach basic levels of proficiency in learning according to a recent UN report. It will require an unprecedented push from the international community to address gaps in funding, to improve learning outcomes and to find ways to get the most marginalised children into school. Education systems in countries around the world should be strengthened.

130. DFID has stated that it is a global leader on education. In order to demonstrate and maintain this, the Government should lead by example through: replenishment for the Global Partnership for Education; continuing to support the Education Cannot Wait fund; and finding ways to support the International Financing Facility for Education. There is a golden opportunity in DFID's refreshed education policy to affirm its commitment to increased and sustainable levels of funding for global education and demonstrate how it will work across Government to achieve results for education around the world.

131. This should include greater clarity and implementation on programmes targeting girls, disabled children and children in crisis-affected communities, as well as other marginalised groups.

132. DFID's Value for Money (VfM) framework makes sense in ensuring that the British taxpayer is not supporting ineffective programmes. However, this framework should not compromise the aim of reaching marginalised groups, and the Department's VfM strategy as it related to education should be clarified.

133. DFID's support for low-fee private schools is controversial, and it is imperative that the Department fully reviews available evidence when considering future support for such initiatives. DFID's support is primarily given to free government schools, in order to reach the maximum numbers of children, and we envisage this continuing.

134. To take full advantage of the lifelong impact of education, it is important to focus on early years education, when a child's brain is developing. This is especially vital in crisis-affected communities, where external stress can hamper the development of a child and have a significant lasting impact. DFID does not apportion enough of its budget to pre-primary education, and needs to do more work in this area.

135. The Department should make rational, evidence based decisions when supporting global education, and a greater focus on politically informed programming through education advisers and support for data and research on what works will have the greatest impact.

136. Ultimately, if the aim of Sustainable Development Goal 4, to "leave no one behind" is to be achieved, DFID should continue leading by example, stepping up where necessary, so that no child is denied this basic human right.

## Conclusions and recommendations

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### Financing global education

1. The Committee recognises that in some circumstances it is right and necessary to allocate education-focused aid to middle-income countries, for example the considerable financial commitments made to Jordan and Lebanon to support the education of Syrian refugees. However, generally it is low and lower middle-income countries that require the most support for education. As the UK's spending on support for global education is transferred to other Government departments with a different geographical focus and other priorities, the Government should ensure that resources are still being focused on those children and young people who most need it. (Paragraph 41)
2. The Committee recognises DFID's continuing commitment to education, and the fact that it has in the past prioritised aid to education in a way other donors have not. However, if SDG4 is to be achieved, all donors should considerably increase the amount of aid allocated to global education, which has lagged behind other sectors for many years. For this reason, the Committee would like to see the amount of UK ODA allocated to education increase over the course of the next spending review period. The Department is commendable in striving to improve the value for money of the amount it spends on education. However, in order to achieve the ambitions of SDG4, the total amount should be increased. (Paragraph 42)
3. *Between 2012–2015, the UK spent an annual average of £966 million on education. We expect to see a significant increase in this figure over the next spending review period. The specific amount should be determined by the new approach to DFID's Value for Money framework that we recommend below.* (Paragraph 43)
4. DFID has not demonstrated a clear understanding of the inter-relationship of education spending with other sectors. If it is serious about achieving value for money on everything spent, it should work towards a better understanding of this area. (Paragraph 44)
5. *The Department should develop a clear and transparent methodology for determining and justifying the allocation of education funding in terms of its potential 'added value'. This is likely to enable better informed decisions over the programmes it funds and the mechanism to which resources are committed.* (Paragraph 45)
6. *The UK Government should, wherever possible, use its influence with partner countries to encourage greater domestic spending on education. It should also support countries in their efforts to target domestic spending towards the most marginalised and disadvantaged children.* (Paragraph 50)
7. As recognised in the Multilateral Development Review 2016, GPE's focus on fragile and conflict-affected states is well aligned with DFID priorities and we recognise DFID's influence in ensuring and maintaining this. (Paragraph 57)
8. *Given that the Global Partnership for Education has improved its performance and has a unique approach to improving the education systems in developing countries,*

*DFID should agree to the full financial contribution requested by GPE at the next replenishment. The UK should also announce its intentions early, to encourage other donors to step forward. (Paragraph 58)*

9. *We expect DFID to link its contributions to performance conditions, which we believe is right. However, DFID should take all necessary steps to ensure that any cap on contributions, as a percentage of total commitments, is an effective tool to encourage other donors (rather than a barrier to GPE receiving the full financial amount promised). To act as an incentive to other donors, the UK's commitment, and the percentage cap, should be announced as soon as possible. (Paragraph 59)*
10. *DFID should support the new International Financing Facility for Education (IFFEd), as an additional mechanism for leveraging funding into the provision of global education. (Paragraph 63)*

### Improving access to education

11. *In light of SDG5 and the recognised multiplier effect of, specifically, girls' education in developing countries, we believe that DFID should continue to fund the Girls' Education Challenge into its second phase, demonstrating how it has used learning from the first phase to inform new ways of working. DFID should also continue to use these innovative programmes to learn more about 'what works' to ensure that the most marginalised girls have access to quality education, using this learning across the organisation and sharing it with other donors and development practitioners, looking into opportunities for scaling successful models. (Paragraph 75)*
12. *DFID should seek to fund some programmes in the second stage of the Girls' Education Challenge that focus on reducing the incidence of 'drop out' at transition points in girls' development and education. The Department should also consider how it can best integrate the tackling of school related gender-based violence in programmes that it funds. (Paragraph 76)*
13. *DFID has shown leadership on education for girls and young women in recent years. The Department should now use its influence in the same way to shine a light on the needs of disabled children. It has made great progress with the Disability Framework, but needs to now ensure this is being implemented across all DFID programmes. (Paragraph 83)*
14. *DFID should use its policy refresh to launch a reinvigorated strategy to support access to quality education for disabled children. We believe that this is a vital area of work for DFID, and hope to undertake a separate inquiry into DFID's work on disability in our future programme of work. (Paragraph 84)*
15. *Humanitarian finance suffers from being short-term and unpredictable. However, as we have seen in recent years, crises—such as the war in Syria—are becoming increasingly protracted. This creates situations and environments that are likely to persist and define how many people will live for many years. The 'temporary' solutions established at the outset should therefore be designed with this in mind.*

If education provision is ignored then the futures of the children caught up in them are at risk and the chances of long term recovery, and the avoidance of repetition, will be reduced. (Paragraph 91)

16. *As part of its policy refresh, DFID needs to establish a long-term, integrated strategy for supporting education in emergencies, especially in long-term crises, through bilateral and multilateral channels. The aim should be to make establishing effective foundations for getting the affected children back into structured learning environments a priority alongside clean water, food, sanitation and shelter.* (Paragraph 92)
17. The benefits of pre-primary education for later learning are proven and there is a real drive from stakeholders for DFID to invest and do more in this area. Although other donors and organisations, such as USAID and the World Bank, are active in supporting early years education, aid funding for pre-primary remains low. It seems clear that there is the space, and desire, for DFID to contribute to work in this area. (Paragraph 97)
18. *DFID should find more effective methods of monitoring its sub-sectoral spend, particularly in early years education where it claims its support is under-represented by the figures available. This will enable the Department to assess what work it is currently carrying out in this area, and where it can add most value or leverage in other resources.* (Paragraph 98)
19. *DFID should invest more in pre-primary education, bilaterally and multilaterally. It should work alongside donors and organisations already active in this area, such as the World Bank and USAID, to determine where the UK could make the most effective contribution.* (Paragraph 99)
20. *DFID should use its education policy refresh as an opportunity to clarify its value for money approach in this area, ensuring it is fit for purpose when targeting the most marginalised children.* (Paragraph 102)
21. *DFID should work where appropriate to support governments to regulate private schools where it has the expertise and resources to do so.* (Paragraph 111)
22. *More research should be done on how the private sector could be used to improve free, government funded schools. The results of the PSL trial in Liberia are welcome, and it is encouraging that trials like this are creating useful data. This data should be assessed carefully when the Government is deciding if/how to support private operators.* (Paragraph 112)
23. *DFID should take further steps to satisfy itself that the model of educational provision offered by Bridge International Academies offers an effective educational return on the ODA committed to it. This should include assessment of whether the model is sustainable, cost-effective and scalable but also whether it could be modified or adapted to improve outcomes when compared to other operators and other models.* (Paragraph 119)

## Improving the quality and equity of education

24. If DFID is to be effective in supporting partner countries to improve education systems, it should have a strong understanding of the context in which it is working. A thorough understanding of the political, social and economic circumstances of each of DFID's priority countries should be at the centre of its education programming decisions. (Paragraph 134)
25. *To ensure programming is politically informed, DFID and Foreign and Commonwealth Office teams in country should be working closely together on education. To take full advantage of the range of knowledge and expertise within country teams, DFID's governance advisers, as well as education advisers, should be instrumental in planning bilateral engagement on education.* (Paragraph 135)
26. DFID's country-specific education advisers are essential to ensuring UK support to education is tailored to each country context, coordinating with other donors, international organisations and NGOs, and—most importantly—developing strong relationships with country governments. If DFID is to support systems reform in the countries it works in, these interlocutors with their intricate knowledge of countries' education systems—from the national to the local level—are essential. (Paragraph 136)
27. *Where possible, DFID should maintain an education adviser in every country where it has a bilateral aid programme.* (Paragraph 137)
28. The Committee welcomes DFID's considerable investments in research and data on global education. While access and learning outcomes are still poor, the Department's investment in baseline data and evidence on what works to improve education is absolutely vital. (Paragraph 140)
29. *DFID should continue to support research on education, such as the RISE programme. It should also continue to support vital data collection, through the Global Education Monitoring Report and others.* (Paragraph 141)

# Appendix 1: Correspondence with the Secretary of State for International Development

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## Letter from the Secretary of State for International Development

31 July 2017

Dear Stephen,

Thank you again for your letter of 27th April on the International Development Committee's inquiry into "DFID's work on education; leaving no one behind?" Let me again congratulate you on your reappointment as Chair of the International Development Committee. I understand that you will now seek to finalise the inquiry, and I look forward to receiving the final report. In the meantime, I am pleased to set out an initial response to your questions and recommendations.

### **Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4**

I agree we face a huge challenge to get all children into school and learning. I am proud that the UK has taken a leadership role and has a strong reputation in this sector. We have consistently sought to expand basic education while at the same time increasing global attention on the need to improve learning outcomes.

Given the significant challenges ahead of us, we intend to build on our experience and draw on the most up to date evidence to review and refresh our education policy paper. This is an opportunity to look again at how best to meet the needs of the most marginalised children, how we will drive a focus on standards and quality and the role of results based finance in delivering on these.

### **Meeting the needs of the most marginalised**

As you point out, the very poorest, and most marginalised—including girls, refugees and displaced people, and those with disabilities—are often denied the opportunities that education offers. We need a more determined effort globally to reach these groups.

I have been repeatedly struck by the multiple barriers that prevent a poor rural disabled girl attending and learning at school. We must break down these barriers. We now have better evidence—including from DFID's own programmes and research—of what works to help marginalised girls learn. We need to see this knowledge applied throughout the international system. I have also said I will deliver a step change within DFID and across the international system to ensure that those with disabilities are consistently included, which means addressing their education needs.

In addition to this, we must also acknowledge and address the hugely detrimental impact which violence has on children staying in school and learning.



I am proud that we have been at the forefront of the humanitarian response in the worst crises, and that you were able to see this for yourselves when you visited Jordan and Lebanon. The UK Government was instrumental in setting up Education Cannot Wait, an innovation in the way it spans the humanitarian and development response, to provide education for children in emergency situations. As a member of ECW's High Level Steering Group I will shine a spotlight on the education needs of those forgotten children, while working relentlessly to drive up performance across delivery partners.

### **Improving learning outcomes**

Learning must be at the heart of how DFID approaches education. We have consistently supported global efforts to have better data and statistics in order to demonstrate where improvements are taking place. Improving standards and quality is an area where we know the UK has a unique offer. I agree that a priority issue should be to tackle the acute crisis in the teacher workforce and we are examining the evidence to support this as part of our policy refresh. This must include tackling endemic issues such as violence in the classroom.

Our priority is to ensure that children receive effective education wherever they are. I will continue to support provision of non-state education where evidence shows us that it is needed and appropriate—for example in the slums of Lagos. But we will ensure that such institutions are effectively regulated and overseen by National Governments, and incorporated in education sector plans.

We will also look at the balance of our support to early learning, basic and secondary education as part our policy refresh. In doing so, we will consider the support provided by others and where we have comparative advantage. The World Bank, for example, has been leading on early childhood development. As Lord Bates said in his letter to you of 1 February, we will continue to examine the case for support to secondary education, particularly for its importance in reaching adolescent girls—and press others to do so: this is a particularly underfunded area. Secondary education is really important in improving girls' life chances, preventing child marriage, reducing HIV infection, delaying early motherhood, and in time leading to women having healthier children and families.

### **Financing education**

As you rightly say, none of this can be achieved without a significant increase in global finance. The UK will continue to champion education on the global stage, and will encourage others to join us and do more on education financing. We have continued to prioritise education spending. Over the last Spending Review period the UK spent over 9% of our ODA per year on education.

But we also need to ensure the money we are spending, including through multilateral mechanisms is transparent and effective. As you will be aware, we have linked our finance to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) to improved results and progress on reform priorities. I propose to take a similar approach to the upcoming GPE replenishment in early 2018. We intend to adopt a similar approach to ECW. We need these global instruments to work harder to drive up the performance of countries' education systems, so that more of the money invested in education leads to real learning outcomes.

The proposal to establish an International Finance Facility for Education is a potentially innovative way to leverage new and additional resources for education. We have been following the development of the proposal closely, and will continue to engage with the Education Commission and the international financial institutions as it develops.

I would be happy to discuss these issues further, as you finalise your inquiry.

Rt Hon Priti Patel MP

Secretary of State

## Letter to the Secretary of State for International Development

25 April 2017

Dear Priti,

As a consequence of the general election being held on 8 June, the International Development Committee will be unable to publish a final Report to conclude our long-running inquiry into ‘DFID’s work on education: leaving no one behind?’ As you will be aware, the Committee has been considering this matter for some nine months now, has undertaken visits to the Middle East and East Africa and has collected a great deal of written and oral evidence. Despite our constraints, we are therefore determined to share with you our reflections and recommendations as we draw this very important inquiry to a close.

### Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4

*“All of the great [...] success stories in development start with education.”*

—Kevin Watkins

Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) commits the UK—alongside 192 other signatory countries—to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. With over 250 million children and young people currently out of school and another 330 million in school but not learning, improving access, equity and quality in education presents an incredible challenge. However, it is a challenge the world must rise to. Education is central to development and to the achievement of all of the SDGs. It improves life chances, has a positive impact on health outcomes, helps prevent conflict, increases a country’s human capital and contributes to economic development. As Minister Bates told us in evidence: “if your target is economic development and elimination of extreme poverty, then it would follow that you would place a very high emphasis on getting rid of the barriers to education.” Unfortunately, despite the central role education plays in development and the achievement of the SDGs, it has long been neglected by many national governments and the international community. DFID has traditionally been a leader on global education and has a strong reputation as one of the foremost donors working in the sector. However, we are concerned that the current UK aid strategy does not place sufficient emphasis on ensuring children across the developing world have access to quality education. In recognition of this, evidence to the Committee

from organisations such as Save the Children and the Global Campaign for Education has called for DFID to produce a new global education strategy, including a long-term spending programme for education.

Whether it produces a new strategy, or simply refreshes the 2013 Education Position Paper produced under the Coalition Government, there is a need for DFID to reaffirm its commitment to education and to clarify its approach, including its support for education in emergencies. The 2015 Conservative manifesto, and subsequent UK Aid Strategy, included a commitment “to help at least 11 million children in the poorest countries gain a decent education, and promote girls’ education”, but gave no detail on how this would be achieved. Producing a new, or refreshed, strategy would clarify the Department’s objectives and could also be an opportunity for colleagues across DFID’s various divisions (e.g. those working on global health, economic development, conflict and humanitarian) to work together to develop a comprehensive and joined-up approach to education.

### Financing education

*“Some will say this is impractical, or too expensive, or too hard. Or maybe even impossible. But it is time the world thinks bigger.”*

—Malala Yousafzai

Internationally, education is shamefully underfunded. In order to achieve SDG 4 by 2030, an enormous increase in funding is needed from domestic, international and private sources. The Education Commission estimate that expenditure on education will need to rise from \$1.2 trillion to \$3 trillion per year by 2030. There has been a clear decline in international aid spending on education since 2011 and the overall ODA spend is far lower than spending on health, government and civil society and infrastructure. As Gordon Brown told us, even if you take all aid agencies together, “the average expenditure per child in low and middle-income countries on education through aid [...] is less than \$10 per head per year”. The recent Education Commission report states that, “Education has not been a top priority for international actors, whether official donors, or charitable organisations”. There is currently no finance mechanism for education equivalent to those that exist in the health sector—such as GAVI and the Global Fund—to galvanise innovation and funding for education. We hope to see this change through the introduction of a new International Finance Facility for Education, which we would like the UK to support in addition to its existing commitments.

Whilst the UK remains one of the biggest donors to education internationally, currently DFID dedicates just over 8% of its budget (£526.2m) to education; less than it spends on health, disaster and government and civil society. In evidence to the Committee, Minister Bates was unable to reassure us that the current education budget would not be cut. Organisations are calling on DFID to commit to spending a far larger proportion of its budget on education, with the Malala Fund advocating for the figure to rise to 15% of all UK aid spending.

The Committee takes the opportunity once again to voice its support for the 0.7% aid target, enshrined in law, which is necessary to ensure sustainable UK aid funding for global education. We welcome your statement last week reaffirming the important work of DFID. Given the balance of DFID's current spending priorities, and the importance of education, we recommend that DFID commit to spending no less than 10% of its annual budget on education. An increase in funding to education could perhaps be achieved by slowing the pace of allocation of aid to other Government departments. This reflects our concern—which we were hoping to explore further in our now curtailed inquiry into non-DFID ODA—that the distribution of aid across Government is threatening areas of development spending, such as education, which should be a core priority for UK Aid.

### Education in emergencies

*“58% of children in countries affected by conflict complete their primary education and just 37% complete secondary education.”*

—Education for All Global Monitoring Report, 2015

Education remains hugely neglected as a proportion of humanitarian aid, currently making up just 1.8% of all humanitarian funding, when the globally agreed target is 4%. The Education Commission estimates that the need for funding for education in emergencies has increased by 21% since 2010, but international financing for it has declined by 41% over the same period.

Humanitarian finance also suffers from being short-term and unpredictable. As Gordon Brown told us: “We cannot forever continue with this situation where the only way we fund humanitarian aid, whether it be for education, health, shelter or food, is through a begging bowl.” In the wake of 2016's World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), DFID should continue to support reforms to the international humanitarian system to ensure that the international community is better prepared to support the needs of children whose lives are torn apart by emergencies. For these children, their top priority is education, and the UK has a key role to play in leading international efforts to secure this.

We congratulate DFID on its significant role in the creation of the Education Cannot Wait fund, launched at the WHS last year. Now that it is operational, we would like to see the Department commit to long-term, sustainable funding for the fund, recognising that protracted crises and an increase in refugee flows across the globe have created a need for additional, enduring support for refugee education from the international community. We also note the leading role that DFID is playing in ensuring Syrian refugees have access to education in the Middle East. During our visit to Jordan and Lebanon last year we witnessed the extraordinary support DFID has given to the governments there to ensure that education can be accessed by those children who have fled conflict in neighbouring Syria. We are, however, concerned by the disparity between DFID's support for refugee education in the Middle East, compared to its support for education provision for refugees and internally displaced persons in East Africa, where migration flows are also high as a result of conflict. This was a subject we were planning to look at in more detail through our inquiry into forced displacement in East Africa.

As highlighted earlier, any new, or refreshed, DFID education strategy should clarify its approach to supporting refugee education in emergencies and protracted crises.

### **Multilateral, bilateral and centrally managed programmes**

Bilateral cooperation between the UK and its priority countries on education remains essential. The Springfield Centre, an independent research centre, told us, to achieve results in education, “What is needed is a pragmatic and analytical approach cognisant of local social, economic and political realities, seeking locally appropriate, sustainable solutions to achieve impact at scale.” DFID’s ability to produce such nuanced and context-driven responses depends on the strength and expertise of their education cadre in-country and strong relationships with governments, local authorities and relevant non-governmental stakeholders.

We are not currently convinced that DFID’s decisions to open and close its bilateral education programmes are sufficiently strategic. We welcome the Department’s decision to resume its bilateral education programme in Uganda. However, the reasons given for closing its bilateral programme in Kenya were unsatisfactory, particularly as DFID did not provide the Committee with a copy of its Country Poverty Reduction Diagnostic, which was referred to in evidence as the rationale for its closure. Given that DFID remains engaged in centrally-managed and multilateral education interventions in Kenya, it seems—without further evidence—peculiar that the Department has disengaged from its bilateral programme, a key element of which the Committee saw, and was very impressed by, during its visit to Kenya.

Given the importance of education to achieving the SDGs, and DFID’s expertise and comparative advantage in this area, DFID should maintain its bilateral education programmes wherever possible in its priority countries, to complement and strengthen its investments in multilateral and centrally-managed programmes. It should also have at least one education adviser in each country, instead of the crossover that occurs between countries such as Zambia and Zimbabwe. This would enable the in-country team to give appropriate priority to education and to help develop the nuanced and specialist response—including strong relationships with domestic governments—that is needed to improve education systems.

DFID’s support to education through multilateral organisations also remains essential, where it is effective and complementary to its bilateral and centrally-managed programmes. However, it is clear that many multilaterals, including the World Bank, are not allocating enough funding to education, particularly in the low-income countries that need most support. As the largest bilateral contributor to the World Bank, and a significant contributor to many others, the UK has considerable influence and should use it to ensure that enough funding is allocated to education and that this funding is provided in the low-income countries where there is most need.

Evidence to the inquiry showed widespread support for DFID maintaining its financial commitment to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), which was up to £300 million at the last replenishment (dependent on a number of conditions, including that this did not exceed 15% of total donor contributions). Although GPE did not receive the highest score possible in the latest Multilateral Development Review, the Committee recognises the significant and positive reforms that GPE has undergone since the last multilateral

review process in 2013. It is clear that these reforms have been spearheaded by the current CEO, Alice Albright, largely in response to the performance conditions attached to DFID's funding, which she described to us as "fantastic". Along with the Education Cannot Wait fund, the Global Partnership for Education forms an essential part of the multilateral landscape on education as it focuses on low-income countries and on basic education, where we have seen support is most needed. It also works directly with governments to support national education systems; work which is vital for sustainable improvements in education but difficult for DFID to undertake now that it has moved away from direct budget support. It is important that the UK either maintains or increases its financial commitment to GPE at the next replenishment in the final quarter of 2017/18. A substantial contribution from the UK will ensure GPE can continue to achieve results, and will also encourage other donors to invest in what is currently the only multilateral mechanism dedicated to improving education systems.

As emphasised in a number of its past reports, the Committee remains concerned about DFID's use of centrally-managed programmes. Although we welcome the introduction of the Girls Education Challenge (GEC) as an innovative way of targeting interventions and funding towards girls that are hardest to reach in DFID's priority countries, a number of valid concerns were raised by the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) about the way the programme is operating. As getting marginalised girls into school is an area where little evidence exists on 'what works' DFID must ensure that there is a mechanism for ensuring any learning gained through GEC programming is used to inform future work in this area. We are pleased that DFID committed to this in its response to ICAI's 2016 report and look forward to hearing more about how this will work in practice.

The ICAI report also highlighted concerns about DFID's approach to value for money when targeting marginalised girls. The report concluded that, "there is a risk that the drive for economy and efficiency will create disincentives for DFID and its partners to focus on marginalised girls". As UNICEF highlighted to us, DFID should accept that targeting the most marginalised "will require more complex and often more expensive policy responses". We therefore welcome the commitment from DFID, made in evidence to us, to incorporate equity into its value for money guidelines for education. We look forward to seeing these new guidelines in due course, and reflecting on how they might be used across the organisation to ensure DFID maintains its focus on leaving no one behind as it supports the achievement of the SDGs.

As is often the case with centrally-managed programmes, we also remain concerned about DFID's ability to join up the GEC programmes with its bilateral and multilateral interventions in its priority countries. As it moves into its second phase, we would like to see DFID make a concerted effort to join its GEC programmes up with its other in-country education work to ensure a coherent approach towards marginalised girls' education.

### **The UK as a global leader on education**

Over the course of this short Parliament, it has become clear to the Committee that DFID has significant political capital and influence amongst donors and non-governmental actors in the international development sector. In addition to its own commitments, evidence has therefore pointed to the need for the UK to act as a leader and global advocate on education, where there has been such relative apathy from the international community in recent years.

The UK could use its voice to encourage other donors to allocate more funding to education and ensure that current funding is allocated where it is most needed, rather than being spent in donors' own countries providing scholarships to domestic institutions. DFID can also use its influence with governments in its priority countries to encourage them to allocate a greater proportion of their domestic budgets to education.

Even before the general election in June, there will be an opportunity for the UK to show such leadership at the G7 Summit in Italy, where education is on the agenda. The Summit provides the UK with a potential platform to encourage other donors to increase their international financial contributions to education. The G7 and G20 Summits this year will offer crucial opportunities to galvanise the funding and drive needed to achieve SDG 4, including for those most vulnerable, such as refugees. The UK has the opportunity to be a leader on global education, and we hope that this Government, and the future Government, will be committed enough to take up the mantle.

### **Allocation of resources**

DFID currently allocates around 44% of its education spending to basic education, 18% to secondary and 4% to post-secondary. Just 1.3% of its basic education spending goes on early childhood education. Overall, the evidence we received agreed that DFID was right to focus the majority of its resources on basic education. As Alice Albright told us, if we think of education as a staircase, one of the critical investments is to ensure “the bottom of the staircase is pretty wide” so that “every kid can start at the bottom”. This makes sense as, if children do not have access to basic education, they stand no chance of progressing on to the later stages of schooling. Gordon Brown expressed concerns that some countries had got out of primary school education too early, “before we had completed our commitment to get every child to school”.

However, despite its allocation to basic education being broadly right, DFID may wish to consider some adjustments to its overall allocation. During the inquiry we have heard particularly compelling evidence from a large number of sources, including UNICEF, the University of Cambridge and Save the Children, to suggest DFID should be spending far more on early childhood education. Kevin Watkins told us that the current low spending on early years had to be seen as a “shooting yourself in the foot’ strategy” because by neglecting early childhood education “you are driving down the learning outcomes from the investments you are putting in place”. Professor Pauline Rose reinforced this point, telling us that, “the evidence is quite clear that that [an early childhood development programme] makes a huge difference to their readiness to learn once they are in school and has greater benefits once they go through the system, particularly for the most marginalised.” She also added that the most marginalised are currently the least likely to get access to these sorts of programmes. Given the weight of evidence on the benefits of pre-primary education, in terms of learning outcomes and equity, we recommend that DFID considers urgently its options for scaling up its support in this area.

We have also heard convincing arguments on the benefits of investing in secondary education, particularly when targeted towards the most marginalised, including girls. Camfed emphasised the need to invest in adolescent girls because they are “tomorrow’s mothers” and education for them will also benefit the next generation. The Malala Fund focused on the wider development benefits of a full 12 years of education for girls, stating in their evidence that, “If all girls had 12 years of education, child marriage would drop 64%,”

early births would drop 59% and child deaths would decrease by 49%". This links directly to your strong focus on family planning. Professor Pauline Rose argued that DFID's efforts should be focused on the transition [from primary to secondary, where there are large numbers of dropouts] and the most marginalised. The evidence suggests therefore that DFID is right to maintain a considerable investment in secondary education, but its interventions here must be focused—at least for now—on key transition periods (where drop outs are high), the most marginalised children, and particularly on girls.

### Improving learning outcomes

*"By 2030, 69% of children in low-income countries—264 million—will not have achieved basic primary level skills in literacy and numeracy."*

—The Education Commission

Although we remain concerned about slippage in some countries, and there are still millions of children out of school, access to primary school has improved immensely since 2000 as a result of the Millennium Development Goals' focus on achieving universal primary education.<sup>175</sup> However, with 330 million children in school but not learning, it is clear now that there is a crisis in the quality of learning outcomes. In order to have a real impact on improving global education and ensure that we leave no one behind, DFID should now focus on supporting improvements in the quality of education that children receive and their ability to learn. But as the Department admits, "there are no quick fixes".<sup>176</sup>

Improving learning outcomes will require considerable investment in research and data, to try and find out where the major problems are and how they may be solved. To this end, we welcome DFID's £26.7m investment in the RISE (Research on Improving Systems of Education) programme and its continuing support for the UNESCO Institute of Statistics, OECD Programme for International Student Assessment for Development (PISA-D) and the Global Education Monitoring Report, which are currently the biggest sources of education data.<sup>177</sup> Although, as DFID admits, there are still relatively few statistics to be found on learning outcomes.<sup>178</sup>

What is evident is that good quality teaching is essential to improving learning outcomes for children in DFID's priority countries and this may be another area where DFID wants to consider its ability to scale up support. Professor Pauline Rose highlighted that ensuring children were not left behind in education relied on ensuring "they have the best teachers, the most qualified teachers and teachers who have been given training in how to teach basic literacy and numeracy".<sup>179</sup> She also emphasised the need for teachers to be trained in inclusive teaching practices, to ensure they can deal with diverse groups of children in the classroom and ensure children are not left behind once they reach the classroom, including those with disabilities.<sup>180</sup> Evidence to the Committee from the Open University provided some interesting suggestions on the potential for DFID to support school-based

175 UN, [Millennium Development Goals Report 2015](#), p. 4

176 DFID ([EDU0054](#)) p. 9

177 DFID ([EDU0054](#)) p. 9–10

178 DFID ([EDU0054](#)) p. 9

179 [Q188](#)

180 [Q188](#)



teacher development.<sup>181</sup> Camfed highlighted the need for support for teacher training to be systemic.<sup>182</sup> The Committee also saw some good practice examples of teacher training support provided by DFID through the EQUIP-T programme in Tanzania, so there are existing examples that the Department can draw from.

### Leaving no one behind

As we have already explored in some depth in this letter, one of the greatest challenges the world faces in achieving SDG 4 is tackling inequality in education. We were told repeatedly in evidence that the poorest children are the least likely to be in school and the most marginalised children—including girls, disabled children and refugees—are most at risk of missing out on an education. As a result, it is clear that a huge proportion of the world's children are being left behind and reaching them will be a critical challenge for DFID in the years ahead. Vital to this process will be the collection of disaggregated data to ensure countries have accurate information on who is being left behind and where they are, to enable governments and donors to reach out to them. We are pleased to note that DFID is already supporting some of this work strengthening data systems.<sup>183</sup>

The education of girls is essential and DFID has repeatedly shown its commitment to getting more girls learning. However, breaking down the barriers that prevent girls getting to school, especially those based on cultural or social norms, remains a huge challenge. As already stated, we welcome the innovative approach of the Girls Education Challenge and recognise that the lessons learned from these programmes could be vital in finding out 'what works' in supporting more girls to receive an education. We have been particularly impressed by Camfed's multidimensional, community-based approach to improving girls' education in Tanzania, and hope lessons can be learned from this programme and transferred to other contexts.<sup>184</sup>

UNICEF estimates that 90% of disabled children in the developing world do not go to school.<sup>185</sup> This is an extraordinary figure. The British Council highlighted to us that whilst DFID has had a strong focus on girls' education, it "has had less focus on children with disabilities and special educational needs".<sup>186</sup> DFID has in recent years shown itself to be a leading advocate on rights for disabled people in developing countries, with the publication of the DFID Disability Framework in 2015.<sup>187</sup> Although the Framework made some basic commitments on ensuring all school building supported by DFID met accessibility requirements, there was no firm commitment on supporting the provision of quality education for children with disabilities. You stated very recently that, "Disability is shamefully the most under-prioritised, under-resourced area in development".<sup>188</sup> We agree and recommend that DFID must now put greater emphasis—akin to its focus on girls education—on working to ensure children with disabilities have access to appropriate, high quality education. In Kenya, the Committee were particularly impressed by the Girls Education Challenge project run by Leonard Cheshire Disability in Kisumu and would like to see DFID supporting similar programmes for all disabled children.

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181 The Open University ([EDU0013](#))

182 Camfed ([EDU0053](#)) para 6.1

183 DFID ([EDU0054](#)) p. 9–10

184 Camfed ([EDU0053](#))

185 UNICEF, 2014, [Global Initiative on Out of School Children: South Asia Regional Study](#)

186 British Council ([EDU0027](#)) para 11.2

187 DFID, 2015, [DFID Disability Framework](#)

188 DFID, [Speech: Bond Annual Conference 2017](#), 20 March 2017

As already mentioned, in order to ensure no one is left behind, it is vital that DFID's approach to value for money acknowledges the additional costs involved in reaching the most marginalised children, including girls and children with disabilities, and adequately reflects the Department's stated commitment to leave no one behind in education.

### Low-fee private schools

Low-fee private schools are a reality in many of DFID's priority countries. There are many different models of low-fee private schools, from small, local providers to large international chains. We have seen examples of different types of low-fee private schools on our visits to Nigeria, Uganda and Kenya over the past two years. Recent visits to these countries, and to the Democratic Republic of Congo, have also opened our eyes to the informal charges parents often have to pay at government schools. Because of this, we recognise that the issue of DFID's engagement with the 'low-fee sector' is more complex than many commentators would suggest.

The biggest problem is that, as things stand, DFID does not have a clear, evidence-based approach to its support for low-fee schools. The impact of such schools on education systems, and on children's learning outcomes, is something which needs a lot more research and interrogation. The evidence presented to us during this inquiry certainly suggests that the majority of low-fee private schools are not serving the poorest and most marginalised children,<sup>189</sup> which is where DFID's focus should certainly be. In addition to this, there is little evidence yet to prove that, once the social background of a child is accounted for, low-fee private schools produce better learning outcomes for children than government schools.<sup>190</sup>

Currently, DFID invests the majority of its education funding in government education systems. This should remain the case, as government schools are still where the most disadvantaged children are based.<sup>191</sup> Investments in low-fee private schools should only be made on an exceptional basis, where there is clear evidence that the school's target children would not otherwise be able to receive an education in a government school (for example the very impressive PEAS schools, which targets marginalised, rural girls in Uganda). Low-fee schools will continue to exist, and to proliferate, in many of DFID's priority countries. Where this is the case, rather than supporting schools directly, DFID could concentrate on providing support to governments to help them establish good systems of regulation for low-fee private schools, to ensure a better and more consistent quality of education for the children attending them. We have already seen examples of this type of work through the DEEPEN programme in Nigeria.

In the specific case of Bridge International Academies, the Committee is not convinced that DFID was right to provide grant funding to Bridge in Nigeria in 2014 and we would be keen to understand, and further interrogate, the rationale behind the substantial investments CDC made in the company in that same year. The evidence received during this inquiry raises serious questions about Bridge's relationships with governments,

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189 Research for Equitable Access and Learning (REAL) Centre, University of Cambridge ([EDU0023](#)) p. 4; [Q214](#); Ark ([EDU0073](#))

190 [Q70](#); Ark ([EDU0073](#)); [Q214](#)

191 Research for Equitable Access and Learning (REAL) Centre, University of Cambridge ([EDU0023](#)) p. 4

transparency and sustainability.<sup>192</sup> The Committee visited Bridge schools in Nigeria, Uganda and Kenya and we recognise that the model is innovative and provides a solution to some of the problems associated with teaching quality in the countries it operates in. However, whilst some of the schools—particularly those in Kenya—appeared to be providing a decent education to children who otherwise may not otherwise be in school, the quality and accessibility of the schools seems variable in different contexts. At this stage, there is limited evidence on Bridge's results, although we look forward to seeing the outcomes of randomised control trials later this year.<sup>193</sup> We would not recommend DFID make any further investments in Bridge until it has seen clear, independent evidence that the schools produce positive learning outcomes for pupils. Even at that time, we would want to see a compelling case for any further DFID support, including evidence to prove that Bridge was providing education to the very poorest and most marginalised children which was not being provided elsewhere.

I look forward to reading your response to our findings and hope that they will prove useful for future policy work in this area. Education is an issue close to the hearts of people in the UK. This is shown by the impassioned evidence we received from UK youth campaigners from the 'Send My Friend to School' campaign. One of the letters we received stated:

"I did not attend school until the age of seven and a half when I moved to the UK, so I know what it feels like to not receive a fundamental part of childhood, the chance to go to school and learn. If I didn't receive the education I am currently getting, I wouldn't be here speaking out on behalf of the children around the globe. What we would like to do is to stress the importance of this issue. Furthermore, we'd like you to keep expressing your support to giving foreign aid to education."<sup>194</sup>

I hope this Government, and any future Government, will take this into account and make education a key priority in its approach to international development.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Twigg MP  
Chair of the Committee

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192 Dr Joanna Harma ([EDU0019](#)); Oxfam ([EDU0018](#)); Right to Education Project ([EDU0028](#)) para 11; [Q186–214](#); the Committee also received a number of pieces of evidence from stakeholders in confidence and Committee members engaged with various stakeholders during their country visits

193 [Q204](#)

194 [Send my Friend to School \(EDU0071\)](#)

## Appendix 2: Programme from the previous Committee's visit to the Middle East

Time	Programme
<b>Day 1: Arrival in Lebanon</b>	
Evening	Arrival in Beirut

<b>Day 2: Lebanon</b>		
Morning	<b>Group 1: Beirut</b>	<b>Group 2: South Lebanon</b>
	Security briefing	Security briefing
	Briefings with HMA and DFID Education	Briefings with HMA and DFID Education
	Visit to first shift public school	Visit to NLGI child protection programme
	Meeting with school principal	
Afternoon	Visit to second shift public school	Visit to NLGI non-formal education programme: Early Childhood Education
	Education system improvement policy round-table	Visit to a NLGI non-formal education programme: Accelerated Learning Programme
Evening	Reception at HMA Residence with key Lebanese, Syrian and international stakeholders on education	

<b>Day 3: Lebanon/Jordan</b>	
Morning	Briefing with NGO Mouvement Social and UNICEF
	Formal debrief with DFID Team
	Meeting with Minister for Education
	Flight to Amman
Afternoon	Jordan: Arrive in Amman
	Briefing with DFID Team
	Meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education

<b>Day 4: Jordan</b>	
Morning	Travel to Asraq Camp
	Briefing on Asraq Camp
	Visit to a Formal Girls School inside Asraq Camp
	Visit to a UK supported Protection Centre (Makani) inside Asraq Camp
Afternoon	Visit to a Double Shift Boys School supporting Syrian refugees in Zarqa (host community)
Evening	Dinner with Jordanian Parliamentarians and Jordan Parliamentary Education Committee counterparts

<b>Day 5: Jordan</b>	
Morning	Visit to the National Parliament
	British Council Youth session and lunch
Afternoon	Visit to an UNRWA school
	Wash up session with DFID team at HMA residence
Evening	Dinner with UK implementation partners

<b>Day 6: Return to UK</b>	
Morning	Return flight to UK

## Appendix 3: Programme from the previous Committee's visit to East Africa

### Programme for visit to Kenya

Time	Programme
<b>Day 1: Security, political and programme briefings in Nairobi</b>	
Afternoon	Arrival in Kenya
	Security briefing from HMG Overseas Security Manager
	Meeting with British High Commissioner to Kenya & Head of DFID Kenya

<b>Day 2: Access to education for marginalised and vulnerable groups–field visits to Kisumu and Samburu</b>		
Morning	Group 1: Kisumu	Group 2: Samburu
	Flight to Kisumu	Flight to Samburu county
	Meeting with Leonard Cheshire Disability staff and Government of Kenya Education Assessment and Resource Centre (EARC) staff	Visit Lorubae Primary School
Afternoon	Working lunch with Ministry of Education county officials	Working lunch with Ministry of Education county officials
	Visit Pandi-Pieri Primary School	Flight back to Nairobi
	Flight back to Nairobi	

### Day 3: Support to improve access and quality for marginalised children in informal settlements

#### Project site visits and meetings with senior Government officials in Nairobi

Morning	Group 1	Group 2
	Visit Merry Cliff Junior school that is implementing "TUSOME"	Visit Little Rock Academy in Kibera's informal settlement
	Travel to a NairoBits (a vocational training school supported by Malala Fund)	Travel to a second school in Kibera
	Visit NairoBits–Reuben Centre	Visit Lorubae Primary School
	Visit Bridge International Academies school (Kingston school)	Visit Kibera Primary school
Afternoon	Meeting with Ministry of Education senior leadership	
Evening	Debrief with DFID Kenya	
	Reception at the High Commissioner's residence. Guests included MPs, senior Ministry of Education leadership, key donors, civil society, and implementing partners.	

### Day 4: Departure

Morning	Flight back to UK
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## Programme for visit to Uganda

Time	Programme	
<b>Day 1: Kampala-based project visits and meetings</b>		
Morning	Arrival at Entebbe Airport	
Afternoon	Security briefing with Regional Security Manager	
	Briefing on Uganda with High Commissioner, Head of DFID office and DFID Education Adviser	
	Group 1: CRANE-Viva	Group 2: Cheshire Services
	Arrive at the KBC Creative Learning Centre & courtesy call at the Head Teacher's office	Arrive at Kyambogo Primary School & courtesy call at the Head Teacher's office
	Interact with beneficiary learners and teachers	Interact with beneficiary learners and teachers
	Observe some instructional processes using IT, Mobile Library; and Demonstration Centre	Observe some Inclusive instructional processes; the disability friendly transport for girls with disabilities; improved school infrastructure; and resource centre
	Interact with parents	Visit Naguru community/parents support group and interact with parents
Evening	Evening event on Public Private Partnerships in education with government officials, union representatives, World Bank representatives and education providers	

<b>Day 2: Field visits to schools</b>	
Morning	Visit a Leonard Cheshire Disability school in Jinja
	Travel to Mayuge District
	Visit Ikulwe Primary School, a rural government primary school
Afternoon	Visit Kityerera High School, a rural secondary school run by PEAS
Evening	Dinner with District Education officials, including Chief Administrative Officer, District & Municipal Education Officers, District & Municipal Inspectors of Schools, and a Primary Teacher Training official

<b>Day 3: Visit one school en route to Kampala, followed by Kampala-based meetings</b>	
Morning	Visit Ssenyi Primary School, a rural government primary school in a remote fishing community



**Day 3: Visit one school en route to Kampala, followed by Kampala-based meetings**

Afternoon	Meeting with major Education Development Partners, including USAID, World Bank, UNICEF and Irish Aid
	Meeting with First Lady and Minister of Education & Sports
Evening	<p>Reception at High Commissioner's Residence with stakeholders including:</p> <p>Senior Government officials from Ministries of Education &amp; Sports, Finance, and the Office of the Prime Minister</p> <p>Heads of Mission from key partners on education and refugees (US, World Bank, Irish Aid, UNICEF, UNHCR)</p> <p>Country Directors of UK, international and Ugandan NGOs</p> <p>Thought leaders from think tanks and academia</p>

**Day 4: Kampala based visits and discussions**

Morning	Meeting with Civil Society on Human Rights
	Visit to YARID project at Katwe Primary School in Kampala
Afternoon	Meeting with a group of teachers
	Meeting with Youth Advocates involved with Plan International's youth outreach programmes
Evening	Debrief with UK High Commissioner, DFID Head of Office, DFID Education and Humanitarian advisers

**Day 5: Travel to Kenya**

Morning	Travel to Entebbe airport
Afternoon	Flight from Entebbe to Nairobi

## Programme for visit to Tanzania

Time	Programme
<b>Day 1: Arrival in Tanzania</b>	
Morning	Arrival in Tanzania
	Security briefing
Afternoon	Lunch with Deputy High Commissioner, Head of DFID Tanzania and DFID Education team
	Visit to a local Dar es Salaam secondary school supported by DFID's Education Programme for Results (EP4R)
Evening	<p>Reception with DFID funded NGOs, civil society, thought leaders, academics and private school providers to understand the educational context and challenges in Tanzania.</p> <p>Roundtable session led by Committee members</p> <p>Open Marketplace event</p>

<b>Day 2: Field visits and meetings in Dodoma Region</b>			
Morning	Flight to Dodoma		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Group 1: Field visit to Bahi District Council</td> <td>Group 2: Field visit to Dodoma District Council</td> </tr> </table>	Group 1: Field visit to Bahi District Council	Group 2: Field visit to Dodoma District Council
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Visit to the parent primary school of the School Readiness Programme	Visit to the parent primary school of the School Readiness Programme		

Day 2: Field visits and meetings in Dodoma Region		
Afternoon	Lunch in the community (cooked by the school)	Lunch in the community (cooked by the school)
	Meeting on in-service teacher training at district centre school	Meeting with staff from President's Office–Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG). PO-RALG
Evening	Dinner with officials from the Ministry of PO-RALG and regional and district level officials	

Day 3: Dar es Salaam	
Morning	Flight from Dodoma to Dar es Salaam
Afternoon	Meeting with Education Minister and senior management staff
	Briefing from DFID Team Leaders on the Tanzania portfolio
	Visit to the DFID centrally managed programme: Girls' Education Challenge (GEC), BRAC Maendeleo
	Meeting with service providers directly supported by DFID including EQUIP-T, Education Payment 4 Results (EP4R), Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED), BRAC Maendeleo and partners
	Dinner with Heads of Co-operation from key donor countries including Sweden, Canada, USA, World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO

Day 4: Dar es Salaam	
Morning	Discussion with Haki-Elimu and Youth Advisory Panel about Open Policy Making and Youth voices
	Discussion with project managers from USAID, Canada and Sweden funded projects
	Discussion related to the last IDC visit on Jobs and Livelihoods and what actions have been taken
Afternoon	Lunch with Deputy High Commissioner, DFID Head of Office and Head of DFID Human Investment Team
	Visit to Ubongo Studios, an Early Childhood Development Programme funded by DFID through the Human Development Innovation Fund (HDIF)

# Formal Minutes

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**Monday 13 November 2017**

Members present:

Stephen Twigg, in the Chair

Richard Burden	Lloyd Russell-Moyle
James Duddridge	Paul Scully
Mrs Pauline Latham OBE	Mr Virendra Sharma
Chris Law	Henry Smith
Mr Ivan Lewis	

Draft Report (*DFID's work on education: Leaving no one behind?*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

*Ordered*, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 136 read and agreed to.

Summary agreed to.

Three Papers were appended to the Report.

*Resolved*, That the Report be the First Report of the Committee to the House.

*Ordered*, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

*Ordered*, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available (Standing Order No. 134).

[Adjourned till tomorrow at 9.45 a.m.]

## Witnesses

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The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

### Wednesday 18 October 2017

*Question number*

**Rt Hon Alistair Burt MP**, Minister of State for International Development and Minister of State for the Middle East at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, **Anna Wechsberg**, Policy Director, Department for International Development and **Ian Attfield**, Senior Education Adviser, Department for International Development

[Q1-57](#)

## Published written evidence

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The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

EDU numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

- 1 Department for International Development ([EDU0001](#))
- 2 Department for International Development Annex A ([EDU0002](#))

## List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

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All publications from the Committee are available on the [publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

### Session 2017–19

First Special Report	DFID's use of private sector contractors: Government Response to the Committee's Eighth Report of Session 2016–17	HC 322
Second Special Report	UK aid: allocation of resources: Government Response to the Committee's Seventh Report of 2016–17	HC 323