



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION  
NAIROBI

**MEDIA RELEASE**

19 December 2011

**Australia's \$270 million commitment to global education**

Australia has pledged \$270 million to the Global Partnership for Education.

"Australia is supporting the Partnership because it gives millions of children in the world's poorest countries, including in Africa, the chance to go to school" said Australian High Commissioner Geoff Tooth today.

"We believe that education is vital to development and a fundamental right for all" he said. "Education – especially for girls – is one of the best investments in development. A child whose mother can read and write is 50 per cent more likely to survive beyond the age of five."

Globally, more than 67 million children do not have the opportunity to go to primary school. Half of these children live in Sub-Saharan Africa. Many children who are in school are failing to learn basic skills like reading and writing. More than 170 million people could be lifted out of poverty if all students in low-income countries left school with basic reading skills. This equates to a 12 per cent cut in global poverty. Without renewed effort, global education goals are unlikely to be reached by 2015.

"Australia is committed to doing its part to improve these figures" said Mr Tooth. "By 2015, Australia expects to invest \$5 billion in education through the aid program – becoming one of the largest bilateral donors to education."

The Global Partnership for Education GPE is the only global partnership between donors and low-income partner countries, multilateral organizations and civil society to ensure quality basic education for all children. The Global Partnership for Education is devoted to getting all children, everywhere, into school. And it is achieving results: since 2002, the Global Partnership has helped more than 19 million children in 46 countries go to primary school, including 27 in Sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, enrolment in African countries supported by the Global Partnership has increased by 50 per cent, almost double the increase in other countries.

The Partnership is supported by Australia, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, UNICEF, UNESCO and the World Bank, among others. Twenty-seven African nations have signed up to the Global Partnership, including Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda.

For media enquiries please contact Asif Khan on +254 20 3755324