

Press release: Girls' education should be a development priority for the Commonwealth

A new report into girls' education in the Commonwealth has highlighted the gap between ambition and reality, calling on leaders from all sectors of society to make this a national development priority and get behind cost-effective investments such as early childhood education.

The Platform for Girls' Education, co-chaired by the Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt, commissioned the report, which assesses the state of girls' education across the 53 Commonwealth countries.

Many Commonwealth countries have made good progress towards achieving gender parity in education, with girls out-performing boys in some countries. However, girls remain particularly disadvantaged in a large number of countries and there is a compelling case for targeted efforts to support them.

The report, published by Cambridge University, suggests that governments across the world need to target more funding to the early years of education, especially for girls in remote rural areas. It also highlights the need for targeted approaches to help girls overcome the many challenges they face as they reach puberty.

The Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

The importance of investing in girls' education cannot be overstated. Educated girls are a powerful force for building more prosperous, fair and resilient societies based on an "invisible chain" of shared values. Our shared vision of 12 years of quality education for all girls can only be achieved through a much greater collective effort to dismantle the barriers, driven by leaders from all sectors of society.

This first report is a significant step to identifying what actions are needed to ensure disadvantaged girls are supported to stay in school.

Professor Pauline Rose, the author of the report and the Director of the Research for Equitable Access and Learning (REAL) Centre at the University of Cambridge said:

The Report presents clear evidence on what works to enhance educational access and learning for marginalised girls. The Platform for Girls' Education presents a key opportunity to promote

political leadership backed up with resources in order to translate this evidence into action at scale.

The Platform for Girls' Education is a group of 12 leaders with a shared commitment to 12 years of quality education for all girls. Its membership includes government and civil society representatives from Canada, Fiji, Ghana, India, Kenya, Pakistan, Rwanda, Trinidad & Tobago and the UK, as well as heads of leading multilateral agencies (UNESCO, UNICEF, Global Partnership for Education).

Notes to editors:

- Please see the [press release](#) with details from the first meeting of the Platform for Girls' Education
- Please see the full [report](#)

Further information