



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

12th March 2021

Jean Comfiant,

RE: EDUCATION AND GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of UK action to improve education globally; your comments upon which I have read with interest.

Improving education systems in developing countries is beneficial for everyone. It supports young people to get good jobs and helps them to lift themselves and their countries out of poverty, thereby building a more prosperous and more stable future for us all. Moreover, it reduces the incentive to seek a better life in another country – which directly impacts the UK.

The UK is a world leader when it comes to improving global education. We are the biggest bilateral donor to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the largest fund in the world dedicated to improving education in developing countries. Indeed, our contribution accounts for 20 percent of the total amount given globally. The UK occupies a prominent position in the GPE, and will this year co-host, with Kenya, the GPE Replenishment Summit 2021.

Girls' education is a particular priority for the UK and for the Prime Minister. The UK's flagship 'Girls' Education Challenge' (GEC), launched in 2012, is the world's largest global programme dedicated to girls' education. The GEC operates in the world's poorest nations and has supported millions of girls to receive a quality education. In Zambia, Zimbabwe and Tanzania, for example, the GEC has helped over 260,000 girls from poor communities to stay in secondary education. My parliamentary colleague, Helen Grant MP, was appointed as the UK's Special Envoy on Girls' Education in January, tasked with championing every girls' right to twelve years of quality education.

According to the UN, the Coronavirus pandemic has been responsible for the largest disruption to education systems in history. This, it warns, risks erasing decades of progress on education. It is why the UK, alongside its existing work, is taking decisive action. The UK is the largest donor to Education Cannot Wait (ECW), the global fund for educating children in emergencies. The UK has also provided £5.3 million to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to enable teachers to provide education to children in ten refugee-hosting countries during the pandemic.



In July 2020, the Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel was established: an independent body composed of leading education experts from around the world. Its mandate is to provide succinct, usable, and policy-focused recommendations to support policymakers' decision-making on education investments in low and middle-income countries. It is jointly convened by the FCDO and World Bank, and its first report was released in October.

Finally, the UK has pledged to put education on the global policy agenda this year as part of its Presidency of the G7, and I shall continue to watch developments with interest.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you, then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*With best wishes,
Tom*

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**