

World pledges \$4B in push to repair COVID's education damage

July 29 2021



Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson alongside former PM of Australia Julia Gillard during a summit to raise funds for the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), in London Thursday July 29, 2021. The UK last month pledged 430 million pounds (dollars 700 million US) to the project, which aims to secure at least five billion US dollars over the next five years. Credit: Tolga Akmen/PA via AP

International governments and companies have pledged more than \$4 billion to educate 175 million children around the world and prevent a generation's chances being blighted by the coronavirus pandemic.

The commitments came Thursday at a [conference](#) in London hosted by Britain, Kenya and funding organization the Global Partnership for Education.

Former Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard, who chairs the [partnership](#), said the donations put it on track to meet its goal of raising \$5 billion over the next five years,

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who addressed the conference alongside Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta, has made girls' education a flagship project of his Conservative government, and is pushing to get 40 million more girls in school around the world by 2026.

He told conference delegates that [education](#) was "the silver bullet ... that can solve virtually every problem that afflicts humanity."

Britain has pledged 430 million pounds (\$600 million) to the Global Partnership for Education. But Johnson is facing criticism for slashing the U.K.'s international development budget from 0.7% of national income to 0.5%, cutting around 4 billion pounds (\$5.6 billion) from projects that help the world's most vulnerable.

The [government](#) says the cut is temporary and is necessary because of the economic blow caused by the pandemic.

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Citation: World pledges \$4B in push to repair COVID's education damage (2021, July 29)

retrieved 28 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2021-07-world-pledges-4b-covid.html>

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