

## Statement of Education Philanthropy to FFD4 30 June 03 July

### **Why philanthropy backs education and why we must use every financing tool at our disposal**

We are the global philanthropic community that believes in the power of education.

We invest in education because we see its transformative impact every day: in individual lives, in communities, and in the long-term progress of societies.

We are concerned that education is increasingly being overlooked in global policy and financing debates. At this year's World Bank Spring Meetings and surrounding events, discussions focused heavily on climate finance, global health, and humanitarian needs, while education remained on the margins. In media and academic commentary, it is too often cited as a case study in aid inefficiency, rather than as a proven engine of human development. Major bilateral funders are stepping back, reflecting a deeper shift in development priorities, one that threatens to leave education without the political and financial support it urgently requires. Further to this, mentions of education are absent from or sparse in the dominant narratives shaping the future of aid, including in the first draft of the [outcome document of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development](#). If this perception continues unchallenged, it risks influencing the decisions of finance ministers, donors, and boardrooms across philanthropy and the private sector.

This statement represents a united voice of philanthropy for education in the lead-up to the Financing for Development 4 conference, a landmark moment for decisions on investment into countries where education systems are under severe pressure and struggling to meet the needs of growing, changing populations.

We are raising our voice now to offer partnership and the full suite of philanthropic levers we bring: grantmaking, catalytic capital, strategic convening, and long-term commitment. We do so in the firm and data-backed belief that our investment in education, across all parts of the learning lifecycle, in every corner of the world, will be essential to unlocking progress on health, climate resilience, gender equity, economic growth, and more in the years to come.

We urge governments, multilateral actors and the private sector to work together alongside philanthropy to drive greater investment in education as a fundamental requirement for the achievement of all the SDGs, and we commend the proposed commitment from the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Financing for Development to close the financing gaps for the provision of education.

We commit to taking action in line with the priority areas outlined in the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Financing for Development's outcomes document that focus on domestic

public resources, private business and finance, international development cooperation, international trade, debt and debt stability, and the international architecture and systemic issues. In particular, we will be:

**1. Aligning with and reinforcing the global education architecture: We cannot afford a retreat from multilateral cooperation**

Existing global funds offer established, effective platforms for pooled investment and are already supported by philanthropy. We see the value of harmonising our contributions with these mechanisms to enhance scale, coherence, and impact, and committing to using existing and efficient ways to channel funding for education.

**2. Partnering with governments to maximise impact from limited resources, and increase domestic investment**

Governments around the world, despite constrained fiscal space, are prioritizing education. We are working with governments to help make the most of limited resources, improve system efficiency, and maintain focus on equity and learning outcomes. We also work to encourage domestic philanthropy to mobilise local capital, deepen accountability, and help ensure education reflects community needs and aspirations.

**3. Catalysing private and blended finance: We recognise the contributions of multi-stakeholder engagement to education**

Philanthropy can unlock larger pools of funding by acting as a bridge to private capital, mobilising access to additional and innovative financial resources. Through outcome-based financing, catalytic grants, and strategic co-funding, we are helping de-risk investment and demonstrate the returns of strengthening public education systems. Businesses are recognising the long-term value of investing in human capital through education. We are committed to unlocking much more finance for education across sectors. That means recognising the different incentives of the private sector and working in partnership to ensure that the entire financing ecosystem is aligned behind the shared goal of strong, inclusive education systems.

We also recognise that other parts of the philanthropic community are doing vital work to address the deeper structural and fiscal constraints behind education financing. Initiatives such as [Fiscal Space](#) are helping to create the enabling conditions for governments to sustainably invest in education over the long term; this work is essential and complementary.

This is a pivotal moment. As aid is redefined and new financing models emerge, education must not be sidelined. The decisions made now, by governments, multilateral actors, the private sector, and philanthropic institutions, will shape the futures of millions of learners.

## **The Members of the IIEFG and the OECD netFWD Community**

*The IIEFG is the largest global network of philanthropic actors funding education. We are committed to achieving the fourth Sustainable Development Goal and believe in the power of education to drive progress towards the other SDGs. The Network of Foundations Working for Development (netFWD) network brings together philanthropic leaders in the development sphere. It connects foundations with OECD experts, policymakers and key stakeholders in the multilateral system to share evidence and strategic insights, explore promising novel approaches, and engage in coalitions and partnerships.*