

*'Millions of parents, teachers and children around the world are calling on their governments to provide free, good quality, basic education for all the world's children. They are part of the Global Campaign for Education; we add our voice to their call. Nelson Mandela and Graca Machel, April 2002.*

Education is a basic human right and fundamental to the fight for human dignity and freedom. For 125 million children and 880 million adults, that right is violated everyday.

### What is the GCE?

[The Global Campaign for Education \(GCE\)](#) promotes education as a basic human right, and mobilizes public pressure on governments and the international community to fulfill their promises to provide free, compulsory public basic education for all people; in particular for children, women and all disadvantaged, deprived sections of society.

The GCE is a broad coalition of development and education research agencies and unions active in over 100 countries. The GCE believes that education is; a universal human right, the key to poverty alleviation and sustainable human development, a core responsibility of the state... and finally achievable if governments mobilise the political will and available resources.

### The demands

With so much to gain, there can be no excuse for delay. The GCE therefore demands that the international community and governments of the South take immediate action to implement the Education for All goals and strategies agreed by 185 world governments at Dakar in April 2000. [\(Find out more about the Dakar summit and Education for All here\)](#) In particular, the GCE calls:

- On governments, to involve citizens' groups, teachers and communities in developing concrete plans of action for delivering and sustaining free, good quality public education for all;
- On governments, to abolish fees and charges for public primary education, and to increase their own spending on adult, early childhood, primary and basic education, with priority investments in schools and teachers serving the most disadvantaged groups;
- On the World Bank and rich Northern countries, to increase aid and debt relief for basic

education, and fund a Global Initiative to back national plans with speedy, coordinated and predictable delivery of the additional resources needed;

- On civil society organizations, to hold their own governments and international institutions accountable for upholding the right to education, and delivering on the Education for All goals.

### **The actions**

Each year, the Global Campaign for Education organises a global Action Week, that brings civil society together all over the world to demand Education for All. During the 2005 Action Week, the GCE will demand that politicians keep their promises to achieve gender equity in education by 2005 and universal primary education by 2015. These are among the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for ending world poverty - but on current trends, they will be missed.

We need universal basic education now to end poverty and empower women. The previous Action Weeks have shown that if we unite and speak with one voice, we can make a powerful impact and force our leaders to take action before it is too late.

In 2005 the GCE is organising the "Send my Friend to School" global action. Children and adult learners around the world will be making life-size cut-outs from card and paper. These cut-out "friends" symbolize the 105 million out-of-school children and 860 million illiterate adults - the majority of whom are girls and women.

**Everyone, everywhere can and should get involved!**  
[to get involved in the 2005 week of action, click here.](#)

[For more information on how](#)

The GCE action week happens every year. In April 2004, coalitions in nearly 100 countries around the world organised the World's Biggest Lobby. For more information on last year's big lobby click here.

In April 2003, two million people took part in the World's Biggest Ever Lesson organized by the GCE. Not only did they set a new world record for the largest lesson in a single undertaking,

but they also made a strong demand that girls must get the same chances to learn as boys.