



# commonwealth education fund investing in the next generation

‘..human history becomes more and more a race between  
education and catastrophe’

**H.G. Wells** ‘The Outline of History’ 1920



# The Commonwealth Education Fund Oversight Committee

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Sir Robin Janvrin, Private Secretary to *H.M. Queen Elizabeth II*

# Sir Edward George

The Commonwealth Education Fund has been established with the aim of promoting primary education throughout the Commonwealth. This, we believe, to be an absolute precondition for the economic and social inclusion of disadvantaged individuals and local communities. Without this inclusion their ability to contribute to the economic well-being of society as a whole is severely limited.



The Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) involves an innovative partnership between three leading aid organisations – ActionAid, Oxfam and Save the Children. In the 17 Commonwealth countries which the Fund is intended to benefit, these organisations have already appointed national co-ordinators and they have drawn-up plans for working on the ground with the local communities – including parents, businesses and faith-based organisations – with the aim of focussing attention on the fundamental importance of primary education in their societies. They also intend providing a bottom-up input to the design and implementation of policies that will help to deliver this important goal.

I have been joined on the CEF Oversight Committee by a number of very distinguished people. We will shortly be approaching the business community – especially businesses

operating in the 17 Commonwealth countries – for help and support.

You may be able to help us:

- \* First, by using any influence you or your business might have, to underline the vital importance of universal primary education in countries covered by the Fund.*
- \* Secondly, by working on the ground with the CEF country co-ordinator to support initiatives to improve the effectiveness of investment in primary education.*
- \* And thirdly, by contributing financially to the CEF itself.*

I am convinced that a great deal can be achieved by the non governmental organisations (NGOs) working together with the local community – including the business community – in what, I believe to be, one of the most important economic and social issues facing the world today. ■

**If you would like to help – in any way – please let me know.**

**I do very much hope that you will want to join us by becoming part of the Commonwealth Education Fund.**

# The Commonwealth Education Fund

Over 100 million children around the world have never seen the inside of a classroom and more than double that number are forced to drop out before completing their primary education. The international community has committed itself to the goal of ensuring that all the world's children receive a good quality basic education by 2015.

But on current trends, this goal will be missed by a wide margin, with 75 million children remaining out of school by the target date.

Yet this is an achievable goal. It would cost only about \$10 billion a year - equivalent to just one fifth of the European Union's milk quota or half of what Americans spend on ice cream every year. If this goal is reached it will represent an historic landmark in human development.

The Commonwealth Education Fund is a ground-breaking initiative based on an unprecedented collaboration between the UK Government, leading British charities and the private sector. The CEF has received £10 million in start-up money from the Government. It now needs to raise a further £10 million, which the Government will match pound-for-pound, making the fund worth potentially £30 million.

These funds will be carefully targeted so that they act as a catalyst, mobilising the public and political will necessary to achieve the larger goal.

Put simply, by directly raising £10 million the CEF can play a pivotal role in mobilising \$10 billion and ensuring all children receive a basic education.

The CEF is grounded in the conviction that education needs to be made a top priority and that everyone has a role to play. Parents, teachers, non-governmental organisations, faith-based organisations, businesses, the media and ordinary citizens need to come together to make their voices heard by national governments. By forming broad-based national alliances that work with governments it is possible to ensure that education remains top of the agenda. Supported by the CEF these same civil society alliances can help to

implement educational reforms, track education spending and monitor progress.

Through the CEF, these alliances will also work internationally, to exchange learning and to campaign for more, better-targeted aid for education. At the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000, the international community pledged that any government that is seriously committed to providing universal basic education will not be allowed to fail for lack of resources. More recently, the countries of the G8 and other wealthy countries have promised to mobilise extra resources in a co-ordinated way to complement developing countries' own efforts. The Commonwealth Education Fund will enable national alliances to join hands with their governments, to persuade the wider international community to keep their promise to the world's out-of-school children. ■

### The Challenge

Writing in the *Financial Times*, the founders of the Fund - Gordon Brown and Sir Edward George - said: 'Education is fundamental to strengthening political structures and to achieving sustained growth. It provides children in developing countries with the skills to transform their lives and lift their nations. It is the key to sustaining growth in world prosperity and ensuring rising living standards for all.'

Yet over 100 million children worldwide (including more than 70 million in the Commonwealth) do not have effective access even to primary education - they do not even get to first base.

In 2000 the United Nations General Assembly, as part of its Millennium Development Goals, set the world two ambitious educational targets. The first was that all children of school age should have completed primary education by 2015 and the second, that in pursuing that goal, full equality of access to education for girls and boys should be achieved by 2005. At the UN's World Education Forum, under the banner 'Education for All', the global community committed itself to the promise that

no country seriously trying to achieve these goals should be thwarted from doing so by a lack of resources.

Developed countries have long been providing educational aid for developing countries but this money, delivered on a piecemeal basis, has only been able to achieve so much. Today, after half a century of such aid, well over 100 million children have never seen the inside of a classroom and over 200 million fail to complete even the first years of primary school. This means they are unable to fully participate in their own, and their societies' development. For education to work, to take root in a country, there has to be an overwhelming demand from the people for it, a government deeply committed to providing it and a national community equipped to ensure that free universal primary education is delivered and delivered effectively.

Across the developing world progress is being made in reducing the number of children who are not attending school. The World Bank reports that in East Asia, for example, primary school enrolment rates are high and still rising; and most other regions of the world are on course to reach full primary school enrolment by 2015.

Universal primary education - the prime goal of the Fund - means that by the age of 14 every child should be able to read and write and have the skills of numeracy, comprehension, analysis and reasoning. In addition children should be confident, curious, independent, resourceful, patient and understanding. It is only when these competencies and qualities are in place that individuals are enabled to take full advantage of all the opportunities for self-improvement that life has to offer. So is this all a reasonable vision or just an impossible dream?

### The Commonwealth Education Fund

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, launched the Commonwealth Education Fund, under the Chairmanship of Sir Edward George, the Governor of the Bank of England, earlier this year to mark the Queen's Golden Jubilee, with the aim of promoting universal primary education within the Commonwealth. It is hoped that, in terms of its global impact, it will come to be seen as one of the most significant legacies of the Queen's fifty years on the throne.

The British Government has pledged an initial £10 million towards the fund

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'...through education we can lift the Commonwealth's poorest children out of hopelessness and despair'

**Rt. Hon, Gordon Brown MP,**  
Chancellor of the Exchequer

# Marion is in school because...

...this year Tanzania abolished primary school fees. Abolition came as a direct result of sustained campaigning by a network of over 200 organisations called the Tanzanian Education Network (TenMet).

TenMet - an alliance of national and international organisations concerned about education in Tanzania - has played a crucial role in persuading the Tanzanian Government to abolish school fees. This has led to an additional 1.6 million children enrolling in primary schools.

When TenMet began its campaign the Tanzanian Government did not think that school fees were a major problem. But because there had been no national census in Tanzania since 1988, they had no idea how many children were not enrolled in school. Primary education was compulsory, so those who couldn't afford the fees lied about their children's ages, or moved, so as to avoid getting into trouble.

TenMet undertook a survey to demonstrate just how many poor children were not attending school. The findings shocked the Government which then committed itself to abolishing primary school fees within two years. At the World Education Forum in Dakar, the Tanzanian Government used the TenMet research to stress the importance of abolishing school fees and it called on the international community for help to end fees for all children attending primary school across the developing world.

But TenMet's work has not ended. The increased enrolment has put pressure on school resources and every shilling put into education needs to be spent wisely. TenMet is campaigning to try and make sure that none of this

money gets diverted either into other areas of spending or into someone's pocket. Most villages now have noticeboards that display how much money each school should be receiving. And TenMet is working with school management committees to help them understand the school budget-making process.

Nationally, the Tanzanian Government now consults with TenMet on a regular basis and the coalition is working to ensure that an even higher percentage of Government funds go into education in the future.

**TenMet is making a real difference. The Commonwealth Education Fund can both sustain it in its current work and help it move into new areas.**

'My family is very poor. I have two brothers and two sisters but my parents could only afford to send my older brother, Kaseem, to school. He was often sent home because my father couldn't afford to give him the money to pay his fees. But now that school is free he's been able to finish his education and now I go to school every day. No one sends me home. And my younger brother and sisters are now looking forward to going to school as soon as they are old enough.'

**Marion, Tanzania**



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and will match pound-for-pound everything subsequently raised by businesses up to a maximum of £10 million. In other words, the CEF could reach £30 million and it will act as a seed investment attracting even more resources into education.

The strength of that investment lies in the strength of the organisational resources behind the CEF. Three globally prominent non-governmental organisations, with decades of experience in fighting poverty - ActionAid, Oxfam and Save the Children - have come together in a working alliance. The Commonwealth Education Fund represents a unique harnessing of the skills and resources of the three agencies, the British Government and the business community, united by a shared belief in the importance of education for the developing world.

The Commonwealth Education Fund is an appeal for money but it is also an appeal for the business community to become partners in a major international project that has the potential to make a real difference to the lives of millions of children across the developing world.

Behind the Fund lies a vision for

the future of education in the Commonwealth, but for that vision to work it needs both cash and commitment. Usually, appeals such as this are for funds to build new schools, improve existing ones, provide textbooks, train new teachers and so on. But the CEF is different. It is different because it is aimed not at supplying immediate educational needs but at creating a social and political environment in which education becomes the number one national priority for developing nations.

#### **The Philosophy**

It is now recognised that education is central to any anti-poverty social and economic development strategy.

Underpinning the Commonwealth Education Fund stands three critical ideas about development. They are that:

- \* without good governance and democracy developing countries will stay poor;*
- \* without universal free primary education democracy cannot flourish and that*
- \* without an active and informed society, committed to schooling for all, universal free primary education will not be achieved.*

The Fund is also making gender equality in education a priority. There is no development strategy better than one that involves women as central players. It has immediate benefits for nutrition, health, savings and reinvestment at the family, community and, ultimately, country level. Making girls' education a priority is a social development policy; It is a long-term investment that yields an exceptionally high return.

#### **The plan**

Progress is being made in the spread of primary education across the developing world although there are regions that are still lagging behind - Africa and South Asia in particular - and here the Commonwealth Education Fund has a pivotal role to play. For, of the approximately 100 million children around the world who do not go to school (of whom two out of three are girls), approximately 70 million live in Commonwealth countries.

So the Fund has identified 17 'target' Commonwealth countries, all of low income and all with serious deficiencies in the resources they are able to provide for education. In Africa they are, Cameroon, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique,

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‘Uganda has taken significant steps towards improving the quality of the education we provide. We have started implementing universal primary education. This has resulted in an enormous increase in enrolment - up from 2.7 million pupils in 1996 to a total today of around 7.2 million. But there is a limit to what one national government alone can

achieve. The responsibility for education should be shared among government, donors, the private sector and civil society. It is vital that all these stakeholders co-ordinate with one another in order to build strong broad-based national coalitions.

The Commonwealth Education Fund is an excellent opportunity for civil society organisations to

strengthen their links with each other as well as with the private sector, with the Government and most importantly of all with the children and poor women and men of the country who are still being denied the right to education.’

**Hon. Zoe Bakoko**, Minister for Gender, Labour and Social Development, Government of Uganda

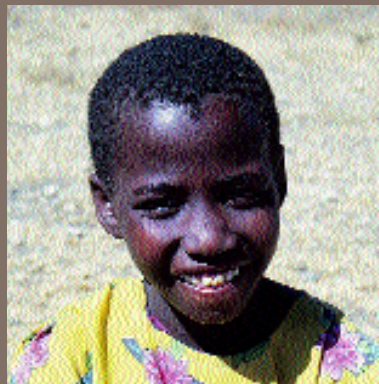
# Behind the CEF...

... is the notion that government-run national education systems have to be made more flexible, responsive and relevant if they are to be inclusive of all children. To achieve this the voices of children like the following need to be heard by policy makers



**Krishna, India**

‘My family couldn’t afford to send me to school. I had to help my parents earn money. I worked in a shop where I earned 300 rupees a month (£4.50) for working 15 hours a day, 7 days a week. I saved enough money to get a train to the city where I hoped to find work but when I got there everything I owned was stolen. Now I and a friend go round the streets collecting rags which we then try and sell. We often talk about going to school one day but, for now, it’s just a dream.’



**Charity, Kenya**

‘I am eleven years old. My father died of AIDS when I was two. My mother also became infected and died when I was six. I and my 14-year-old sister now live with my grandmother. I’m supposed to go back to school next term, but my grandmother cannot afford the fees. I’ll still turn up although I’ll probably be sent home. I want to study because I want to learn more, especially about the good things in this world. It makes me wish that my Dad hadn’t died. If he was still alive, I think he’d pay my fees.’



**Iresha, Bangladesh**

‘I am nine years old and I don’t go to school every day as my Mother says I have to stay at home and help her around the house. Even when I do go to school I don’t always enjoy it. There are too many children in my classroom so there are some days when I don’t have a desk to sit at. The classroom has holes in the roof. That doesn’t matter in the dry season but in the wet season the rain keeps falling and I can’t work. But I keep going because I know how important it is to go to school.’

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Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe; and in South Asia, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

In all the target countries ActionAid, Oxfam and Save the Children already have their own well-established relations with partners on the ground and, together, they will be working on a range of innovative programmes and strategies aimed at advancing the goals of the CEF. The three aid organisations will ensure that all CEF money is separately identified and a full report on all expenditure will be submitted to the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DfID).

### **The Vision**

So if the aim is to make a reality, at least in the Commonwealth, of the United Nations' goal of achieving universal free primary education by 2015, how is this going to be achieved?

In simple terms it is by making education the number one political priority in the Fund's target countries. To do this the organisations behind the CEF have set themselves three areas of priority action – all based around challenging the notion that education is a privilege and instead asserting that it is every child's right, and this right must be respected.

In order to achieve this the Fund is aiming to: strengthen the involvement of local communities and civil society, including non-government parents, business and faith-based organisations, in a bottom-up approach to the design and implementation of plans to achieve universal access to primary education

at local and national levels.

Of course these measures cannot work, and are not intended to work, in isolation from the huge range of educational initiatives that are currently being undertaken by developing countries, donor governments and aid agencies. That work must continue and the CEF is intended to make these initiatives even more effective by providing them a fertile soil in which to grow.

### **The process**

So how will the money be spent to achieve these broad aims?

The key to the CEF strategy lies in working with strong citizen-based organisations that are able to articulate the demand that every child has a right to free primary education and are also able to ensure that money that has been earmarked for education is actually spent in the schools with girls and boys receiving equality of treatment.

ActionAid, Oxfam and Save the Children will work with local and national organisations:

*\* Helping them campaign for the goal of free primary education for all. This will include giving them the organisational skills and resources to research educational policy and then to disseminate the results of that research to as wide an audience as possible. The organisations will also be supported in their own fundraising so that their work can continue after CEF funding has ended. And their own internal operations will be strengthened so that they become more accountable and responsive to their own societies.*

*\* This will mean strengthening their own networks, taking in children's rights groups, parents associations, school management committees and teachers unions as well as faith-based organisations, and the business community; the intention being to strengthen the national voices calling for the need to invest in basic education. And they will be assisted in engaging constructively and critically with government, parliamentarians, donors, and other decision-makers to ensure access, equity and quality in education. They will also be supported in benefiting from other countries' experience and sharing the lessons they themselves have learnt. Online networking creates exciting new possibilities for this international exchange to take place cost-effectively.*

*\* Local groups of parents, community leaders and others will be helped to understand how school budgets are calculated to enable them to see if their school, and their localities, are getting their fair shares. They will be shown how to track the range of costs charged to parents – whether formal or informal, compulsory or voluntary. School management committees will be offered support in gaining a stronger role in the actual management of classroom resources. This should enable parents to better monitor school performance in areas such as teacher attendance and the quality of the lessons being delivered.*

*\* Local organisations will be assisted in organising campaigns to ensure access to quality education for all. In particular they will be helped to campaign for equal access to schools for girls - a major issue in virtually all the target countries. And they will work to ensure that other*

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# Sandy Leitch

There are some very clear reasons why I believe business should be involved with the Commonwealth Education Fund.

The job of business is to make profit – this is our number one priority. We make profits by giving value for money and service to consumers. But I strongly believe that successful commercial organisations, like my own, have a duty – a moral obligation – to the communities in which we live and work.



We, all of us, must be prepared to give something back, to enrich and to improve the societies of which we are all part, from where we draw our profits. This is as true for the 17 nations of the Commonwealth being targeted by the Fund, as it is for the UK and other developed countries. Many companies are recognising this and re-examining their corporate values accordingly. They are actively looking at how they can become better, more responsible corporate citizens - how they can become more closely involved in the communities in which they operate.

We believe this Fund will provide companies with a perfect vehicle to channel this involvement. We see three main ways companies can help us:

First, they can act as champions and use their influence to support the vital cause of universal primary education.

Second, by co-operating on the ground with the Fund co-ordinators they can directly support initiatives the Fund is promoting.

And thirdly, they can contribute financially to the Fund.

I believe that the Fund's objectives are very much in businesses' own interests. Business doesn't operate in a vacuum and improving education and access to education is a fundamental step in securing economic prosperity and business competitiveness in any economy.

The task ahead won't be easy – nothing worthwhile is ever easy. But what we do have now is opportunity. The opportunity to help secure access to primary education for all and through this the opportunity to help secure a prosperous, stable and more certain future for the children of the Commonwealth. ■

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*socially excluded groups such as HIV/AIDS orphans, low-caste children and street-children also get access to free primary education as a right.*

### **The role of the business community**

The Commonwealth Education Fund is looking for the support of the business community in making the goal of 'Education for All' a reality in the Commonwealth. The credibility of this major global initiative will be enormously enhanced by the backing of major British companies, particularly those that operate within the target countries. For the job of putting education at the top of the political agendas of the countries covered by the CEF will need the strength, not just of the aid organisations and their local partners, but also of the UK and local business sectors.

Investing in education in the developing world has a compelling logic of its own, but commercial companies also have a vital long-term self-interest in the economic and social progress of the communities in which they operate.

The long-term strengths of the markets of East Asia demonstrate how

global businesses benefit from the impact of improved education on economic development and from the access that this creates to better-educated local workforces. The potential markets of Africa and South Asia are massive, and the economic development of these regions will benefit not only the countries themselves but their trading partners as well.

Companies can also gain from the positive impact that involvement in such schemes can have on their own staff. Opinion polling is now demonstrating the degree to which the British public recognises the importance of making a positive contribution to the developing world. Staff working for companies that are seen to be in the forefront of making 'Education for All' a reality will undoubtedly feel that they and their employers are making a meaningful contribution in the UK and throughout the world.

After the Earth Summit in Johannesburg, there is a heightened awareness among consumers, both in this country and in the developing world, about the significance of issues such as development and sustainability. There are clearly very

beneficial implications for the public image and brand name of businesses that become associated with such vital causes.

But above all this is an issue that, on all levels, has a moral imperative. There is no ambiguity about the benefits of spreading the net of universal primary education to all children. Together, governments, aid agencies, partner organisations and the business sector can give a voice to the voiceless – those hungry minds whose right to education is currently being ignored.

Contributing to the Commonwealth Education Fund is the opportunity of being involved in an ambitious project that will change millions of lives. It might sound like a rather grand claim, but this is a truly realisable project.

If the CEF vision can be delivered, and it can, then the children of the Commonwealth will benefit, their whole societies benefit and the rest of the world will benefit as well. ■

### **Become part of the commonwealth education fund**

'The Commonwealth Education Fund will further boost the efforts that Commonwealth countries are making towards expanding access and improving the quality of the primary education they are able to deliver. This initiative further demonstrates the pivotal role that the United Kingdom continues to play in the developing world. Education empowers the poor, safeguards

the vulnerable, promotes economic growth and social justice, and promotes the Commonwealth values of democracy, human rights, citizenship, good governance, tolerance and pluralism.

Commonwealth education ministers, at their meeting in Canada in November 2000, reaffirmed their commitment to providing quality

basic education for all, on a fair and equitable basis. I am confident that the Commonwealth Education Fund will help open the doors of learning to millions of children in the Commonwealth and contribute to the achievement of 'Education for All' by 2015.'

**His Excellency the Rt. Hon. Donald C. McKinnon**, Commonwealth Secretary-General

# Lives can be changed...

...as these children's stories demonstrate. They tell stories about schooling for marginalised groups – AIDS orphans, shepherd children and nomadic children. These are the sort of projects that are central to the CEF mission.



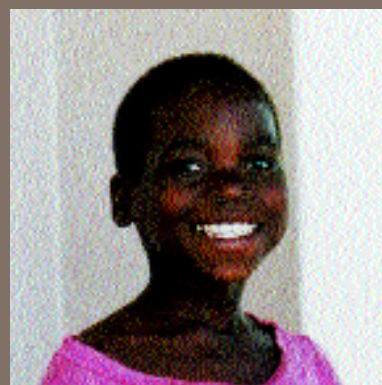
**Abasa, Ghana**

'I'm 8-years-old. I'm a shepherd. I look after my family's sheep and goats. I have to take them to grazing areas, sometimes more than a mile from my village and I don't get back until late in the afternoon. But I go to school - a Shepherds School - it's run in the evenings after I and other children like me have finished our work for the day. I've been at school three years and I really enjoy it. I hope my young sister and brother will also be able to come to this school.'



**Guddi, India**

'I live near the northern Indian town of Firozabad. The temperature is sometimes more than 40 degrees celsius, even the oxen can't work. I make glass bangles in a small factory, it's very hot, tiring, boring work. But I can't afford not to work. The 40 or 50 rupees (around 65 pence) I earn each day accounts for almost half my family's income. I don't mind working but I worry about missing out on my education so I go to school after I have finished work for the day. I enjoy the classes even though sometimes I am very tired and find it difficult to concentrate.'



**Anibal, Mozambique**

'Both my parents die as a result of AIDS so I live with my grandfather. He told me about the time when there was no school in our village, the nearest one was five kilometres away. Then one day we were visited by some people from outside and they told us how to go about getting a school for our village. All the people in the village got together and we asked the Government for help. They sent a man who built the school. A teacher also arrived and now I am learning to read and write. My grandfather is also going to the school - he's learning to read and write as well.'

act:onaid



As Directors of ActionAid, Oxfam and Save the Children - three of the world's leading aid organisations - we know that education is the key to development.

Amartya Sen, the Nobel Laureate, has observed: no democracy has ever undergone a famine and there is no better guarantee of democracy than a strong and universal system of primary education.



The Commonwealth Education Fund seeks to reinforce this link between democracy and education. The Fund's very purpose is to enable citizen and community organisations to play a greater role in improving government education systems. Their day-to-day experience of education can provide powerful insights to strengthen educational reforms.

As independent organisations we have often acted in collaboration but the degree of co-operation we are undertaking to make the Commonwealth Education Fund a reality is unprecedented. We are also looking forward to working closely with other organisations, both here in the UK and in the target countries, including the business community. It reflects the importance we attach to this project.

And we are excited by the prospect that the Fund can make a real contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals of universal primary education by 2015 with full gender equality by 2005.

Only two Commonwealth developing countries make any reference to the 2005 gender equity target for education in their poverty reduction strategy plans. There is an urgent need to ensure that this is put on the agenda in all Commonwealth countries otherwise all the UN's development targets could be rendered meaningless. If we can ignore one we can ignore them all. We have to show that we can make a significant difference by 2005.

We believe, that with your help, we can make that difference. ■

Salil Shetty, Chief Executive, ActionAid

Barbara Stocking, Director, Oxfam

Mike Aaronson, Director General, SCF



# Rt. Hon. Gordon Brown

Today there are over 70 million children in the Commonwealth who are not in school because they have no school to go to. Children who will never enjoy even the most basic primary education. Children thus destined to fail almost before their life's journey has begun.



The new Commonwealth Education Fund will support the Government's commitment to ensure that, by 2015, no child is left out and that every child in the Commonwealth receives primary education.

The CEF was launched earlier this year, in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen, to mark her 50 years as Head of the Commonwealth. The commitment it represents – that every child should have a decent start in life – will provide a fitting legacy for the Golden Jubilee, sowing the seeds of social justice and prosperity across the Commonwealth for the next fifty years.

Operating under the Chairmanship of Sir Edward George, Governor of the Bank of England, and administered jointly by three British charities – ActionAid, Oxfam and Save the Children – the CEF will help strengthen

the education systems of 17 of the world's poorest countries.

The UK Government has already committed an initial £10 million to the CEF.

**But we wish to encourage businesses and individuals to contribute too – so we will match, pound for pound, any contributions they make up to a total of £10 million, making the fund worth a possible £30 million.**

If, through education, we can lift the Commonwealth's poorest children out of hopelessness and despair, we will have achieved a momentous victory for the values of the Commonwealth and secured a stronger, fairer, more prosperous future – not just for them but for all of us. ■

# Why should businesses join the Commonwealth Education Fund?

Joining the Commonwealth Education Fund will help to change the lives of many of the world's poorest and most disadvantaged children. By contributing to the CEF you will:

- \* become closely associated with a landmark achievement in world development – one that will be celebrated as an enduring point of reference in charting human progress,
- \* be seen to be in the forefront of strategic thinking - looking beyond bricks and mortar to find imaginative new solutions,
- \* put the fundamental values of your company clearly on the record internationally,
- \* gain positive media coverage in the UK and internationally,
- \* develop good relations with, and improve access to, national governments in Commonwealth countries,
- \* gain a positive profile through association with the leading charities - ActionAid, Oxfam and Save the Children,
- \* motivate your employees, strengthening their commitment to, and sense of identity with, your company (both in the UK and in the Commonwealth),
- \* expose key staff to new challenges and insights (particularly for staff based in Commonwealth countries but also for those UK-based managers who visit the on-the-ground project work),
- \* provide a deeper pool of skilled labour for you to draw upon in those Commonwealth countries where you operate,
- \* create a more stable and positive environment for your investment and
- \* contribute to building a wider market of consumers for your products in the Commonwealth.

There are many ways in which you can contribute to the Commonwealth Education Fund. *Find out how by contacting either:*

**[siredwardgeorge@commonwealtheducationfund.org](mailto:siredwardgeorge@commonwealtheducationfund.org)**

or

**[sandyleitch@commonwealtheducationfund.org](mailto:sandyleitch@commonwealtheducationfund.org)**

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‘If the global community continues to disregard the importance of basic education it will not be able to overcome the tremendous problems that our precarious world faces. Any country that neglects the education of its people dooms them to inadequate access to all the opportunities of global commerce.

A person who cannot read instructions or understand the demands of accuracy is at a great disadvantage in getting a job in today's globalising world. Basic education is also critical in giving citizens a political voice.

It is remarkable that in the long history of famines in the world, there has never been one in a democratic country. This is not really surprising, since elections are hard to win after a famine. These recognitions force the ruling governments in democracies to act quickly and effectively to prevent famines. For these, and many other reasons I am an enthusiastic supporter of the Commonwealth Education Fund.’

**Nobel Laureate Prof. Amartya Sen**



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