

**RESULTS International (Australia)**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Australian education pledge near top of the class**

Global funding to ensure more children go to school received a significant boost overnight with a generous contribution from Australia at the international pledging meeting held in Copenhagen.

Pledging \$270 million over 4 years to the Global Partnership for Education, Australia's pledge was one of the most generous of all the donor nations. Australia's bold commitment at the pledging meeting and its leadership in bilateral education funding reaffirm Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd's statement at the Commonwealth Heads of Governments Meeting last week in Perth that "Australia regards education as one of the best investments we can make, at home and overseas."

Total funds raised from donors was \$1.5 billion with developing countries pledging to increase domestic spending on education by \$2 billion. With 67 million children currently not in school, this new funding will put 25 million children into school for the first time, purchase 50 million new textbooks, and train 600,000 new teachers.

Education is fundamental to good health and well-being as well as a driver of economic growth. Studies have shown that children of women who go to primary school are 40 per cent less likely to die before the age of five.

Speaking on behalf of the grassroots anti-poverty advocacy group, RESULTS, national manager, Maree Nutt said "Australians should be very proud of this generous pledge which will ensure more children in school, more teachers and more textbooks."

The Global Partnership for Education provides resources and technical support to 46 eligible poor countries. Since 2002 it has disbursed over \$2 billion in education aid to low income countries and enabled an additional 19 million children to go to school.

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**RESULTS International (Australia)** engages in grassroots advocacy on poverty issues with members around the country. [www.results.org.au](http://www.results.org.au)