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## **UN chief encourages philanthropists to invest more in education**



28 February 2011 – [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon today lauded the role philanthropists play in facilitating access to education and encouraged them to commit more resources to improve quality and ensure that even the most marginalized children have opportunities to acquire education.

“The world needs you to do even more: more giving, more advocacy, more sharing best practices and more teamwork, including with the United Nations,” the Secretary-General said in a [speech](#) delivered on his behalf by his Chef de Cabinet, Vijay Nambiar, to a special event in New York to strengthen partnership between the United Nations and the philanthropic community.

The event, “*Partnering with the philanthropic community to promote education for all*,” organized by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), brought together four hundred philanthropists, corporate and civil society leaders to UN Headquarters to share best practices and lessons to boost global private funding for the education of boys and girls.

In his remarks to the event, the Secretary-General paid tribute to the role played by philanthropic investments in spearheading innovation and providing the impetus for wider reforms.

“They are leveraging technology and providing new models of community involvement; they are bringing added value to your companies and society alike,” the Secretary-General said, while also thanking the philanthropic community for its wide-ranging engagement.

He outlined three ways in which more could be done: first, by making multi-year commitments to investments in education that address the root of the education deficit; second, by joining existing multi-partner efforts; and thirdly, by solving critical bottlenecks such as in teacher preparation, the monitoring of school and student performance and finding alternatives for scarce school supplies such as textbooks.

Mr. Ban noted that the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)) has said that achieving the Education for All goals will require a global investment of \$16 billion. Launched in 1990, the Education for All movement is a global commitment to provide quality basic education for all children, youth and adults, through six key education goals which aim to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015.

The Secretary-General also noted that nearly two million teachers will be needed by 2015 to achieve the global goal of universal primary education. “All of this requires greater investment. That is where the philanthropic community can play such a critical role,” he said.

Mr. Ban acknowledged the austerity characterizing current economic conditions but pointed out that education is a long-term investment that will help countries to recover and spur economic growth.

“Let us support proven efforts, take these to scale and find innovative ways to help those hardest to reach,” the Secretary-General said in his remarks, adding “those 67 million children waiting for a chance for education and opportunity should not have to wait any longer.”

In his remarks to the event, the President of ECOSOC, Lazarous Kapambwe, encouraged philanthropists to continue supporting the less fortunate and also explore other ways of improving the quality of education. “Philanthropy should continue to do what it does best – helping the marginalized and vulnerable catch up, while not shying away from risk either,” he said.

Addressing the event, UNESCO’s Executive Director, Irina Bokova, praised the role the philanthropic community played in increasing learning opportunities and stimulating innovation. “We need to strengthen this dialogue and work together with governments and communities to accelerate progress and enable all children, youth and adults to enjoy access to quality education,” Ms. Bokova said.

Of the grants announced at the event today, the Dublin-based Cathal Ryan Trust contributed \$14 million to the UN Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)) to build schools in Sri Lanka for 6,000 children and rehabilitate health-care facilities for 25,000 children under the age of five, 5,000 pregnant women and 5,000 lactating women.

Symantec’s contribution of \$900,000 – in addition to \$100,000 given last year to the non-governmental organization, Room to Read – will enable more than 20,000 boys and girls in India gain access to quality education programmes.

Western Union Foundation’s \$500,000 contribution to the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)) will enable migrants from the Philippines and Morocco living and working abroad to contribute

to sustainable local development, including education, in their home countries. The contribution is part of a \$1.1 million grant from the Western Union Foundation to support UN efforts to advance the Millennium Development Goals.

Last November, telecommunications giant Nokia contributed between \$5 million and \$10 million to UNESCO to promote the use of mobile technologies in education projects worldwide.

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