

ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON EDUCATION FOR ALL

A debate on donor support to low-cost private schools as a strategy to increase educational participation in developing countries

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Global Education for All is a group of parliamentarians from both Houses and all parties, who have come together to support strong UK action on achieving the Education for All goals.



Keith Lewin, Sean Coughlan and Michael Barber
Committee Room 15, Houses of Parliament

On Wednesday 5th December the APPG Global Education for All held a debate on donor support to low-cost private schools as a strategy to increase educational participation in developing countries.

This is a hotly-debated and live topic given that the UK government has expressed a desire to focus more on market-based solutions to development around the world. In the education sector this agenda is progressing rapidly. Initiatives to support low-cost private schools have been announced by DfID offices in Pakistan, India, Kenya, and Nigeria, as well as research projects in other countries. This event was an opportunity to hear from experts on both sides of this debate, and to discuss the most effective ways for the UK to support expanded access to education in low-income countries.

The debate was chaired by Sean Coughlan, BBC News Education Correspondent. Sir Michael Barber spoke in favour of donor support to low-cost private schools. Sir Michael Barber is [Chief Advisor at Pearson Education](#), Co-Chair of the Pakistan Education Task Force, and former advisor to the UK Government. Professor Keith Lewin spoke in opposition to donor support for fee paying, for profit private schools. Professor Lewin is from the Centre for International Education at the University of Sussex, a senior advisor to DFID, World Bank, UNICEF, and several developing

country governments, and Director of the DFID-funded [Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity \(CREATE\)](#).

Following the debate there was open and lively discussion with the audience, and at the end of the event Dr Paul Atherton, Education Advisor on low cost private schools at DFID gave a short response to the points raised. Sean Coughlan, BBC News Education Correspondent who chaired the debate, has also published an article about the event on the BBC website - "[Can private schools teach the world?](#)".

Summaries of the debate are on:

<http://www.periglobal.org/role-state/document/all-party-parliamentary-group-global-education-all-debate-donor-support-low-cost>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-20641059>

<http://www.appg-educationforall.org.uk/>

Open Society Foundation Peri Video

<http://vimeo.com/53410853>