



Better Life, Better Future

UNESCO GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP
FOR GIRLS' AND WOMEN'S EDUCATION



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP

Since its creation, UNESCO has been advocating for, promoting and defending the right to quality education for all, especially for girls and women. As fundamental human rights, gender equality and education stand at the core of UNESCO's mandate.

UNESCO launched the **Global Partnership for Girls' and Women's Education** in 2011 guided by the conviction that educating girls and women can break the cycle of poverty and foster greater social justice. The Partnership seeks to increase learning opportunities for **adolescent girls** and **women** and to find solutions to some of the biggest challenges and obstacles to their education.

The Partnership addresses two main areas which require increased attention:

- **secondary education**
- **literacy**

The Partnership focuses on and seeks to build bridges around the following:

- advocacy and awareness raising
- global policy dialogue
- multi-stakeholder collaboration
- technical support

Important partners have joined the Partnership since it was launched and the number continues to increase. These include:

- Governments of Italy, Japan, Pakistan and USA
- GEMS Foundation
- Hainan Airlines, HNA Group
- Nokia
- Packard Foundation
- Procter & Gamble
- The Barefoot College
- UN Women

The Partnership also benefits from UNESCO's Capacity Development for Education for All Programme (CapEFA) which operates in some 30 priority countries.



- *"There are no immovable barriers to gender equality and education for all. Young girls and women are changing the world, we must support them. We must give them the tools they need to shape the world for the better."*

Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO

WHY A PARTNERSHIP ON GIRLS' AND WOMEN'S EDUCATION?

Girls and women are subject to multiple forms of discrimination in all spheres of their lives, including education. Girls' and women's unequal access to and performance in education are both a cause and a result of this discrimination.

This is why we need an innovative partnership to intensify efforts, to increase awareness and to mobilize broad support for girls' and women's education. To achieve this we must harness the respective strengths of partners – be these in funding capacity, expertise, outreach or other.

Particular attention is needed to expand and improve the quality of education for girls and women at the secondary level and in the area of literacy, to take successful initiatives to scale, to replicate good practice and to engage new actors.

With the 2015 deadline for both the Education for All (EFA) goals and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) fast approaching, there is an urgent need to ensure that gender equality and respect for the basic human rights of girls and women, including their right to education, remain at the core of the post-2015 agenda.

Quality Education

- ✓ Saves lives of mothers and their children
- ✓ Improves child nutrition and health
- ✓ Reduces early marriages and pregnancies
- ✓ Increases job opportunities
- ✓ Leads to faster growth
- ✓ Increases tolerance and understanding
- ✓ Increases awareness and sensitisation about environmental issues



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■ Because girls face a distinctive set of barriers to learning...

Girls drop out of school for many reasons: early marriage and pregnancy, gender-based violence in and around schools, poverty, household chores, lack of gender-sensitive learning contents and environments. Targeted measures are needed to get girls to school and keep them there until they complete a full course of education.

■ Because illiteracy has a female face...

Illiteracy is a major obstacle to women's empowerment. Women face multiple challenges and are often the poorest and most marginalized in social, political or economic domains. As a result, their access to good quality education has not been prioritized. Literacy programmes that are sensitive and adapted to their specific context and needs are required.

WHAT HAS THE PARTNERSHIP ACHIEVED SO FAR?

UNESCO established dynamic partnerships to support marginalized girls and women in Africa and Asia. A number of projects have been launched, focusing on remote, rural areas. These include:

> Malala Fund for Girls' Education (Pakistan, USD 10 million)

Pakistan, Malala Yousafzai's home country, joined forces with UNESCO to protect and promote girls' education in Pakistan and elsewhere. Aiming to build capacities in both formal and non-formal education, the programme provides gender-sensitive training for teachers and raises awareness in communities in order to improve access to safe and good quality learning environments for girls living in hard-to-reach areas.

> UNESCO/HNA partnership (HNA Group, USD 5 million)

Signed in February 2014, this is a five-year framework agreement (2014-2018) to fund girls' and women's education in Africa and South Asia. The aim is to expand access to and the quality of education, especially for adolescent girls that are hardest to reach, ensuring that they stay and complete education at all levels and that learning environments are safe and free from school-related gender-based violence.

> Girls' and women's education using ICTs in Senegal and Nigeria (Procter & Gamble, USD 3.15 million)

Launched in 2012, the project is working to reach 40,000 girls and women, aged 15-55 years, with basic literacy skills in a period of 2 years. During the 1st phase of the project, some 200 classes were opened in seven regions in Senegal with more than 4,000 girls and women enrolled, 2,300 girls and women followed distance courses through training and use of ICTs, while another 1,000 girls received additional academic support to help them stay in school. The project will soon be launched in Nigeria.

> Crowd-sourcing girls' education in Ethiopia and Tanzania (Packard Foundation, USD 1.5 million)

The project aims to decrease by 20% the school drop-out rate among girls in remote areas, especially during the vulnerable transition period from primary to secondary education and until the completion of secondary education (ages 12-19 years). In Ethiopia, more than 4,000 girls and other stakeholders received awareness training on sexual and reproductive health and more than 1,000 girls benefited from tutorial support. In Tanzania, activities included the creation of safe spaces for girls in 15 secondary schools, teacher training and the development of resource material for students and teachers.

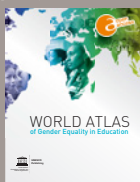
> Partnership on teacher training and girls' education (GEMS Foundation, USD 1 million)

The first project, 'Girls' education in mathematics, science and technology' implemented in Kenya and Lesotho in 2012-2013, supported girls and women in science, mathematics and technology education. About 150 school principals, teachers and Ministry officials were trained on gender-sensitive modules and pedagogies, impacting some 5,000 students in both countries.

> Mobile phone literacy – empowering women and girls (USA, USD 347,000)

The outcome of the project will be a global report providing policy recommendations on the use of mobile devices for advancing women's and girls' literacy.

UNESCO World Atlas of Gender Equality in Education



From Access to Equality



■ *"When UNESCO's programme on literacy started in my neighbourhood I asked myself - but why don't I enrol... to start learning again. This programme taught me many things, how to read and write, how to take people's contact details and be able to use my mobile to communicate with them."*

Kewe Ndiaye, a Senegalese young woman who left primary school to look after her siblings, explaining how the literacy programme enabled her to go back to school and how she now aspires to be a fashion designer.

THE WAY FORWARD

Girls' and women's education yields major development gains for all, including improved family health, civic participation, increased productivity and prosperity.

Girls' and women's education has the power to transform not only their lives but also the lives of their families and their communities. This transformative power of education needs to be central to the post-2015 global development agenda.

Building on the successes and past experience, UNESCO will expand the Partnership to ensure that it becomes a dynamic mechanism for promoting girls' and women's education up until and beyond 2015, in complement to other United Nations Initiatives, including the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) and the United Nations Secretary-General's Global Education First Initiative (GEFI).

The Global Partnership for Girls' and Women's Education will continue to raise awareness and advocate for the importance of girls' and women's education as a basic human right, a global priority and an imperative development objective, so that girls and women can access and benefit from good quality education.



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TARGETS FOR 2014-2015:

- ▶ **increase the number and diversity of partners**
- ▶ **expand geographical coverage**
- ▶ **increase the amount of resources invested in girls' and women's education**
- ▶ **promote South-South and North-South-South Cooperation**

■ In 2011, there were **34.3 million** girls out of school at lower secondary level. By 2015, **56%** of countries will achieve parity in lower secondary education but there will still be 31 countries with severe gender disparities. Of the **30.6 million** girls at primary level that were still out of school in 2011, on current trends, **55%** are expected to never enrol.

■ **493 million** adult women are illiterate and account for almost two-thirds of the world's illiterate adults as a result of poor education quality and years of neglect of education for girls and women. Half of the 61 countries with data will not achieve gender parity in adult literacy by 2015 on current trends.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

“Offering girls basic education is one sure way of giving them much greater power - of enabling them to make genuine choices over the kinds of lives they wish to lead. Education in today’s world is not a choice nor a luxury, it is a fundamental right of every child and the government is responsible for providing appropriate schooling to every child regardless of caste, creed and gender.”

H.E. Mr. Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman, Minister of State for Education, Pakistan

Whether you represent:

- Governments
- Private sector companies
- Foundations
- Civil Society Organizations & NGOs
- Bilateral & Multilateral Organizations
- Media
- Other

You can also invest in improving the lives and future of girls and women in the most underprivileged settings. UNESCO’s Global Partnership for Girls’ and Women’s Education provides a solid platform bringing together UNESCO’s unique experience in education and its extended multi-sectoral network.

Find out how you can become a partner and support UNESCO’s efforts to make the right to education a reality for all girls and women:

Education Sector
UNESCO
7 place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP, France
Email: gender.ed@unesco.org
Website: www.unesco.org/new/better-life-better-future

■ *“Our partnership with UNESCO is enabling us to broaden the significant difference we are making in the lives of girls today – the women of tomorrow.”*

Steve Bishop, Procter & Gamble’s Group President of Global Feminine Care

■ *“More than an act of positive discrimination for women and girls, whom as we know are the first victims of the scourge of illiteracy, this project is an innovative approach that consists of integrating information and communication technologies in the learning process”*

H.E. Mr Kalidou Diallo, Former Minister of Education, 2011, Senegal