

GIRLS' EDUCATION: THE PATH TO PROGRESS



Class 10 students at Shree Krishna Ratna School in Chautara, Ward 5, Sindhupalchowk District, Nepal
GPE/Jawad Jalali

THE CHALLENGE

- ▶ Although more girls than ever go to school today, **129 million girls** worldwide are still denied an education.
- ▶ **Nearly one in three** adolescent girls from the poorest families has never set foot inside a classroom.
- ▶ In low-income countries, **fewer than two in three girls** finish primary school and only one in three finishes lower secondary school.
- ▶ Girls face many barriers in getting an education, including child marriage. Each year, **12 million girls under age 18** are forced to marry.

GPE RESULTS



82 MILLION

MORE GIRLS are in school and on the path to gender equality in GPE partner countries since 2002, including 39 million girls living through conflict and crises.



GIRLS' ENROLLMENT

HAS INCREASED BY 65% in primary education in GPE partner countries since 2002.



67%

OF GPE PARTNER COUNTRIES have as many girls as boys completing primary school, compared with 42% when GPE was founded in 2002.

GPE'S APPROACH

GPE believes that all girls should be educated, healthy and safe, and it has taken bold steps to realize this vision by:

- ▶ **Hardwiring gender equality into everything we do:** This means helping partner countries diagnose and address gender inequalities so that every girl can get an education.
- ▶ **Investing in girls:** GPE mobilizes financing and partnership to help partner countries improve equity, gender equality and inclusion in education. Beginning in 2021, the GPE Girls' Education Accelerator will provide additional funding to speed up progress and dismantle barriers to girls' schooling.
- ▶ **Putting gender equality at the heart of education systems:** GPE helps partner countries identify gender barriers within education systems and ensure that strategies and policies are in place to address them so that all girls can learn and thrive.
- ▶ **Putting girls' education on the world stage:** GPE has helped elevate girls' education in key global settings, from the G7 Gender at the Center Initiative to Pope Francis' Global Compact on Education. GPE is also working with partners to feature education strongly at the Generation Equality Forum, convened by UN Women and co-hosted by France and Mexico.



Female students at Meskerem Elementary School, Bahar Dar, Ethiopia
GPE/Kelley Lynch

WHY EDUCATING GIRLS MATTERS

Educating girls generates huge dividends for economic prosperity, gender equality, climate resilience, public health, and lasting peace and stability.

- ▶ If every girl completed primary school, maternal deaths would decline by two-thirds.
- ▶ A child whose mother can read is 50% more likely to live past the age of 5, 50% more likely to be immunized, and twice as likely to go to school.
- ▶ If every girl received 12 years of schooling, child marriage would plunge by two-thirds, and girls' higher lifetime earnings would grow economies by as much as \$30 trillion.
- ▶ For every additional year of schooling girls receive, their country's resilience to climate disasters improves because educating girls has an impact beyond the individual, cascading into her family and her community.

OVERCOMING BARRIERS IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), extreme poverty, insecurity and inequity pose formidable barriers to girls' education. GPE is helping the country tackle these barriers on many fronts. From 2013 to 2017, a \$100 million grant from GPE helped partners develop a strategy and action plan to improve girls' education and combat gender-based discrimination in Kasai West and Equateur provinces. The program benefited nearly 1.4 million girls in primary school, resulted in 82,000 more girls enrolling in grade 1 and increased gender parity in both provinces.

GPE's current \$100 million grant to the DRC builds on this success by revising textbooks to eliminate sexist references and stereotypes, promoting a child protection law that criminalizes early marriage, supporting a public awareness campaign highlighting the importance of educating girls, and funding activities to prevent gender-based violence.