Learning Brief Compendium

Girls' Education Challenge

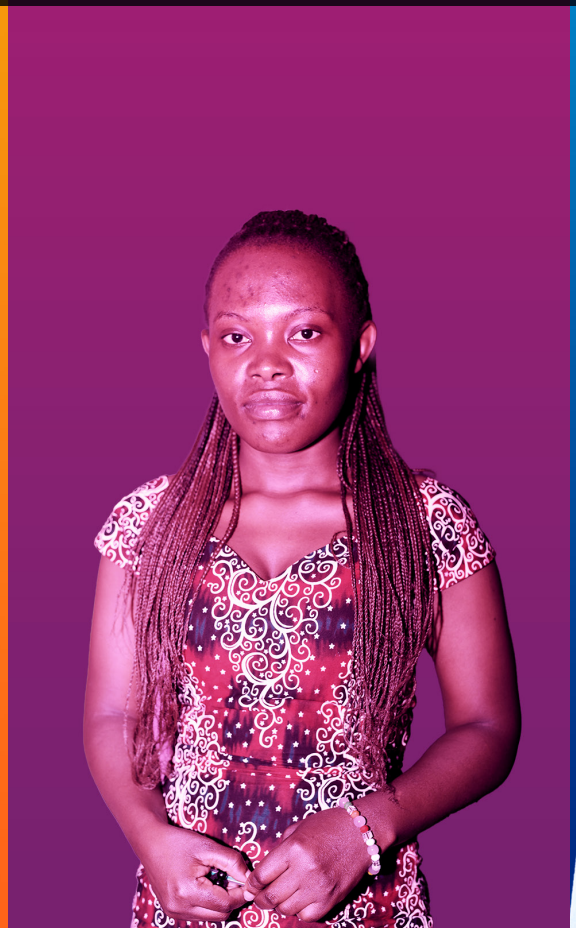
UKaid from the British people

A quick and accessible overview of 13 essential topics to improve girls' education

A snapshot of the approach, value for money and factors for success, plus links to further reading

A valuable reference tool









What is the purpose of compendium and who is it for?

The compendium's simple format makes it a useful resource for many audiences, including education specialists, other specialists and generalists.

The compendium is a quick and accessible reference tool for all GEC Learning Briefs.

Each Brief is summarised in one or two pages that highlight:

1) the approach taken
2) value for money (where this is examined)
3) key factors for success in bullet points
4) a QR code and link to access the full brief

This format provides readers with an overview of the brief's content. However, the compendium is intended as a snapshot, and readers are encouraged to read the full Learning Brief to gain a more complete understanding of the topic.

What is the Girls' Education Challenge?

The Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) was the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's £500 million investment to improve the educational opportunities of the world's most marginalised girls. It comprised two types of projects: 1) GEC-Transition (GEC-T) projects, which worked within schools and supported girls most at risk of dropping out, and 2) Leave No Girl Behind (LNGB) projects, which targeted highly marginalised girls who had already dropped out or who had never been able to enrol in school.

What is the GEC Learning Brief Series?

The Girls' Education Challenge compiled a wealth of project data and learning from a portfolio of 41 projects operating across 17 countries. The 14 Learning Briefs in the series are rooted in quantitative and qualitative evidence and provide a synthesis of learning from project intervention designs and implementation approaches that have proved vital in supporting improvements in girls' learning.

Visit the website's resource page to access a host of learning products, such as evaluations, country briefings, and tools and guidance. The GEC blog series can also be accessed here.

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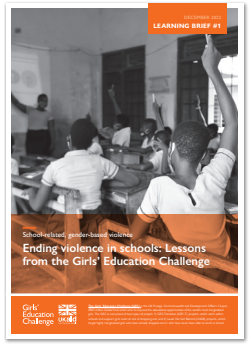
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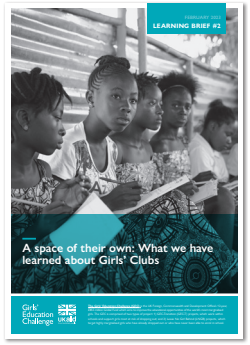
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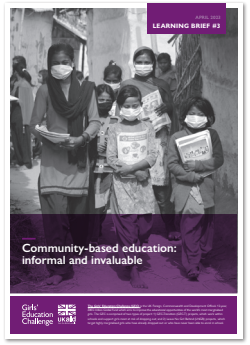
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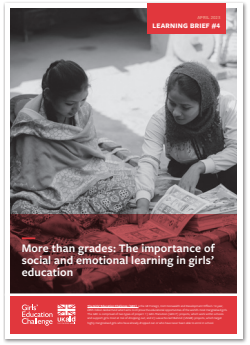
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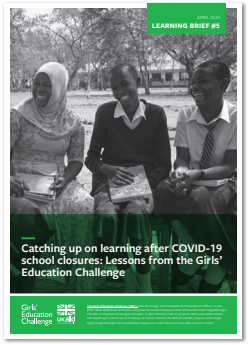
QR codes and links to all Learning Briefs

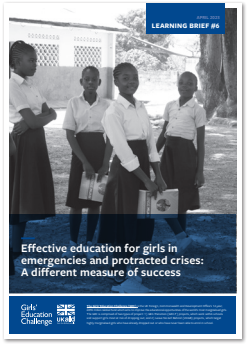


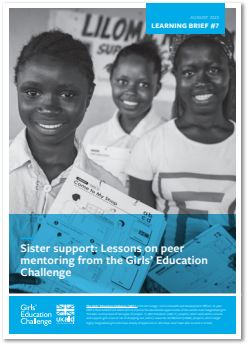


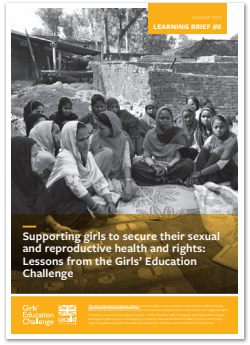




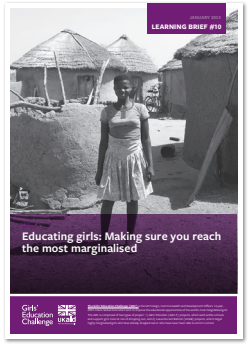




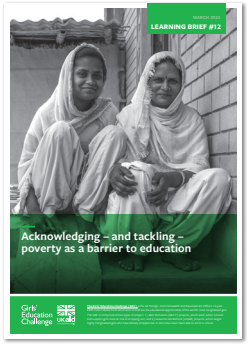
















Scan the QR codes under each Learning Brief to read the full Brief.

Endling violence in schools: Lessons from the Girls' Education Challenge highlights how to address school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV)

#1

Approach

Projects adopted three key approaches to address SRGBV:

1. strengthening reporting, referral, and response systems through school-level mechanisms and staff training;
2. creating safer school environments via zero-tolerance policies, non-violent management tools, and advocacy to shift community norms; and
3. enhancing girls' awareness of violence, rights, and reporting pathways.

Results showed that combining these strategies reduced girls' fears of violence, corporal punishment, and perceptions of schools as unsafe. However, while safety is essential for learning, it must be complemented by strong pedagogy and curricula to enhance outcomes fully.

Value for money

An analysis of projects' budgets indicates good cost efficiencies for work tackling SRGBV; costs range from £4 to £28 annually per beneficiary. It should be noted that direct causality between SRGBV activities and learning outcomes is difficult to evidence. However, inferences regarding cost-effectiveness can be made for some projects based on the costs of interventions and intermediate outcomes, such as girls feeling safe or teachers reducing the use of physical punishments.

Factors for success

This section outlines the core elements that seem to have influenced positive changes in attitudes towards gender-based violence, teacher practice, girls' perceptions of safety, and the quality of reporting and referral systems.

Engage in strong SRGV intervention design and implementation

- Root Theories of Change in a deep understanding of gender, education and violence. Apply this nuanced knowledge to local contexts for more effective SRGBV work.
- Address multiple drivers of SRGBV by implementing a combination of high-quality interventions.

Strengthen reporting systems

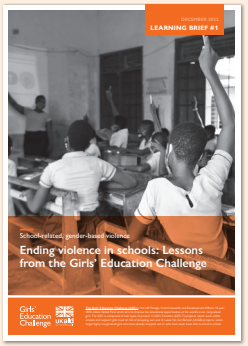
- Support the dissemination and implementation of any national SRGBV policies.
- Ensure that any existing structures or referral pathways are survivor-centred, child-sensitive, easily accessible and functional.
- Create survivor-centred reporting and response mechanisms from scratch if necessary.
- Develop good working relationships with the relevant government agency or department.
- Develop a survivor-centred practice of 'case conferencing', in which district-level, multi-sectoral teams come together to address a survivor's needs.
- Establish multiple ways of reporting at the school level, including anonymously.
- Ensure at least one focal point is female.
- Use direct messaging (such as WhatsApp) among community members and champions to keep discussions active on girls' broad challenges (rather than individual cases where direct messaging would not be appropriate for confidentiality reasons).
- Work with the leaders of particularly hard-to-engage communities.
- Involve government protection officers in training sessions, such as those conducted for community members.

Implement safer environment strategies

- Analyse and engage with potential perpetrators positively and constructively.
- Support teachers and school management staff with methods to maintain discipline in a classroom without using violence or verbal abuse, grounded in content aimed at changing attitudes.
- Facilitate critical self-reflection about gender and the use of violence amongst teachers.
- Approaches to gender-based violence, including bullying and corporal punishment, should be supported by a wholesale shift in culture at school and home.
- Work with boys and men to change their perceptions of girls' rights.
- Inclusive participation can create empathy and reduce bullying amongst peers.

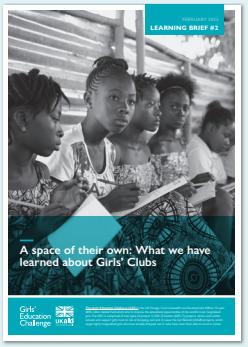
Support girls' awareness of violence

- Develop interventions rooted in girls' own lived experiences of SRGBV.
- Support girls to map the locations and details of where they feel safe or unsafe within schools and communities, as this provides valuable information as to who perpetrators are and what forms abuse takes.
- Integrate gender training to address a culture of 'victim blaming'.



A space of their own: What we have learned about Girls' Clubs explores the importance and role girls' clubs can play in empowering girls and highlights lessons learned on delivering impactful clubs

#2



Approach

Projects used a girl-focused approach to drive the active development of girls' agency.

Most projects also worked beyond the level of the girl herself through other efforts that explicitly tackle structural gender inequalities to effect sustainable change. They achieved this by aligning Girls' Clubs' content with girls' experiences, interests, and aspirations while recognising and challenging gender norms and constraints. Effective girls' clubs were facilitated by trained female mentors or peer leaders who provided safe, girl-only spaces for discussions on diverse topics, from friendships to rights and reproductive health. They often addressed gaps in skills like literacy and numeracy.

This holistic model emphasised building girls' confidence, self-esteem, and agency while tackling broader structural barriers to gender equality for sustainable change.

Value for money

Projects revealed some strong examples of how girls' clubs drive value for money. An analysis of project budgets indicated a range of annual costs per beneficiary, ranging from £8 to £87 annually per beneficiary. These were estimated by isolating the direct and indirect budget lines that reflected club activities, dividing by the direct beneficiaries covered by the activities, and annualising.

Factors for success

A Girls' Club Performance Framework was designed to help projects strengthen and monitor their clubs in four core areas: participation, facilitation, content and monitoring. The factors that influenced positive changes in these four areas are set out below.

Ensure girls' participation

- Actively engage the community and caregivers in the start-up and running of the Girls' Clubs achieved strong buy-in.
- Invite parents, and mothers in particular, to participate in the clubs reinforced the bond between mothers and daughters and the club's status within the community.
- Understand the make-up of club members allowed them to be more inclusive and accessible.
- Adopt a pragmatic and flexible approach to club sessions' timing, duration and location to support regular attendance and access, particularly for the most vulnerable girls.
- Girls' Clubs have a high potential for replication and scale-up in other areas due to the enthusiasm that girls tend to hold for them, their low cost, and the presence of women in the community and learning institutions who want to be facilitators and mentors.

Develop effective facilitators

- Ideal facilitators are locally trusted young people capable of personal growth and embracing progressive attitudes.
- Emphasise the importance of a safe and supportive physical environment positively affects learning, increases self-confidence, and strengthens social networks.
- The content relating to girls' rights can be viewed as challenging to adult (male) authority. Working with girls to anticipate possible negative outcomes, seeking out adult allies, and using a locally sensitive approach can mitigate against a negative backlash from the school and community.

Design and deliver effective content

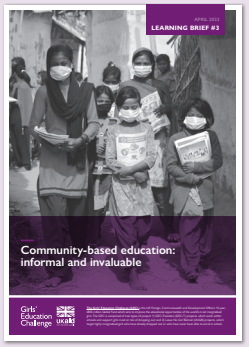
- Involve girls in decisions about the design, planning, and implementation of content – especially about controlling one's life and claiming one's rights – results in strong engagement in the clubs and a wider commitment to changing the attitudes of the surrounding community.
- Pilot content, test modules and ask for girls' feedback to produce the most relevant content.
- Deliver sessions in the language most familiar to the girls (not necessarily the official language of instruction in school) boosts the number of girls who actively engage in the club, ensures conversation topics are understood and contributes to a feeling of 'safe space'.
- Mixed clubs, as a complementary activity to girls-only discussions, provide an environment in which girls and boys can share and appreciate different perspectives on issues like menstruation, consent, contraception and expectations for relationships, love and sex.
- Content designed for boys can open a space to discuss positive masculinities and gender.
- Girls learn better through participatory and inclusive approaches.
- Promote involvement in civic or practical action contributes to girls' political empowerment and fosters community support for girl-led action more generally.
- Develop and practice communication skills increases girls' confidence.

Monitor girls' clubs effectively

- Data on the membership and attendance of girls within clubs is often uneven, inconsistent and non-disaggregated.
- Monitoring the quality of clubs depends on the monitors' ability to recognise good facilitation and gender responsiveness and to hold meaningful, child-friendly discussions with girls in which they can express their views.
- Use a clear framework on empowerment, including defined concepts and indicators, is key to measuring results and understanding impact.
- Dosage monitoring is most effective when it aims to check that minimum levels of exposure and dosage are being met but also uses the opportunity to verify that no harm is being caused (e.g., by requiring girls to attend frequently and risking backlash from family members who perceive that girls should be at home).

Community-based education: informal and invaluable explores the critical role community-based education plays in supporting children and adolescents, especially the most marginalised, and what success looks like

#3



Approach

Across projects, CBE approaches tended to fall into one of the categories outlined below.

- **Extension CBE:** This takes place within the community and follows the government curriculum and pace. In general, it is an extension of the government system. Extension CBE was offered in areas where the government was not working.
- **Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP)**: ALP follows the government curriculum but at an accelerated pace, aiming to mainstream learners who have been out of school for some time (more than a year) back into the formal system. ALPs supported girls who were over-age for their grades. They were often the only appropriate option, as older girls would not be comfortable learning with young learners, and their needs differed.
- **Rapid catch-up:** Generally shorter than an accelerated education programme it supports children who have been out of school for less time but still need some support before they return. Catch-up programmes were mainly for girls whose education, for some reason, has been temporarily interrupted.
- **Alternative education:** It does not follow the government's formal curriculum and tends to focus on practical and everyday functional and vocational skills. Alternative education was for girls for whom formal education was not viable. Programmes focused on practical skills, vocational training, and financial empowerment, preparing them for income generation and self-sufficiency.

Value for money

There are some good examples of how value for money is driven through CBE programmes. Projects improved learning outcomes and life skills for girls. The costs of CBE are influenced by at which stage of implementation the programme is. Effective CBE needs a process of design and test, learn and then adapt approach. Detailed costing and evaluation are needed to support programme scaling and funding. The costs of CBE are not fixed as they flex according to combinations of elements.

Factors for success

This section explores four factors for success in providing community-based education: reaching the most marginalised, adopting holistic approaches to CBE, improving teaching and learning, and working with government and school partners for sustainable solutions.

Reach the most marginalised

- Allow for flexibility in timetabling to suit girls' needs.
- Tailor delivery to suit the needs of girls such as adapting delivery modality.
- Carefully consider language needs. Often, girls drop out of school because they struggle with learning because the language of instruction differs from the language they speak at home.
- Target the most marginalised; have clear and agreed selection criteria with a robust rationale that can be upheld.
- Create a safe and nurturing CBE environment (and all-female spaces where feasible).

Adopt holistic approaches to CBE

- Analyse the intersectional barriers to education and design activities to respond to these barriers.
- Ensure the active involvement and ownership of CBEs by community members and structures.
- Focus on transforming existing power structures and relationships over time through sensitising communities and working towards changing any negative cultural and social norms that can impede girls' learning.
- Integrate life skills which focus on empowerment and respond to girls' safety and social and emotional needs.

Improve teaching and learning

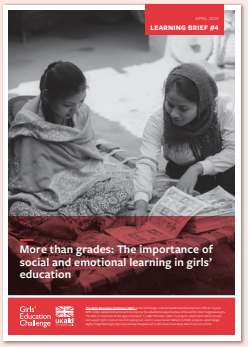
- Tailor the content to meet the specific needs of adolescent girls and make it relevant to their lived realities.
- Tailor the pedagogical approach so it is appropriate to the age and learning level of the girls.
- Ensure an enabling environment that's supportive and increases girls' confidence in learning.
- Provide opportunities for continuous professional development for teachers, particularly peer-to-peer and particularly for uncertified or unregistered teachers.

Work with government and school partners for sustainable solutions

- From the outset, work closely with government partners and within existing CBE policies and frameworks, and find opportunities to strengthen CBE policies and approaches.
- Work with schools and government partners to ensure the smooth transition of girls to formal education.
- Work with schools and government partners to ensure girls have a positive experience once in school.

More than Grades: The Importance of social and emotional learning in girls' education looks at the critical role of social and emotional learning (SEL) in fostering academic success, mental health and psychosocial well-being.

#4



Approach

Projects' external evaluations demonstrated links between improvement in SEL – such as life skills, self-confidence and self-esteem, self-efficacy and leadership – and other outcomes, including learning and successful transition. The GEC utilised a four-tiered approach to address diverse needs in varying contexts, including emergencies. Level 1 focused on creating safe, inclusive environments. Level 2 emphasised the development of social and emotional skills. Level 3 provided focused psychosocial support. Level 4 offered specialised mental health support.

Value for money

SEL activities across GEC projects provide some strong examples of how value for money is driven. Analysis of project budgets indicated a cost range of £2 to £20 annually per beneficiary.

Factors for success

Drawing on lessons from the GEC, this section highlights the core elements that have influenced the success of SEL programming during project design and implementation.

Embed SEL into programme design

- Embed SEL into a strong Theory of Change that sets out how SEL will contribute to girls' improved learning and eventual life outcomes.
- Prioritise contextual and cultural relevance social and emotional programmes.
- Focus on gender, equity and social inclusion (GESI) transformation through providing SEL.
- Ensure SEL is sensitive to emergency and protracted crises and contexts and avoid the risk of doing harm.
- Build strong mechanisms to inform learning and adaptive management through rigorous monitoring.
- Intentionally measure SEL competencies, such as increases in girls' self-esteem, agency, self-efficacy, communication, friendship and sense of belonging, conflict resolution and goal setting.

Lay strong foundations for SEL

- Create a safe learning environment that promotes positive and trusting relationships between learners and with educators or adults.
- Strengthen peer support and building healthy interpersonal connections for girls.
- Involve families, particularly parents and husbands for older girls.

Provide social and emotional support programmes

- Engage through Girls' Clubs to promote girls' wellbeing and help them understand and cope with physical and emotional changes.
- Use positive teaching methodologies to build SEL across foundational subjects, such as literacy and numeracy, along with financial literacy and life skills.
- Link SEL into girls' transition to work to create positive economic outcomes.
- Engage female mentors, particularly for adolescent girls.
- Support the SEL and capacity of mentors and teachers providing them with what they need to integrate SEL into their classrooms.
- Engage girls' views and participation in SEL programming to exercise their agency, feel a greater sense of control, be heard, and have a greater chance of their specific needs being taken into account.
- Include girls with disabilities in SEL work to reduce stigmas, increase their self-worth and provide them with a sense of belonging.

Provide focused psychosocial support

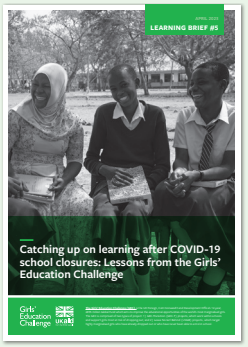
- Adapt quickly to provide psychological first aid during crises, including psychological first aid29 to improve adolescents' ability to cope with shocks and stress.

Specialised mental health support

- Include mental health support and referral mechanisms partnering with specialist disability and mental health organisations to provide counselling and referrals when necessary.

Catching up on learning after COVID-19 school closures: Lessons from the Girls' Education Challenge examines what worked to mitigate the disproportionate learning loss among the world's most disadvantaged girls during crises and post-recovery, specifically Accelerated Learning Programmes (ALPs) and other catch-up interventions

#5



Approach

The RAPID Framework outlines five key actions for education recovery:

1. Reach every child and retain them in school
2. Assess current learning levels
3. Prioritise fundamentals
4. Increase catch-up learning
5. Develop psychosocial health and wellbeing.

This Brief provides insights into ensuring that access and retention, teaching and learning, psychosocial well-being, and wrap-around support activities are considered during times of crisis. Projects leveraged the RAPID Framework to implement targeted interventions for disadvantaged girls, both before and after COVID-19, including accelerated education, remedial programs, and community-based study groups. Post-pandemic efforts expanded to include broader activities addressing access, retention, teaching, learning, and psychosocial well-being.

Value for money

Catch-up learning across the GEC portfolio offers some good value for money, ranging from £2 to £194 annually per beneficiary.

Factors for success

This section highlights the core elements that have influenced the success of mitigation measures to reduce learning loss among the world's most disadvantaged girls during crises and post-recovery.

Access and retention activities

- Provide practical support and resources to girls and families.
- Leverage support at home.
- Work with community-based structures and government partners to monitor students' return.

Teaching and learning activities

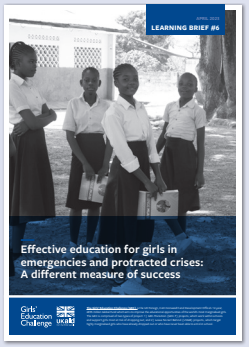
- Leverage hybrid models and learning when schools re-open.
- Leverage hybrid models of continuous professional development (CPD).
- Provide remedial and itinerant teachers to support teachers and marginalised learners.
- Provide structured teaching and learning materials focusing on clear remediation strategies and core skills.
- Provide catch-up programmes to mitigate learning loss before school re-opening or after school hours targeting the most needy students.
- Focus on language support where needed.
- Prioritise exam classes.

Psychosocial, wellbeing and wrap around support activities

- Gather data and sharing evidence-based insights and learning from project experiences to inform national catch-up strategies.
- Advocate for gender-responsive and inclusive planning- jointing where feasible.
- Provide practical support to government catch-up plans.
- Focus on the psycho-social wellbeing and physical safety needs of girls and academic needs.
- Provide mentoring support from young women in the communities.

Effective education for girls in emergencies and protracted crises: A different measure of success explores what success looks like for education programmes in fragile, conflict and crisis-affected contexts

#6



Approach

GEC projects in fragile contexts addressed educational challenges through four key interventions.

1. direct delivery of education (e.g., community-based, accelerated, and remedial learning)
2. engaging communities to build support for girls' education
3. enhancing girls' safety and resilience through psychosocial support and empowerment forums
4. providing humanitarian aid like cash transfers and food support.

All projects in education in emergency and protracted crises implemented activities in these four areas, with a degree of emphasis on delivery linked to the context and level of fragility.

These initiatives aimed to keep girls in school, build their resilience, mitigate the impacts of crises such as conflict, climate change, and economic instability, and foster systemic changes to ensure sustainable educational opportunities.

Value for money

Working in education in emergencies and protracted crises suggests that delivering value for girls means reaching them, facilitating teaching and learning activities relevant to the context, and, first and foremost, enabling improved safety for girls. On the other hand, costs are higher when delivering, and it is important to acknowledge how difficult it is to operate in such complex contexts. Projects delivering education in emergencies and protracted crises vary from offering 'reasonable' value for money to 'very good' value for money. The cost per beneficiary varies from £49 to £179, and annual expenditure per secondary school child varies from £76 to £244.

Factors for success

This section draws out the core elements that have influenced the success of programming in education in emergencies and protracted crises. However, it is important to note that through an analysis of projects' achievements, what has worked to bring about results can be articulated in three ways that depart from merely focusing on academic achievement.

Provide direct delivery of education services alongside the formal system

- Experiment and step away from traditional ways of delivering education.
- Develop smart strategies and adaptability for bypassing severe constraints such as adapting learning timetables.
- Bring education to the girls often through a blended learning approach, i.e. different delivery modalities.
- Work through existing systems where possible.
- Provide low-cost learning materials.
- Mitigate the dropout of girls and teachers through interventions such as monitoring, tracking and awareness/ back-to-school campaigns.

Work with parents and communities to gather support for girls' education

- Build social relationships and networks around the girls.
- Conduct political analyses to understand and mobilise community champions for girls' education.
- Shift attitudes towards girls' education by involving community members, mothers and religious leaders in designing and delivering interventions.
- Pivot and drawing in additional resources to respond to emergencies / crises.
- Plan for risks of back by developing mitigation measures to address these risks during the design and implementation phases.
- Leverage reputation and experience of working across multiple sectors, such as education and health, to overcome lack of trust by the community members.

Work towards girls' resilience, safety, mental health and psychosocial wellbeing and build girls' resilience and tracking retention.

- Prioritise the provision of safe learning spaces to girls in the immediate aftermath of a crisis, such as girls' clubs.

Respond to humanitarian needs through Village Savings and Loan Associations, distribution of cash and food, and the provision of non-formal education

- Overcome the constraints around poverty by working with teachers and school staff to mitigate the increase in financial constraints to education access during times of fragility and conflict.
- Look for opportunities for girls to gain experience outside their immediate contexts, such as resident homes and scholarship programmes.

Sister support: Lesson on peer mentoring from GEC highlights project approaches to peer mentoring and stresses lessons learned for successful peer mentoring

#7



Approach

Peer mentoring approaches are tailored to their varied contexts, with differences in structure, location, and network connections. Structured approaches provide standardised guidelines, assigned roles, and resources such as manuals, ensuring consistency and oversight, while less structured models offer schools more autonomy. Peer mentoring is often school-based, relying on school leadership, though some models involve external mentors with project affiliations. Sessions may connect to broader support networks, from local stakeholders to governmental bodies, with relationships ranging from formalised to informal, enriching the mentoring process and providing additional resources.

Value for money

Peer mentoring generally offers good value for money. It is generally not resource intensive as the mentors contribute their time voluntarily, but at the same time, it produces desirable outcomes such as providing vital learning support and encouragement to girls who need it. There are often higher costs at the beginning, such as the provision of materials and training costs, but once a space is secured for running the sessions and the mentors are in place, the running costs are low.

Factors for success

This section outlines the core elements contributing to the successful implementation of peer mentoring programming.

Ensure that peer mentoring responds to the needs of girls and their contexts

- The situation of every girl and the barriers they face to their learning and wellbeing are different.
- Peer mentoring approaches and curricula must be designed to meet girls' specific needs.
- Include voices of girls to inform the design of the interventions.
- Mentoring approaches adapt to girls' needs over time.

Incentivise and provide structured support to mentors

- Formalise peer mentorship through incentive structures to improve and sustain the level of commitment and motivation of the mentors.
- Incentives can include the provision of smartphones and data bundles, access to loans and capacity building.
- A further step would be some formal recognition of mentors. This could be through formal award ceremonies or their time as mentors counting towards national education certifications.

Highlight the importance of safeguarding and mental health

- Build a robust approach to safeguarding with peer mentoring interventions.
- Train mentors and those supporting mentors (such as teachers) in safeguarding and child protection.
- Attend to the mental health of mentors themselves, such as making sure that they do not feel overwhelmed by the stories they hear or the problems their mentees face.
- Sensitise community members on girls' safety and protection.
- Embed their safeguarding protocols and mechanisms within existing local and district-level protection systems.

Ensure robust monitoring and evaluation

- Monitoring peer mentoring intervention to allow for adaptions to be based on the latest evidence gathered.
- Establish practical ways for the mentors, mentees and school staff to share views on challenges and successes and to gain insights on what is working and how it can be strengthened and better supported.

Ensure a clear vision and plan for sustaining peer mentoring

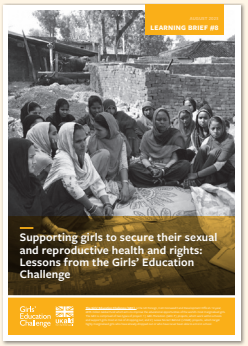
- Work alongside government, school and community partners, and build their capacity and commitment to continuing these programmes.
- Engage local government, from inception and throughout implementation, to ensure sustainability and the replication of project learning.
- Broaden the network of peer mentoring to include larger networks of support beyond the school, community and at the country level and even across countries.

Generate more research and evidence on peer mentoring

- Address current evidence gaps on what peer mentoring approaches are most effective, how peer mentors can be best incentivised, how peer mentorship affects girls' self-esteem and wellbeing and shift negative attitudes and sociocultural norms that are detrimental to girls' education.

Supporting girls to secure their sexual and reproductive health and rights: Lessons from the GEC focuses on successful activities, interventions, and approaches to support girls in securing their sexual and reproductive health rights

#8



Approach

Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) is an important aspect of sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR), particularly for adolescent girls and boys. CSE can help them develop age-appropriate knowledge, attitudes and skills that contribute to healthy and safe relationships, develop positive attitudes to gender equality, and equip them to reflect critically on cultural norms and traditional practices and beliefs.

Projects supported girls' SRHR through CSE embedded in broader life skills curricula. CSE equipped learners with knowledge, skills, and attitudes to make informed decisions, protect their rights, and foster respectful relationships, aligned with international guidance on effective sexuality education.

Projects emphasised building girls' agency through self-efficacy, decision-making, and negotiation skills while engaging parents, teachers, and community leaders to shift social norms. Additionally, efforts included addressing menstrual hygiene management and improving access to contraception and family planning services.

Value for money

This Brief did not examine value for money.

Factors for success

This section outlines the factors influencing positive SRHR outcomes. Projects reported changes in girls' attendance, improved knowledge, shifting attitudes and a reduction in girls' feelings of shame and stigma.

Address issues around attendance and curriculum

- Implement sustainable approaches to overcome Sexual Reproductive Health barriers to attendance.
- Provide a comprehensive sexuality education curriculum that meets girls' needs.

Address issues around stigma and social norms

- Prioritise the reduction of shame and stigma around menstrual health management.
- Engage with girls' families, boys and partners.
- Rather than relying on SRHR, link and layer different interventions.
- Negotiate with conservative forces; projects which undertook strategic and smart approaches when engaging with more conservative stakeholders, often achieved what they had set out to without compromising content.

Support facilitators to deliver effectively

- Create a learner-centred and participatory environment.
- Emphasise the selection of CSE facilitators and provide them with intensive support.

Include girls' realities in programming

- Find a balance between simple messaging and the complexity of girls' realities.
- Address barriers to accessing family planning resources and contraception.

Using Technology to improve girls' learning looks at how EdTech can work in low resource contexts for the most disadvantaged

#9

Approach

Projects employed diverse EdTech modalities, including radio, mobile phones, computers, tablets, TVs, and assistive technologies, often adapting to meet specific needs or external factors like COVID-19. Radio was widely used for distance education, delivering academic, life skills, and well-being content, supported by distributed radios and community awareness campaigns. Mobile phones facilitated communication, SMS-based learning, and teacher training, while apps like Cell-Ed expanded access to learning, though device availability posed challenges. Computers, tablets, and TVs supported classroom integration, special education needs, and national content broadcasting, with many projects combining digital and paper-based approaches for broader impact.

Value for money

This piece examined value for money at the project level, finding a range from promising to good value for money.

Factors for success

This section outlines the factors of success that contributed to the effective implementation of EdTech. Factors are organised and presented by four themes that emerged from the research. Though potentially relevant to education programmes more broadly, these elements contain specific learning related to the effective implementation of EdTech for marginalised girls within marginalised communities.

Evidence-informed design and delivery

- Consult the community and the girls and centring their views and needs.
- Make an assessment of existing infrastructure, capacity and context.
- Feed organisational knowledge into the design and drawing from existing evidence.
- Choose strong, multi-layered monitoring and evaluation (M&E) that drives adaptations.

Build and maintain relationships across and between stakeholders

- Engage with government at all levels for impact and sustainability.
- Engage communities in EdTech implementation.
- The importance of human relationships to support learning.

Offer comprehensive and continuous training and capacity development

- Train multiple stakeholders.
- Training is an ongoing process, not a one-off activity.
- Make training interactive, adaptive and differentiated.
- Focus on other training needs alongside training on EdTech integration.
- Provide specific guidance in crises.

Situate EdTech within a broader holistic model

- Blend technology-based and non-technology-based options.
- Design inclusive, contextualised EdTech content within a holistic model.
- Align with existing national education plans and curricula.



Educating girls: Making sure you reach the most marginalised highlights what it means to be the most marginalised and draws attention to effective ways to reach and engage with them

#10

Approach

The GEC approach to marginalisation distinguishes between individual characteristics (e.g., disability, gender) and the barriers these interact with at home, school, community, and systemic levels. Marginalisation arises from these interactions, not the characteristics themselves.

Projects identified the most marginalised girls (e.g., refugees, child brides, girls in extreme poverty) and addressed specific barriers they face. This approach highlights how education can perpetuate marginalisation if it reinforces societal inequalities, prompting projects to design interventions rooted in understanding the girls' lived experiences and contextual barriers.

Value for money

This piece did not explicitly examine a value amount for value for money but highlighted the importance of including an equity lens when assessing value for money. An equity focus underscores the diverse needs and experiences of different communities. It helps avoid decision-making based on narrow economic indicators rather than on what is truly important and valuable to people.

Factors for success

Core elements are needed to reach and support the most marginalised girls.

Identify who the most marginalised girls are and where they are

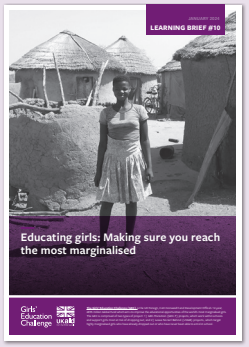
- Build a solid understanding of the most marginalised girls and their context.
- Use strong pre-existing relationships with communities to identify and support the girls.
- Deploy staff with strong competencies in community engagement.
- Mitigate risks and ensure Do No Harm principles.
- Conduct a participatory analysis of factors of exclusion.

Respond to what the most marginalised girls need and want

- Use girls' voices to inform project design.
- Find the most relevant learning pathways. For instance, non-formal education (NFE) may be the only pathway for some adolescent out-of-school girls.
- Implement a graduated response to ensure that all girls, including the most marginalised, were reached with varying degrees of support.
- Build girls' social cohesion and collective action.
- Work with communities, particularly men and boys, to challenge and shift gender and social norms.
- Work closely with families.
- Engage mentors and encourage peer support.
- Use gender and social inclusion-responsive pedagogy.
- Understand the risks and contextual change and be accountable to the most marginalised.

Articulate what success looks like for marginalised groups and track progress toward this vision

- Commit to adaptive management.
- Disaggregate data; ensure that monitoring, evaluation, and learning utilise sub-group data and that data collection and feedback systems support working with the most marginalised.
- Use participatory monitoring systems.
- Work towards transformative and sustainable change.



Tackling child marriage through education explores issues surrounding child marriage and outlines the approaches and activities that projects took to address them

#11



Approach

Projects adopted a strong focus on tackling child marriage as a key barrier to educational opportunities for marginalised girls. Strategies included engaging communities, men, and boys to shift social norms toward gender equality, improving access to quality education, and equipping girls with life skills and knowledge of their rights to challenge harmful norms and make informed decisions. Projects also enhance access to SRHR and protection services, strengthening reporting and referral mechanisms while adhering to robust safeguarding policies. Partnerships with local agencies ensure comprehensive follow-up and resolution of child protection cases.

Value for money

This Learning Brief did not examine value for money.

Factors for success

This section highlights the core elements needed to tackle child marriage through education.

Ensure the project has a robust approach to reaching the most marginalised

- Consider and respond to the unique needs of girls in their communities and the barriers they face.
- Build an approach to analysing the most marginalised people, reaching them, addressing their barriers to education, and responding to their educational needs.

Ensure that life skill programmes are pushing boundaries and are progressive, while respecting the views of education and community stakeholders

- Implement life skills programmes that are gender transformative and include comprehensive sexuality education.
- Ensure that safe spaces are created where girls can critically reflect on the information with their peers and mentors, and where girls feel comfortable to share their experiences and ask questions.

Transform the negative gender norms that control adolescent girls' mobility, choice, and sexuality through working across various levels.

- Take a multi-pronged approach to shift norms and take action at multiple levels, such as the household, community, education and government.
- Bear in mind that the first step to changing harmful norms is interrogating the attitudes and behaviours of project staff on gender and doing work on shifting their negative views if they exist.

Have robust safeguarding policies and procedures and clear, safe, confidential reporting systems and referral pathways.

- Learners, teachers and community members should be familiar with the reporting systems and referral pathways. Where they do not exist, work with key stakeholders to develop them from scratch.
- Include relevant ministry, district actors and government protection officers to build capacity and influence.

Work with youth and women's organisations and female leaders.

- Work with organisations and leaders representing marginalised girls' views, know the barriers they face and know the levers of change within communities and government agencies to design solutions for meaningful change for marginalised girls.

Engage men and boys

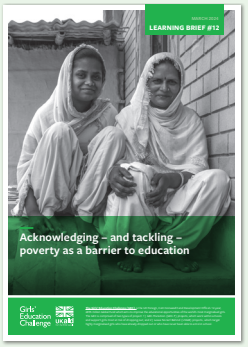
- Recognise that adolescent boys are also affected by gender norms, which pressure them to behave in ways that are detrimental to girls.
- Work with boys and men on positive masculinities.

Engage traditional and religious leaders and other key influential stakeholders

- Engage traditional and religious leaders from the outset.
- Work with 'change champions' such village heads.
- Provide training to groups such as school management committees and mothers' groups to ensure sustainability.

Acknowledging – and tackling – poverty as a barrier to education examines the relationship between poverty, gender and education and explores the ways in which projects tackled this huge and complex issue

#12



Approach

Projects addressed educational marginalisation by tackling poverty as a key barrier, recognising its gendered impacts on girls' education and well-being. Using a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) lens, projects targeted the most vulnerable groups, including girls with disabilities, child brides, and refugees, tailoring interventions to their specific needs. Social protection interventions focused on social assistance (e.g., transport, financial aid, assistive devices), labour market interventions, and social care support to alleviate economic barriers and reduce vulnerabilities. This holistic approach improved education outcomes, empowered girls, and contributed to broader gender equality and inclusion.

Value for money

This Learning Brief does not look at value for money.

Factors for success

This section highlights factors of success under three key areas of intervention.

Implement social assistance programmes

- Target carefully the most marginalised – and ensuring effective communication of the rationale for this approach in the wider community.
- Recognising that the most marginalised girls are less likely to be in school.
- Consider financial barriers to in-school and at-home learning.
- Social assistance to teachers can have a lasting impact on teacher retention.
- Consider sustainability issues; more successful projects were better able to engage with families well before the project closed, explaining that support would come to an end and helping to plan how parents could begin to take over costs themselves or connect with other government or NGO interventions that could help them.

Implement labour market interventions

- Link girls to relevant saving groups or institutions.
- Provide business grants to help girls execute their business plans and achieve financial autonomy.
- Plan the learning component carefully to ensure meeting the needs of learners.
- Work with communities to shift attitudes around vocational and entrepreneurial training for girls; community outreach was important to support girls' skills training and shift norms around vocational training for girls, who often view some skills and trades as unsuitable – having clear and accessible pathways for skills training.
- Implement quality skills training that is practical and relevant.
- Facilitate life skills, mentorship and social networks.

Implement social care interventions

- Map social protection services and actors in target regions.
- Identify and dismantle barriers to access to care.

Teachers: The change-makers at the heart of girls' education looks at how projects supported teachers in developing their pedagogical skills through teacher professional development and how increased knowledge acquisition translated into changed practice and improved outcomes in the classroom

#13



Approach

Projects tailored their teaching and learning approaches to the specific needs of their target contexts, prioritising teacher support through training, coaching, and collaborative learning mechanisms. Recognising the limitations of one-size-fits-all training, they shifted toward context-specific, inclusive, and teacher-led professional development (TPD) approaches informed by ongoing assessments. Projects also engaged Ministries of Education and other stakeholders to integrate teacher support into broader systemic improvements, ensuring alignment with national frameworks and addressing resource and infrastructure challenges. A strong emphasis was placed on gender-responsive pedagogy, reflecting the need to address gender inequities in classrooms, though this approach sometimes reflected top-down influences from international actors.

Value for money

This Learning Brief does not look at value for money.

Factors for success

This sections outlines factors for success under seven key areas.

Adopt a TPD approach that respond to teachers' realities and girls' priorities

- Generate a robust understanding of teachers' needs and learners' priorities at the design phase—but also continuously.
- Take a multidimensional approach to defining and measuring 'teaching quality'.
- Face issues around subject knowledge or language of instruction proficiency upfront.
- TPD should be ongoing and school-based to ensure an individualised, context-based approach.

Take inclusion seriously

- Co-design GESI-related content or materials with teachers and sufficiently qualified GESI specialists.
- Recruit and train teachers from marginalised communities.
- Support teachers to accommodate and support learners who do not speak the language of instruction.

Consider and plan for all levels of the educational ecosystem

- Map out the different influences and powerholders within an individual teacher's ecosystem.
- Involve headteachers, school principals and school management from the outset in projects.

Prioritise teacher motivation

- Focus on motivation and base approaches on what teachers think, feel and aspire to be.
- Consider how gender and power impact motivation and professional opportunity.
- Engage with structural, systemic bottlenecks, such as teachers' pay.
- Understand and address the dynamics of teacher absenteeism.
- Provide opportunities for peer-to-peer teacher professional development such as school-based or cluster-based communities of practice.
- Support the promotion and formal qualification of teachers.

Engage and empower teachers and ensure effective/ quality support structures

- Invest in the institutionalisation of CPD that engages and empowers teachers.
- Analyse the professional development needs of those who educate and support teachers, such as coaches and master trainers.
- Give coaches and teacher educators the support, budgets, power, and access to data they need.

Plan for sustainability

- Plan for scale from the start: think about how those tasked with visiting schools can do this long-term without dependency on project funding.

Aim for systemic change

- Engage with Ministries of Education before any planned programme or intervention to understand gaps in CPD and most strategic entry points.
- Create evidence and communication plans that meet the system's needs and allow actors to be influenced and supported in decision-making.
- Plan for success and for staff to move on. Plan to train enough over time to sustain numbers within the project and understand movements in the education system.

Girls' Education Challenge

UKaid
from the British people

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