

QUARTERLY LEARNING DIGEST

Girls'
Education
Challenge



AUGUST 2021

Here is the second Learning Digest, a great summary of all the learning from the GEC since April 2021

The past few months have been very busy with the G7 and Global Partnership for Education and we look forward to continuing the conversation on what works in Girls' Education as we move into the Autumn. We hope you find this interesting, informative and useful. If you would like to sign up to receive information on our events, webinars and learning outputs please sign up [here](#).

Girls' Education Day at the Global Education Summit, 26 July 2021



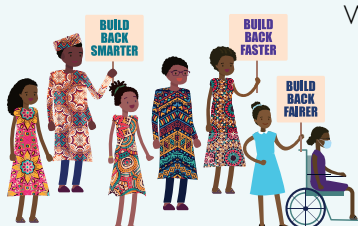
At the end of July, world leaders came together at the Global Education Summit to support quality education for all children and make 5-year pledges to support GPE's work to help transform education systems in up to 90 countries and territories.

As part of the Summit, the GEC convened a day of discussion and activities which focused on girls' education. We heard from speakers including Sally Gear (FCDO), Jaime Oberlander (USAID Somalia), Antara Ganguli (UNGEI) and Elaine Unterhalter (UCL). In case you missed it (or want to see it again!), the full session can be viewed [here](#).

You can also watch our new videos on our YouTube channel which look at the GEC's work, particularly in response to the pandemic.

Film #1 – [The Girls' Education Challenge 2021](#)

Film #2 – [Girls' Education and COVID-19: Keeping girls safe and learning](#)



We are now turning our attention to how we can work with our global partners to build back smarter, faster and fairer. We will be using our evidence to propose new ways to build resilience into education systems to support the world's most marginalised girls.

Be part of the discussion

GEC Discussion Series

In June and July 2021, we had our first GEC Discussion Series under the theme "Challenge, mitigation and resilience: The story of COVID-19 so far and the Girls' Education Challenge". Over 300 individuals joined from many organisations working in the development sector, including donors, NGOs, academia and private sector. The webinar recordings are now available on the GEC YouTube channel. Watch out for our next GEC Discussion Series in the autumn!



Discussion Series webinars:

Initial estimates of learning loss in Kenya and Nepal

COVID-19 and the Girls' Education Challenge: how NGOs, governments and community networks are partnering to leave no girl behind

Adopting a gender-responsive approach to education at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic: Lessons and experiences from South Asia

Coordinated sensitive education response amid COVID-19 pandemic: Innovations from two GEC projects in Afghanistan

What have we learnt?

Emerging Findings

From March to June 2021, the GEC ran a series of workshops to collate and analyse project findings regarding the impact of COVID-19 on girls' learning, safety, wellbeing and return to school. From this came five regional briefs that focus on the emerging findings from the projects and countries in those regions. Access the brief here: [Southern Africa](#), [Central Africa](#), [East Africa](#), [West Africa](#) and [South Asia](#). As more evidence and data emerge on the impacts of COVID-19, we will continue this conversation and update the emerging findings briefs.



Spotlight on VfM

We are excited to share our first Spotlight Brief on Value for Money (VfM), which reviews the VfM of five interventions from the Sister for Sisters' Education project, implemented by VSO in Nepal. This brief assesses intervention costs against the benefits delivered, by exploring the interventions' relevance, cost-effectiveness and sustainability.



International Celebration Days

This quarter we marked a number of international celebration days – World Health Day, Global Day of Parents, International Day Against Child Labour and World Refugee Day – sharing stories, achievements and lessons from the work of GEC projects.



No girl should miss school because of her period. On Menstrual Hygiene Day (28 May), we highlighted the work of TEAM Girl Malawi who are providing 6,000 girls with reusable sanitary packs and information to support their access to education. [Read more about their work](#) on Twitter and in this blog.



Don't forget to [follow us](#) on Twitter for more stories, news and celebrations!

Using community-based structures in education programming

This Thematic Review summarises the learning around the ways in which community-based structures supported and elevated the work of GEC projects during COVID-19 closures. It examines their role in supporting projects as they adapted their interventions and identifies six specific ways in which they were successfully used. The Thematic Review is intended for projects, implementors and non-governmental organisations interested in working with community-based structures to maximise project outcomes.



Final reflections: lessons and results from completed projects

The Supporting the Education of Marginalised Girls (STEM) project (Nepal) and the Excelling Against the Odds project (Ethiopia) completed in March 2021. In two blogs highlighted below, the project teams reflect on the impact of their projects, the challenges they faced, the results that were achieved and the lessons that were learned. In the two 'Final reflections' reports, these topics are covered in more detail.



Webinars

Between January and February 2021, we held two interesting webinars. One looked at working with the government to ensure sustainability and focused on two GEC projects implemented by Mercy Corps in Nigeria and Nepal. The other looked at the girls supported by the GEC, their learning levels at baseline and how their learning has been affected during the COVID-19 pandemic. Recordings of the two webinars are available on the GEC YouTube channel.

New resources

Pivoting evaluation designs during (and after) COVID-19

For GEC projects, evaluations were designed to assess the impact of activities on learning and transition, and assess sustainability of interventions. Many designs were compromised due to COVID-19 related school closures. This Practice Brief suggests that with the flexibility to re-examine evaluation plans and the right preparation ahead of data collection, the impact of a substantive shift in context – such as the COVID-19 pandemic – can be mitigated. It presents four considerations for evaluators to adapt their midline or endline approaches.

Distance Teaching and Learning guide

Download the Distance Teaching and Learning Guide produced in collaboration with the EdTechHub below. This guide is intended to support implementation of DTL interventions from planning to evaluation. This was launched back in May with the INEE and projects continue to use the guide and self assessment monitoring tool to support their work.



Four characteristics of a strong monitoring approach

Monitoring systems in GEC projects were tested during COVID-19 closures. They were relied on heavily to get critical information on the reach, quality and effectiveness of interventions. This brief summarises the learning from seven Girls' Education Challenge projects' monitoring systems during the COVID-19 school closures. Using data coming out of these systems, the brief describes four qualities of a good monitoring approach. M&E teams can examine their own systems for these qualities to build better, stronger and more effective monitoring systems now and in the future.

COVID-19 and girls' learning continuity in South Asia: Misplaced anxiety or justified fear?

Ian Attfield (UK FDCO, Girls' Education Challenge), Chris Henderson (UNICEF Consultant and Columbia University) and Dr. Mumtaza Abdurazzakova (Save the Children) reflect on the impacts caused by COVID-19 on girls' learning and how projects adapted to ensure the continuation of learning for children. The blog also introduces the development of the evidence-based Framework and Standards for Gender Responsive Education in the Context of COVID-19, used to guide regional policymakers' and practitioners' priorities over the weeks and months following the peak of the pandemic.

Seeing the whole person: Madalitso's journey and our shared responsibility to support her

Madalitso's journey throughout her time with TEAM Girl Malawi is portrayed vividly through the words of Harold Kuombolo (Link Community Development Malawi), Umba Zalira (Theatre for a Change Malawi), and Rose Woods (Supreme). Despite her extraordinary responsibilities and challenges, Madalitso has progressed significantly in her learning and is now able to make better decisions about her life.

All means all: What happens when you include girls with disabilities?

13% of learners enrolled in the TEAM Girl Malawi project have a disability. This would not be possible without an holistic approach towards supporting the most marginalised girls. Kate Skyes from Link Education International shares the learning journey of how Link and their partners were able to include children with disabilities in their work.



Education programming in a pandemic: Using what we already know about girls to support them during and after Covid-19 school closures

Rachel Outhred (Oxford MeasurEd), Anita Reilly (Girls' Education Challenge) and Fergal Turner (Oxford MeasurEd) summarise what we already know about marginalised girls and their learning characteristics, along with what it means for programmes working with marginalised girls during the pandemic.

Coming up

The GEC at the UKFIET Conference, from 13 September 2021

The UKFIET conference will include presentations from the GEC. If you are attending the conference, please do join us!

	SESSION TITLE	DAY/TIME (BST)
1	Gender equality in education at the time of COVID-19: what and how do we build back better?	Tuesday, 14 September 2021 10:00 - 11:30
2	Understanding multiple and intersecting identities for girls with disabilities and implications for equitable education programming	Tuesday, 14 September 2021 12:30 - 14:00
3	Reimagining evidence collection during COVID-19 to ensure inclusiveness	Tuesday, 14 September 2021 14:15 - 15:00
4	Practical support in an unexpected time: Learnings from Plan International's Girls Education Challenge portfolio on resilience, wellbeing and safeguarding in its COVID-19 response	Wednesday, 15 September 2021 09:00 - 09:45
5	Exploring the interactional experiences of in-school pregnant and parenting girls in Kenya and their implications for equitable redistribution of school-based benefits and resources	Wednesday, 15 September 2021 10:00 - 11:30
6	Adapting retention systems to include the most marginalised girls during COVID-19. Lessons from the Girls' Education Challenge	Wednesday, 15 September 2021 10:00 - 11:30
7	Virtual educator training and professional development: Three practice and evidence based case studies exploring low to high tech virtual training and continuing professional development in Zimbabwe, Sierra Leone and Ghana.	Wednesday, 15 September 2021 12:30 - 14:00
8	Reimagining learning spaces to reach the most marginalised girls during COVID-19. Experiences from the Girls' Education Challenge (theme opening plenary)	Thursday, 16 September 2021 09:00 - 09:45

Stay up to date with the latest GEC Learning Communications



Dates for the diary:

International Literacy Day	8 September
International Day to Protect Education from Attack	9 September
International Teachers' Day	5 October
International Mental Health Day	10 November
International Day of the Girl Child	11 November
CoP26	31 November

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Girls' Education Challenge



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