



# COUNTRY BRIEFING: GHANA



The Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) was launched by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office in 2012 as a 12-year commitment to reach the most marginalised girls globally and is the largest global fund dedicated to girls' education.

The GEC has had three projects in Ghana. Two projects focused on learning and transitioning girls between basic and secondary education. One project is supporting the most marginalised and vulnerable out-of-school girls to gain functional literacy and numeracy and increase agency and empowerment and support positive transitions into formal schooling, safe livelihoods, and safer and healthier households. From 2017 onwards, under GEC-T and LNGB, the total investment in the three projects is £45,878,870, of which £42,540,451 has been spent to date. The tables below show the numbers targeted by all three projects in Ghana from 2017 to date.

LEAD PARTNER	PROJECT	WINDOW	START DATE	END DATE	DISTRICTS/REGIONS
World Education Inc.	<a href="#">Strategic Approaches to Girls' Education (STAGE)</a>	LNGB	August 2018	February 2023	Central, Northern, Upper East, Upper West, Oti and Eastern regions
Plan International UK	<a href="#">Making Ghanaian Girls Great! (MGCubed)</a>	GEC-T	May 2017	January 2022	Oti and Greater Accra Regions
Impact(Ed) International	<a href="#">Discovery Project</a>	GEC-T	April 2017	December 2020	Northern Region of Ghana



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LEAD PARTNER*	GIRLS TARGETED	GIRLS WITH DISABILITIES TARGETED	BOYS TARGETED	SCHOOLS/ LEARNING CENTRES REACHED	TEACHERS TRAINED	LEARNING MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED	SANITARY AND WASH KITS DISTRIBUTED
World Education Inc.	17,000	646	0	652	981	10,758	31,894
Plan International UK	14,132	41	11,435	72	985	23,810	72 schools supported
Impact(Ed) International	104,365	5,949	7,587	800	4,983	25,338	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>135,497</b>	<b>6,636</b>	<b>19,022</b>	<b>1524</b>	<b>6,949</b>	<b>34,568</b>	<b>31,966</b>

\* Project reported data is from the start of this phase of the project in 2017 to December 2021.

## Highlights

### Accelerated learning and remedial sessions address foundational literacy and numeracy skills.

Accelerated and remedial classes in all three projects showed positive learning results. Project data showed that the accelerated learning programme addressed foundational literacy and numeracy skills gaps for the Discovery Project. Girls felt that they were learning better, interacting more with their teachers and each other, and feeling more confident participating in class. In MGCubed, the project delivered high-quality interactive learning content to students using solar-powered and satellite-enabled distance learning infrastructure through remedial lessons. This led to a significant positive impact on girls' education attainment across literacy and numeracy, with especially strong outcomes in literacy. In STAGE, numeracy and literacy scores at midline demonstrate significant improvement compared to the baseline scores. School results and the project's assessments indicate that the majority of STAGE girls who have integrated into school are performing at or above learning levels compared to their peers.

**Supporting girls to transition successfully.** In Ghana, the transition from Primary 6 to Junior Secondary school was identified as a critical transition point at which girls are likely to drop out. In the Discovery Project, 89% of project girls had transitioned into Junior Secondary school. In MGCubed, 97% of girls transitioned to Junior Secondary School by the end of the project, a particularly significant improvement in the COVID-19 pandemic. In MGCubed, cash transfers were especially effective in supporting girls' transition, with girls who received a cash transfer 1.3 times more likely to transition successfully. For STAGE, 95% of out of school girls in the formal track transitioned into school, with many of these girls entering school for the first time post-COVID-19 school closures. For STAGE, 94% of girls in the non-formal track graduated with certificates from the National Vocational Training Institute.

**Increasing girls' self-efficacy and assertiveness through innovation.** In collaboration with Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED), the Discovery Project created a multi-media life skills series called My Better World to develop practical knowledge and real-world life skills for girls' clubs. In 2020, the Discovery Project launched broadcasts of the My Better World series through regional and national TV and radio stations in Ghana, with an audience of an estimated 4 million. There was a steady increase in girls' self-efficacy from baseline to endline for the Discovery Project, which was linked to girls participating in girls' clubs and watching the My Better World videos. MGCubed designed and delivered after-school club sessions through satellite-enabled distance learning to support girls' wellbeing and attendance, strengthen resilience and self-efficacy, foster positive relationships between boys and girls, and challenge harmful stereotypes. MGCubed found evidence that resilience and academic self-efficacy are mutually reinforcing and that academic self-efficacy supports self-esteem, literacy, numeracy, and attendance outcomes. Interpersonal skills were also shown to support learning and transition outcomes.

**Responding to COVID-19 through innovation.** During COVID-19 school closures, MGCubed and its sister project, Train for Tomorrow, worked with the Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service to support the government's national distance learning programme by creating content for a national learning television channel called Ghana Learning TV (GLTV). MGCubed also assisted the Ghana Education Service to produce and delivering a national distance learning programme for Senior High School students preparing to take the West African Senior School Certificate. An estimated three million students benefited from this content during COVID-19 school closures.

During COVID-19, MGCubed found that a significant proportion of project participants were unable to access GLTV. The most common reason was either lack of access to a television or inability to access the channel. In response, MGCubed supported the most disadvantaged children in their project to watch GLTV by distributing TVs and decoders. Through this activity, 2650 decoders and

2585 TV sets were distributed to households of girls without access to TV. The households of boys with disabilities were also included in the distribution to support them to participate in GLTV lessons. During the pandemic, the number of student beneficiaries engaging with GLTV increased considerably. In 2020, only 32% of MGCubed participants had watched GLTV, but this increased to 72% in 2021. This was supported by the work of MGCubed project staff, which encouraged children and caregivers to participate in home learning through phone calls and face-to-face visits. The Discovery Project also supported government counterparts in implementing distance learning plans and raising awareness around child protection and COVID-19 prevention. As part of the project's COVID-19 response, the My Better World series was adapted for radio. The Discovery Project worked with District Education Offices to provide learner packs to learners enrolled in remedial classes. During COVID-19, STAGE continued running small groups of community-based lessons while schools were closed, in line with government mandates. This was critical for continuing education provision for marginalised girls who lacked access to remote education options

**Positive action made towards girls' education.** The endline evaluation of the Discovery Project found strong evidence of the link between community action plans (which actively addressed barriers to girls' education and aimed to change attitudes) and concrete actions in support of girls' education. In Ghana, 95% of schools' community action plans showed an impact in promoting girls' education and learning. Efforts included mobilising community resources to address specific barriers such as improvements to school infrastructure, including water and sanitation facilities. In addition, MGCubed supported systemic improvements in school leadership and management, working with schools to institutionalise the practice of developing gender-sensitive action plans. At endline, 97% of schools had a written School Performance Improvement Plan, with 74% of these implementing specific objectives and targets around girls' education and transition.

**Motivating girls to attend and re-enrol in school.** MGCubed's ongoing support to girls and their caregivers during school closures, in tandem with a school and community-led early warning system for dropouts, contributed to 96% of MGCubed participants re-enrolling in school when they reopened in January 2021. This included 96% of girls with disabilities returning to school post-pandemic.

## Progress and learning

The three GEC projects have published robust evidence to demonstrate their impact:

LEAD PARTNER	SUMMARY OF FINDINGS*
<b>World Education Inc.</b>	In both literacy and numeracy, girls had significant improvement in learning outcomes. The overall numeracy score improved by 21 points from baseline to midline. Improvements are consistent and observed across all EGMA subtasks and bands of achievement. The overall literacy score improved by 18 points from baseline to midline.
<b>Plan International UK</b>	Evaluation data indicated that the MGCubed project positively impacted girls' education attainment across literacy and numeracy. At the endline, girls in project schools were found to have primarily maintained existing learning levels in both English and mathematics between school closures in March 2020 and schools reopening in January 2021, a significant achievement has given girls' prolonged absence from formal learning.
<b>Impact(Ed) International</b>	Given that the endline evaluation was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, it was impossible to directly measure learning outcomes through learning assessments and report whether the additional impact on learning outcomes had emerged by endline. However, the quantitative evidence was found that participating in remedial lessons was associated with improvements in literacy in Ghana.

\* Evidence in the table is from an evaluation point, baseline, midline, or endline carried out by an external evaluator.

**Spotlight on the GEC and COVID-19 in West Africa:** [This brief](#) summarises emerging findings around the impact of COVID-19 on learning, wellbeing and return to school from GEC projects in Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. All projects in Ghana were asked to participate in workshops and submit evidence around understanding the impacts of COVID-19 on learning, wellbeing and return to school. The brief was primarily aimed at national governments, INGOs and NGOs working in the region and it has continued relevance due to the ongoing uncertainty and continued impact on schools and, in some cases, school closures and learning. It outlines interventions that support the reopening of schools and, in some cases, the continuation of remote learning as schools remains closed.

## Sustaining results

- Influencing the Ministry of Education's (MoE) strategy for distance learning initiatives is one of the MGCubed project's significant achievements. MGCubed has supported the MoE in reviewing its existing policies and programmes from a gender equality and social inclusion perspective, sharing lessons on gender, safe school environment and inclusion. The project has also supported the development of a work plan and budget for reviewing the existing education sector gender policy by the MoE, working to ensure that inclusion and safeguarding are consistently mainstreamed. Plan International has been included in a working group to oversee the policy development process. In addition, MGCubed trained District Education Officers in their monitoring strategies and tools. The Officers said they would continue using these after the project ends.
- In the MGCubed project, FCDO Ghana and the GEC Fund Management team worked together to leverage technology for learning. As a result, a partnership agreement was made between MGCubed and the Government. The project has given the five content production studios to the government agency, the Centre for National Distance Learning and Open Schooling (CENDLOS). Influencing at the national level, MGCubed presented its work on digital learning at the Ghana Digital Innovation Week. Key stakeholders also discussed the future strategy for e-learning at their closure event.
- The Discovery Project worked closely with the government's national, regional, and district levels. As a result, the project's final evaluation found evidence supporting the project's community, school, and system-level sustainability, specifically evidenced in district-level sustainability plans and human resources designated to carry them out.
- STAGE is conducting national-level advocacy and research on issues including disability and gender-based violence on social media platforms, radio and community information campaigns. The project participates in the Education Sector Gender Policy review and is part of this working group.
- All three projects have supported and showcased implementation and result highlighting the Ministry of Education's key basic education reforms to emphasise their relevance to broader Education Sector Plan (ESP) goals and sector progress, particularly around gender and inclusion, curriculum, learning assessments, teacher training, information communication technology (ICT) in education, and complementary education.

## Resources

- [Emerging Findings: The impact of COVID-19 on girls and the Girls' Education Challenge response. Focus on West Africa \(Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone\)](#)
- [Country briefing Ghana \(March 2021\)](#)
- [Final blog from the Discovery project](#)
- [Final reflections. Achievements and lessons learned from the Discovery project](#)
- [Impact report, Ghana: Discovery project](#)
- [Video about the Discovery project: Fuseina's story](#)
- [Discovery Project 2, Endline Evaluation November 2020](#)
- [MGCubed Final Reflections](#)
- [Blog by GATE GEC Team "Building an inclusive ecosystem for girls' education"](#)
- [Blog by Michelle Sandal "Improving access, retention and learning for children with disabilities"](#)
- [Blog by Barbara Harvey "Supporting young women to become teachers and role models in Sierra Leone"](#)
- [MGCubed Endline December 2021](#)
- [WEI's Strategic Approaches to Girls' Education \(STAGE\)](#)

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