



# COUNTRY BRIEFING: GHANA



GEC-T	2 projects	470,130 target beneficiaries
LNGB	1 project	17,000 target beneficiaries <sup>1</sup>

The GEC has three projects across Ghana: two GEC-T projects focusing on transitioning girls between basic and secondary education; and one LNGB project supporting the most marginalised and vulnerable out-of-school girls.

All projects have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 crisis with schools closing in Ghana in March 2020. In response, projects have focused their efforts on distance learning education programmes such as TV, radio and learning packs, COVID-19 messaging and Alternative Learning Provision (ALP). During the last quarter (July to September 2020), projects provided direct contact and support to over 217,000 girls and boys through their COVID-19 response activities.

PROJECT NAME	WINDOW	LEAD PARTNER	PROJECT START DATE	PROJECT CLOSE DATE
<u>Discovery Project</u>	GEC-T	Impact(Ed) International	1 April 2017	31 December 2020
<u>Making Ghanaian Girls Great!</u>	GEC-T	Plan International UK	1 May 2017	31 September 2021
<u>Strategic Approaches for Girls' Education (STAGE)</u>	LNGB	World Education Inc. (WEI)	31 August 2018	31 October 2022



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<sup>1</sup> Number subject to adjustment following identification of beneficiaries

Project data is based on reporting from May to October 2020

Since the start of the second phase of the GEC<sup>2</sup> (2017-2025), projects in Ghana have reported the following achievements up to June 2020:



**17,585**  
teachers trained

**3,849**  
girls club  
leaders trained



**23,847**  
textbooks  
distributed



**12,850**  
bursaries  
distributed

## Achievements

- **Plan's** recent results showed improved literacy scores for girls participating in the project. They also showed improvements in transition for girls participating in project activities.
- **Impact(Ed)** evaluations have shown that the project has had a positive impact on the self-efficacy of girls, that **Impact(Ed)** teacher training and support led to improved teaching quality in literacy, numeracy, assessment, and the project had a positive impact on teachers' ability to create a safe and inclusive classroom environment. Participating in remedial lessons was associated with improvements in literacy.

## Challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic, local tensions and severe weather events have made it difficult for project staff to reach girls and continue their learning.

- **Access to learning:** Girls' access to learning has been affected by the closure of schools; many girls lost face-to-face contact with teachers and opportunities to learn alongside their peers.
- **Flooding:** During this period, communities in districts including Tolon, Bawku West and Mamprugu Maoagduri have been cut off by flooding, making in-person monitoring and activities a challenge.
- **Girls' safety and well-being:** Due to the closure of schools, most girls have been engaged in other economic activities to support their families and are also at greater risk of sexual violence, child marriage and early pregnancy. In addition, data from project surveys have shown that many caregivers have noticed a negative change in their child's mood since school closure.



<sup>2</sup> The first phase of the GEC ran from 2012-2017 and provided quality education for over a million marginalised girls. The GEC is now in its second phase (2017-2025), with up to 41 projects in 17 countries. The second phase is enabling existing GEC beneficiary girls to complete primary school and transition to secondary education, technical vocational training or employment. Within the second phase, a second cohort of girls are also being supported through the Leave No Girl Behind funding window, which consists of interventions for highly marginalised, adolescent girls who are out of school.

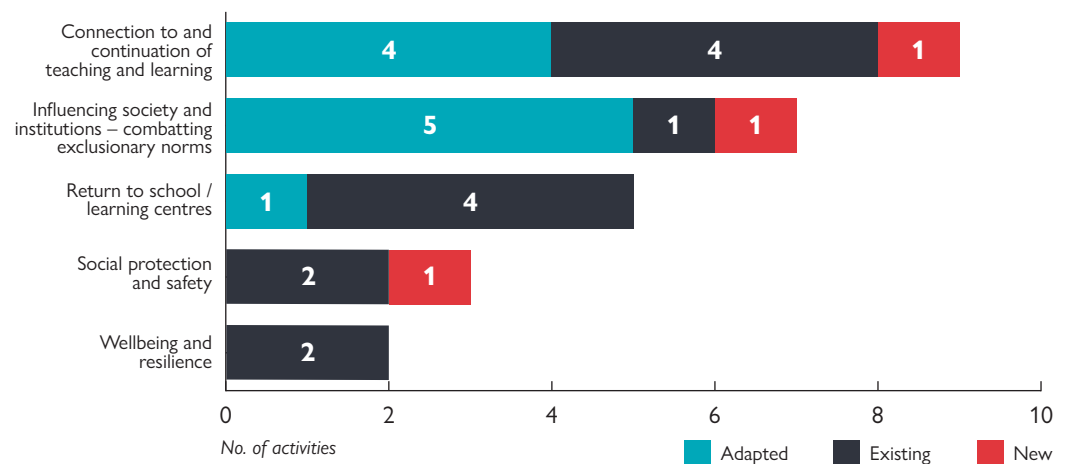
## Recent highlights

In response, all projects in Ghana have now changed their activities to best meet the needs of the beneficiary girls. *Figure 1* outlines the types of activities projects have implemented and indicates the proportion of these that are existing, adapted or completely new to projects. Some highlights from these activities include:

- **Supporting the national education distance learning strategy:** The Ghana Learning TV channel has been airing free content nationally for learners in all grades to enable students with access to a TV to continue learning while schools are closed. **Plan** has supported this by generating academic content for these TV broadcasts, and providing technical support in pedagogy, gender and inclusion, and in recording and editing of lessons.
- **Health awareness messaging:** WEI formulated and organised the sending of 127,391 COVID-19 awareness text messages between May and July 2020.
- **ALP classes:** In line with government guidelines, **WEI** adapted and continued ALP classes from 22 June for girls on both non-formal track (2,233 girls) and formal learning tracks (8,801 girls).
- **Using mobile technology to reach more girls:** Whatsapp messages on COVID-19 safety, child protection and education developed by **Impact(Ed)** reached Head Teachers, resource teachers, mentors and teachers covering all 800 project schools. Cell-Ed messaging in four local languages reached 2,652 households/parents and 4,795 teachers.
- **Using television broadcasting to enable more distance learning:** **Impact(Ed)** secured broadcast slots on National TV (reaching 4M) for My Better World commencing in September. This animated series covers a range of life skills topics aimed at empowering girls, and changing attitudes and behaviours related to girls' education and gender equality.
- **Development of Learner Packs:** **Impact(Ed)**'s Learner Packs are designed to provide remedial support to students, in line with the national curriculum. These packs include schemes of learning and diagnostic assessment and placement tools. District education authorities have been trained in the use of these, and the packs have been distributed to over 12,000 learners through the District Education Offices (DEOs). The DEOs are planning to copy these and distribute more widely to learners in their districts.

All projects have put in place safeguarding protocols and procedures to ensure that their COVID-19 responses are safe for girls, other beneficiaries, and staff members. Safety, as well as learning, continues to be a top priority for all GEC projects.\*

**Figure 1: COVID-19 Response activities in Ghana<sup>3</sup>**



\* Please see the safeguarding section on the COVID-19 page of the GEC website for materials and guidance provided to projects: <https://girlseducationchallenge.org/#/article/covid-19-response>. The GEC expects our projects to be compliant with our 14 minimum standards on safeguarding.

<sup>3</sup> Projects began implementing the COVID-19 response activities in Q2 2020 and will continue or be adapted in accordance with the evolving COVID-19 situation in each context and in agreement with the FM.

## Coordination and collaboration

- **Plan's support to the Ministry of Education's (MoE) national response:** The project has supported the MoE and the Ghana Education Service (GES) in the broadcast of televised lessons through the Ghana Learning TV channel as part of the MoE's distance learning education programme.
- **Impact(Ed) support to government: Impact(Ed)** has engaged with the directly with District Directors of Education and their Deputies on joint planning. This includes working on the Learner Packs and developing Learning Focused Sustainability Plans as part of the project's exit strategy and handover of core activities such as the remedial programme in literacy and numeracy, professional development for teachers in numeracy and literacy teaching, use of ICT in lessons, life skills and core competencies development for girls, especially through clubs and the MBW series.
- **WEI coordination with Ghana Health Service:** WEI Collaborated with Ghana Health Service to develop and review project prevention messages on COVID-19, adolescent sexual and reproductive health issues, gender-based violence, nutrition, supporting persons with disabilities, family planning and nutrition.

## Lessons learned

- **The necessity of back-to-school campaigns to overcome barriers exacerbated by COVID-19:** Targeted back to school campaigns including specific social protection activities need to be focused on sub-groups of girls, such as girls with disabilities, or young mothers. This is to support their return to school and to overcome financial barriers that they might now face caused by COVID-19 and a prolonged absence from school.
- **Community networks are key to successful reporting mechanisms:** The projects have learned that it is vital to leverage existing community-based reporting mechanisms for child protection, particularly during times of crisis, such as COVID-19. These mechanisms can then also be used as an opportunity to update communities on available referral points.

## Priorities from January 2021

Schools have been closed in Ghana since 16 March 2020. Second year students in Junior and Senior High Schools resumed in October 2020. All nursery, kindergarten, primary, Junior High School (JHS) 1 and Senior High School (SHS) 1 students are due to resume school in 1 January 2021. As such, the projects are going to focus on activities that support the continuation of learning as well as supporting students' return to school.

- **Address dropout:** To ensure that dropouts rates are kept as low as possible, **WEI** staff will engage directly with community members, encouraging return to school and updating them on developments.
- **Support the continuation of learning:** **Plan** will provide students with remedial learning workbooks and caregivers will be provided with guidance to support their children.
- **Build the capacity of education stakeholders:** **Plan** will provide capacity building for teachers, head teachers and District Education Officers. The project will resume professional training for community and school stakeholders.
- **Resource microsite:** **Impact(Ed)** continues to engage with the district assemblies and the education directorate to complete the resource microsite for use by learners, teachers, headteachers and other stakeholders as a legacy of the project.

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