

GIRLS

INVESTING IN GIRLS AT THE GRASSROOTS

Growing up in the developing world, a girl faces divergent paths that have serious implications for her future: will she stay in school, or get married? Can she even afford school, and will she be safe there? Will she have to work to support her family—as a domestic servant, a sex worker, a bonded laborer—or will she have the opportunity to learn other skills? Can she protect her body and her health? Girls encounter these problematic realities every day—but we have the power to make sure their future is bright.

“Educating girls delivers a higher return than any other investment in the developing world.” — THE WORLD BANK

#1

Suicide is the #1 cause of death for teen girls worldwide. Complications from pregnancy and childbirth are #2.

62M

Around the world, 62 million girls are denied an education.

1/3

Roughly one-third of all girls in the developing world are married before age 18.



GIRL POWER HAS GLOBAL IMPACT

It's no surprise that educated girls are more likely to have paid employment as adults. But they also marry and give birth later in life; have fewer, healthier babies; and are less likely to transmit HIV to their children. Children born to educated mothers are twice as likely to survive past the age of 5. These mothers are also more likely to send their children to school and break the cycle of poverty.

Progress has been made in the last decade, but girls continue to be discriminated against—and in the worst cases, abused or killed—simply for demanding equal opportunity. The most marginalized girls, often ethnic minorities, orphans, girls living in rural areas, and the desperately poor, are the most at risk and are critically in need of assistance.

“My family was so poor, I dropped out of school and started working on the black market. I was only thinking about tomorrow's bread. But now that I've started educating myself, I have dreams and I think about my future.”

— GFC GRASSROOTS PARTNER BENEFICIARY, MONGOLIA

Sources: World Health Organization, International Center for Research on Women, USAID



OUR APPROACH: REACHING THE MOST VULNERABLE

The Global Fund for Children supports local, grassroots solutions, equipping girls with the skills, knowledge, and resources they need to thrive. We work to ensure that all girls have the opportunity to:

LEARN

by convincing parents to send their daughters to school, providing scholarships so girls can afford an education, and creating safe places for girls to learn.

EARN

through programs in financial literacy and entrepreneurship, and skills training in fields like tailoring, computers, sustainable agriculture, and more.

PROTECT THEIR BODIES

by teaching girls how to prevent early pregnancy, sexual abuse, and HIV infection, and by educating communities on the dangers of sexual exploitation and child marriage.

KNOW THEIR RIGHTS

through telephone hotlines, media campaigns, school health clubs, parent and teacher trainings, and community outreach activities.

LEAD

by helping girls to build confidence, raise their voices, and become agents of change in their schools, neighborhoods, and governments.

BE SAFE

by providing survivors of sexual abuse and exploitation with transitional homes, therapy, and opportunities to rebuild their lives.

Last year, we provided extensive capacity-building services and more than \$1.2 million in funding to 88 grassroots organizations whose programs address girls' needs in 37 countries.

OUR RESULTS: TRANSFORMATIVE, SUSTAINABLE CHANGE

At GFC, we invest at the grassroots level, finding homegrown organizations that may be small but are already making a difference in girls' lives. Through our partnership, we provide these organizations with flexible capital, management support, training, and networking opportunities to help them grow and succeed. Our strategic support enables them to measure and track their impact, while also helping them to grow into lasting community resources that can endure for generations.

“Girls are now advocating strongly for their rights, bargaining better terms and conditions of employment, and earning better salaries than before they joined the program.” — GFC GRASSROOTS PARTNER LEADER, KENYA

EXAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

685 The number of children served by *Equal Community Foundation* last year. ECF is one of the very few organizations in India working with boys to reduce gender-based violence, empowering them to take action against the violence they witness in their daily lives and training male professionals to become mentors for boys and young men.

100% The percentage of *Akili Dada's* program participants who graduated from high school last year. Located in Kenya, *Akili Dada* finds top-performing girls who are at risk of dropping out of school, and provides them with scholarships, mentoring, and leadership development. These girls were born to be leaders—now nothing stands in their way.

720 The number of girls involved in *Hong Kong's* sex industry who were offered new opportunities through *Teen's Key* last year. *Teen's Key* provides teen sex workers with individualized assistance, including health services, legal advice, and academic and occupational counseling, to help them make informed choices about their rights and the path forward.

GET INVOLVED

The Global Fund for Children specializes in finding small organizations with big potential and helping them to grow into sustainable resources for their communities. Our locally based partners understand how to support girls so they can grow into independent, contributing members of society—to the benefit of themselves, their children, their communities, and the world. To learn more about how you can contribute to the advancement of girls worldwide, please visit www.globalfundforchildren.org.