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GIRLS' EDUCATION CHALLENGE (GEC)

July 2016 – July 2021

\$25 Million

(USAID funding primarily supports Steps toward Afghan Girls Education Success II program under GEC)

OVERVIEW

Adolescent girls in Afghanistan face barriers and lack of access to educational opportunities from an early age, due to poverty, cultural norms, and geographic isolation. They are less likely than boys to enter primary school, and those who do enter school have a higher dropout rate. The Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) represents continued collaboration between USAID and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) to improve girls' education in Afghanistan. The program provides adolescent girls with access to education, materials, and safe spaces to learn.

GEC projects in Afghanistan also help to mobilize and build capacity within government, communities, and schools through training and mentoring of teachers, government employees, and community leaders. GEC targets marginalized girls, including those in migrant communities or with disabilities.

GEC programming includes community-based education, support to government schools, and Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET). GEC is implemented by a large consortium led by the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF). Other partners are Aga Khan Educational Services, Catholic Relief Services, Save the Children, Afghan Education Production Organization, and Care International.

ACTIVITIES

- The GEC STAGES II program provides education for girls and boys through Community Based Education (CBE) classes in 1,047 communities across 16 provinces.
- STAGES II establishes primary and lower secondary CBE classes and accelerated learning program (ALP) classes in remote communities with little-to-no access to government schools.
- The implementation of STAGES-supported classes is complemented by additional activities, including training of teachers, training of school management councils (school shuras), renovation of schools and classrooms, and provision of school equipment, facilities and learning resources, and remedial support in government schools.
- STAGES II is piloting multi-grade classes and to address female teacher shortages, the program provides support to adolescent girls to attend Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) and enroll in teacher apprenticeships under the GEC Girls Learning to Teach Afghans (GLTTA) component.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Establishing and supporting positive/conducive quality learning environments in 1,436 CBE classes
- Supporting students in 432 government schools through additional academic, supervisory, and infrastructure support
- Providing education to 21,132 girls and 8,071 boys enrolled in CBE, ALP, or LSCBE classes
- Raising community and girls' awareness of 8,571 WASH or menstrual hygiene kit distributions
- Rehabilitation or construction of 175 classrooms in high-needs areas
- Mobilizing up to 390,000 GBP in community in-kind contributions to support girls' education and learning spaces
- Training 2,827 female and 3,932 male teachers in inclusive, student centered, and gender equitable educational methods
- Training 888 school management committees to ensure conducive and safe learning environments and support sustainable outcomes
- Supporting 2,428 young women to become teachers through a teaching apprenticeship program and grants to attend Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs)

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E-mail: kblaidocinformation@usaid.gov

Web: <http://www.usaid.gov/afghanistan>