



Education

Educating women and girls transforms individuals as well as societies. As girls achieve greater levels of education, they are more likely to delay marriage, seek higher-wage employment, exercise control over their reproductive lives, and raise healthier families.¹ Girls' education has far-reaching impacts on all levels of society, from economic development, to political participation, to health. Recent studies have shown a clear link between increasing education for young women and a country's economic growth.² As women and girls become more educated, improve their economic standing, and become greater change agents within their communities, all of society benefits.³

Although girls' enrollment in primary and secondary school has increased worldwide, gaps between girls' and boys' educational attainment persist in many regions, especially South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.⁴ In many parts of the developing world, girls' schooling drops off considerably by the secondary level.⁵ An estimated 74 million young women worldwide are unable to read or write due to inadequate schooling⁶ and need additional opportunities to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills.

From 1970-2013, VGIF invested more than 420,000 USD to support 101 education projects across the globe. These funded programs reached approximately 29,390 people, including 15,500 women and 10,600 girls.

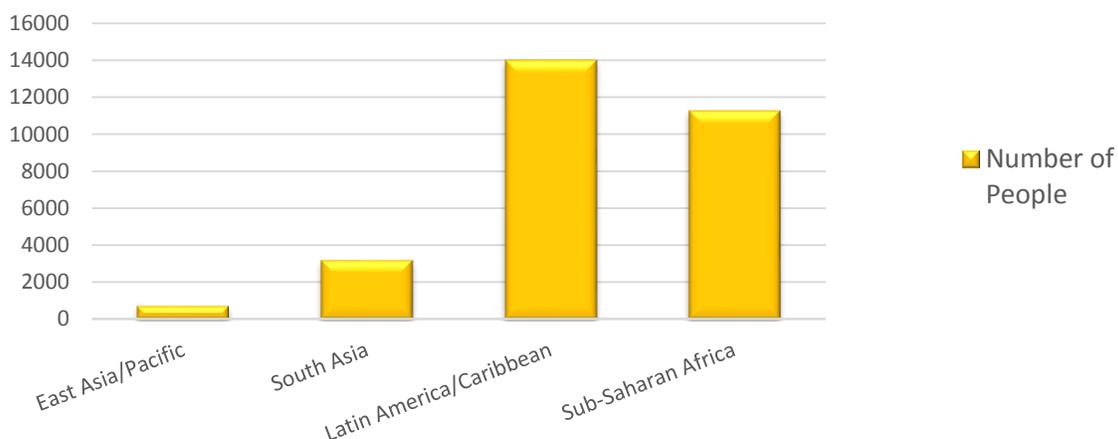
VGIF grantees used the following strategies to increase girls' education rates and increase women's literacy:

- Supporting formal education programs (i.e. primary through university-level) through schools fees and infrastructure;
- Raising public awareness about the importance of educating girls;
- Providing safe water and appropriate sanitation facilities to enable girls to stay in school;
- Teaching literacy and numeracy to unschooled women and girls.

Worldwide, an estimated 34 million adolescent girls of secondary-school age are not in school.

Girls face many barriers to school completion, including a lack of school fees, lack of appropriate sanitary facilities, early marriage, and cultural prejudices and beliefs.⁴

Education Projects: Total People Reached by Region



PROJECT HIGHLIGHT: Improving Science Education for Secondary-School Girls



The “Laboratory for Science Education” Project by the Auxilium Girls’ School in India was funded by VGIF in 2010-2011 through an initial one-year grant and again in 2013 through a multi-year grant. The project has equipped science laboratories in an all-girls school to improve instruction, create opportunities for hands-on learning, and boost students’ achievement in the sciences.

To date, the project has served more than 730 girls through improved instruction and is working to encourage secondary school girls to pursue further education in the sciences.

As one student stated, “**My study of Science consisted of memorization of definitions and formulae [before]. It is only when we started going to the laboratory that I started understanding those complex terms.... It is fun to learn and I understand much better.**”

VGIF ACHIEVEMENTS: Education

From 1970-2013, VGIF funded **101 projects** that included an education component.

The projects reached approximately **26,040** women and girls and **29,390** people overall, including men and boys.

Projects focused primarily on advancing women and girls’ **literacy and formal education** by providing school fees, science and technology training, literacy programs, and infrastructure support to school facilities. Several projects included components to improve access to safe water and built latrines to allow girls to stay in school, especially after the onset of menstruation.

¹ Unicef, “Recommitting to Child Survival: A Promise Renewed.” (UNICEF, 2012), available at http://www.unicef.org/esaro/Child_survival_a_promise_renewed.pdf.

² Women Deliver, “Girls Education.” available at <http://www.womendeliver.org/knowledge-center/facts-figures/girls-education/>.

³ Women Deliver, “Invest in Girls and Women: Everybody Wins”. (Women Deliver, 2014), available at http://www.womendeliver.org/assets/Everybody_Wins.pdf

⁴ United Nations Girls Education Initiative, *Annual Report 2012*. (UNGEI, 2013).

⁵ United Nations, *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2012*. (UN, 2012).

⁶ Ibid.