



# Girls' Education Results in Ethiopia



**LINK**  
EDUCATION

2017-2022



# Girls' Education Results in Ethiopia

In 2017, Link began a new stage in our ongoing journey to break down the barriers girls in rural Ethiopia face to completing their education. We created the STAGES (Supporting the Transition of Adolescent Girls Through Enhancing Systems) project to work with government, schools and communities to help girls stay in school, receive a quality education and escape the cycle of poverty.

The project recognises that there is no individual reason why girls are being left behind, and therefore no singular quick fix. Instead, we work at every level of the education system to provide a network of support and shift community attitudes to empower girls in the long term. To learn more about the many actions Link is undertaking, [visit our website](#).



144 schools



61,000 girls

In 2021, Link invited an external evaluator to visit our project and explore where we have been most effective. The evaluation was designed to be forward looking, answering questions which would inform planning and implementation in the final two years of the project. Through surveys and interviews with girls, teachers, school directors, community members and local government officials, the report gains a deep and reliable snapshot of the project's progress.

We have summarised the results of that study [here](#).

# Sustainability - Making Lasting Change

Link is proud to help strengthen and improve existing education systems to ensure lasting change once our project is finished. Reports from government officials so far show signs of success.

Regional officials are already starting to make long-term changes to their work by incorporating aspects of our project's interventions into their planning processes. They told us that seeing the positive impact of our combined work motivated them to keep the activities going after the project ended.

The three areas they particularly praised were:

- Working with school leaders to emphasise girls' learning
- Gender and inclusion focused teacher training
- Child safeguarding

"Because it is strongly aligned with the sector's role and because it is also fruitful to improving teaching and learning, the government will continue to implement the current initiatives."

District Education Officer

"We have gained knowledge and skills, and we have seen the changes it can bring, so we will have a plan to continue it."

District Education Officer

# Girls' Wellbeing – Building Confidence to Succeed

Confidence and self-esteem are essential for girls to pursue their education. Our project sought to change attitudes and increase support from their community to give girls the confidence to succeed, as well as making schools safer and welcoming to girls.

Working closely with female teachers and community leaders in project schools, girls were provided with emotional support through peer group clubs and counselling, as well as working with communities and teachers to make schools and teaching methods suit girls' needs. We also upgraded latrines and provided sanitary pads and soap to ensure periods would not cause girls to miss school.

## What do girls say helps them to stay in school?

- 93% said feeling safe at school
- 92% said parental support
- 88% said girl-friendly schools



**"Confidence of female students has increased and whatever it is, they can express without shame.**

**Girls are also being empowered and developing mechanisms for supporting each other."**

School Cluster Supervisor



**54% increase in girls' self-reported feelings of confidence and agency since the start of the project**



**72% of girls now say they feel confident to answer questions in class and want to keep studying**

**"[counselling has] considerably strengthened me to keep moving forward."**

Female Learner



# School Leadership – Championing Change

We worked with school leaders at every level, from headteachers to district government staff, to ensure that education systems were set up to promote inclusive teaching methods and make schools safe spaces for girls.

Across the board, our results show that these leaders found significant improvements have been made.



**94%** of teachers now report that school leaders are responsive to girls' needs, increased from 67%

**"Before we received training, our way of supervision was simply criticism. But [since] we got trained, we have been involved in follow-up, evaluation and coaching and mentoring activities."**

School Cluster Supervisor



# Teaching and Learning That Works for Girls

We provided training to teachers to help them create lesson plans and classroom practices that give girls an equal chance.

Thanks to Link and partners, **94%** of teachers in schools we work with have now received training in gender and inclusion focused teaching. That's an increase of **65%**, and is helping to make a difference in the classroom.



**30% increase in teachers who say they now take gender into account when teaching**



**Over 90% increase in teachers reporting improvements in safeguarding**

The teachers we worked with were asked which aspects of the project were effectively reducing the barriers girls face in getting an education. Nearly 100% of them selected every project activity.



**"Since teachers started implementing active learning methodology in the past two years, female students' academic achievement has improved, and girls' self-confidence and self-awareness have developed."**

School Cluster Supervisor

# Community Action – Keeping Girls Safe



"After a reported bride abduction, the elders used to negotiate and try to settle the case, which helped the perpetrators get away without justice, and the elders approved the marriage just because the girl was already abducted. Now it is unacceptable in most areas in our district; [now] they report the case."

District Education Officer

They say it takes a village to raise a child, and our research continues to show that community support is a crucial factor in keeping girls in school and helping them to succeed. We've worked with communities to champion an attitudinal shift and encourage communities to support girls' education.

We've seen a marked increase in communities choosing to prioritise girls' safety and put their education first.

"Girls know about violence and how to report it. Hence, the confidence of female students has increased, and whatever it is, they can express without shame."

School Cluster Supervisor

# What Happens Next?

It's great to see how much progress has been made, but we're committed to using this data to continuously improve our work.

The research showed that some girls still struggle with English as the language of instruction. We're going to explore ways we can support teachers and learners to understand one another and their textbooks better.

We are also exploring ways we can support our government partners to scale up activities from our project and sustain them in the long-term.



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