



Girl Child Education (GCE) Project

Background and Rationale

According to the National Population and Housing Census 2021, the overall female literacy rate in the country is only 69.4%, while male literacy rate is nearly 83.6%. While 75% of age-appropriate children attend lower basic education, attendance drops sharply at higher levels, with only 50% attending upper basic and 48% attending secondary education. This disparity is even more pronounced for girls, particularly those from rural and impoverished households due to economic, cultural, or traditional constraints. Not attending school also puts girls at a higher risk of trafficking, abuse, early marriage and a lifetime of limited potential. The Heifer Nepal team realized early on that the challenges women face in adulthood are deeply rooted in the education disparity of girls. This scenario highlighted the importance of encouraging girl child education in Nepal, leading Heifer Nepal staff to initiate the Girl Child Education (GCE) project as part of its gender program in 2000.

Project Goal

Heifer Nepal launched the Girl Child Education Project with the goal of empowering girls through education.

Project Partners

The Girl Child Education (GCE) project has achieved a meaningful impact, made possible by the generous contributions of numerous Heifer International Korea donors. Among these valued supporters are the Life Insurance Social Contribution Committee Korea, KYOBO Life Insurance, Social Solidarity Bank Korea, PRGATE (a Deloitte business), SPEEDMARK, Paju Dairy Clinic of Seoul, LG Electronics, and Yonsei University Dairy. Additional funds were raised through the dedicated efforts of Heifer Nepal staff, Seoul International School, Helping Hands for Nepal, as well as committed volunteers, friends, relatives, and well-wishers since the project's inception in 2000. Local fundraising initiatives led by Heifer Nepal staff, volunteers, and community supporters have also played a crucial role in the success of this initiative.

Duration

2022-2026

Project Area

Sindhuli, Rautahat, Chitwan, Palpa, Gulmi, Dhading, Sarlahi, Mahottari, Baglung, Parbat, Rasuwa, Sindhupalchok, Dolakha, Syangja, Dang, Bardiya, Pyuthan, and Rolpa

Project Objectives

- Overcome the conservative traditions in Nepal, particularly in rural areas, where girls are denied equal opportunities.
- Empower girls through education.
- Provide support to families facing economic constraints that prevent them from sending their daughters to school.
- Increase the number of girls attending school in all project areas.
- Promote gender equity within families, helping them understand that both girls and boys are equally valuable.
- Foster local participation, particularly in terms of financial support, and mobilize community resources for development activities.

Impacts So Far

GCE project has made a significant impact on the lives of 2,851 girls to date. In 2022, the program awarded scholarships to 380 girls. Building on this success, the project expanded in 2023, providing scholarships of essential school supplies to 200 girls. That same year, GCE facilitated the establishment of Heifer Mael Library (a community library) at Shree Panchakanya Secondary School in Kudule, Sindhuli, in partnership with Heifer Korea and the local government school. This library has become an invaluable resource, particularly for girls and women in the school and surrounding community, fostering hope and motivation to achieve their dreams. Similarly, in 2024, the GCE project extended its support to an additional 210 girls.

Modality of Implementation

The GCE Project allocates funds to families in need, enabling them to send their daughters to school. Donations are collected and assessed before the school year from donors, staff, volunteers to determine available scholarships for girls in grades 1–10. A call for applications is made, and a selection committee within Heifer reviews submissions to choose recipients. Project partners sign agreements to distribute funds as educational materials or fees. Before disbursing scholarships, partners verify school enrollment through admission documents. They also provide progress reports six months after enrollment and at year-end, tracking attendance and academic performance.

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The GCE Project aligns with 5 Sustainable Development Goals: No Poverty (1), Good Health and Well-being (3), Gender Equality (5), Quality Education (4), Reduced Inequalities (10).

Expected Outcome

The project aims to educate and support 1,000 girls by 2026, ensuring they have access to essential educational resources. This initiative will empower them to complete their schooling, improve academic performance, and raise community awareness about the importance of girls' education.

