



Transitioning into life

ZIMBABWE



LOCATION: 9 districts in the Midlands and Southern Provinces of Zimbabwe



PROJECT NAME: Improving Gender, Attitudes, Transition and Education (IGATE-T), funded by DFID's Girls' Education Challenge and UK philanthropists



GOAL: 57,797 marginalised girls are well equipped to transition into life through fluency in literacy, numeracy, financial and life skills.



DURATION: 4.5 years (2017 – 2021)

OVERVIEW

In Zimbabwe, 12% of all children do not complete primary school.¹ The number of children in school declines with every school year, with only a quarter of children finishing secondary school.²

Zimbabwe's economic problems, including sharp and frequent price increases for basic commodities, have resulted in children going to bed hungry and often travelling the long distances to school without having a proper meal. Shortages of cash, fuel, electricity and erosion of salaries have led to protests and strikes by civil servants, including teachers. In the past 12 months we've seen students lose around five months of learning, and teachers' morale decline as their salaries have become worth six times less due to inflation. This trend has been ongoing for over five years.

Barriers to girls' education

Key barriers include:

- Families' inability to pay school or exam fees.
- Distance to school and safety risks en route.
- Shortage of trained teachers, textbooks, and quality of teaching.
- Lack of menstrual and sanitary ware.
- Negative attitudes towards girls' education.
- High workload in the home for girls.
- A culture of gender-based violence.

What the project is doing

In phase two of the Improving Gender Attitudes, Transition, and Education project (IGATE-T), World Vision, in partnership with others,³ are working across 318 rural primary and secondary schools, specifically reaching vulnerable girls through a holistic intervention. This includes improving: teachers' professional development, community engagement – helping to shift religious and social norms – and girls' leadership clubs. In addition, complementary community-based learning programmes for out-of-school girls provide a second chance to learn foundational literacy, numeracy, financial intelligence and vocational skills for girls who would otherwise struggle to continue their education.



RESULTS

With our partners CARE and the Open University (UK) we co-developed material for teachers, complementing Zimbabwe's Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education curriculum and adolescent development manual. Using these materials, we achieved the following:

- 13,029 learners participated in leadership clubs.
- Four modules and guidelines were developed and used by a total of 1,438 teachers who were trained in participatory teaching methods, literacy and numeracy.
- 3,000 English reading books were provided to 39 secondary schools.
- 826 teachers reached children in 266 primary schools and 16 secondary schools, increasing the knowledge and skills of 35,292 marginalised girls and 51,786 marginalised boys.
- Teacher training was also complemented by community engagement initiatives seeking to improve school attendance, transition to secondary school and to reduce gender-based violence, especially through strengthening 318 school and community Child Protection Committees.
- 266 primary head teachers were trained in effective school management and leadership.
- 56 mentors were trained and supported as learning leaders and teachers' buddies.
- Girls' leadership skills were also improved by participation in 318 girls' clubs during school or in the community.
- 1,300 Form I entrants received bicycles to improve attendance and encourage more girls to transition to secondary school.

IMPACT ON EDUCATION



The midline evaluation reported that **82% of teachers received training in the 12 months under evaluation and this has resulted in improved teaching methods in classrooms.**

A big difference was observed in the proportion of teachers playing literacy and numeracy games (68% for IGATE-T schools versus 52% for non IGATE-T schools) helping with vital skills improvement.

“My teacher teaches me maths through games like bingo and I can now add and count by myself.” Nyasha, 12.

“The project has had a substantial impact on literacy skills for poorest and marginalised learners, including children with high chore burdens, learners in households with no formal education, and double orphans.” (IGATE-T midline evaluation 2019⁴)

In terms of transition, the largest improvements in grade to grade progression occur among students who had the lowest literacy scores at baseline, girls with high chore burdens, and those who come from households that cannot afford their basic needs.

¹ <https://data.unicef.org/country/zwe/#> primary completion rate 88% (2018 data).

² <https://data.unicef.org/country/zwe/#> adjusted net attendance rate upper secondary education 24% (2018 data).

³ World Vision is working with the following partners: CARE, Open University (UK), SNV Netherlands, WBR (World Bicycle Relief), UDACIZA (Union for the Development of Apostolic Churches in Zimbabwe), EWF (Emthonjeni Women's Forum) and MoPSE (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education).

⁴ This evaluation received a score of 73 which means that it is rated “good” evidence quality according to the BOND evidence principles. https://www.bond.org.uk/monitoring-and-evaluation/monitoring-and-evaluation-tools#evidence_principles

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

The challenging operational context of Zimbabwe has resulted in demotivated teachers and caregivers unable to meet basic needs for their children. In order to overcome this, the project has had to adapt the teacher training component and meet transport and accommodation costs, as well as support school feeding programmes happening in target schools, helping to keep children learning.



FINDING JOY IN LEARNING – NYASHA'S STORY

When domestic disputes pushed 12-year-old Nyasha's mother to leave her family, Nyasha (pictured above left) suddenly became her siblings' carer and the housekeeper, doing all the chores and cooking at home. With a daily 8.6-mile walk to and from school too, she struggled with lessons.

Teacher, Febbie, noticed Nyasha's turmoil and encouraged her to join the leadership club. This is an initiative designed to equip struggling learners with core skills to build confidence and self-esteem. Febbie also met with Nyasha's family, and through BEEP⁵ (a partnership between the IGATE-T project and World Bicycle Relief), Nyasha was

provided with a bicycle to lessen the burden of distance to and from school.

The teachers now describe Nyasha as a vibrant young girl who is not afraid to assert herself in activities.

“I enjoy the literacy lessons as they have taught me to speak in English and that gives me more confidence at school!”

Now, Nyasha is finally able to say that she enjoys her lessons.

COVER: This teacher in Zimbabwe has been trained by World Vision to create a child-friendly environment in the classroom and to support pupils' reading skills and numeracy skills with creative methods. ©2018 Marcus Simaitis/World Vision

PREVIOUS PAGE (CLOCKWISE): A trust-building exercise with out-of-school children, building confidence and capacity; community-based initiatives for out of school children – a session on entrepreneurial skills; essential water and sanitation facilities for girls in a rural school within the project area. The project is actively encouraging best practice in this area. ©2019 Teresa de Souza/World Vision

⁵ Bicycles for Educational Empowerment Project.

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World Vision believes that by working together with children, their communities, and our supporters and partners, the lives of the world's most vulnerable children can be transformed. As a Christian organisation, we aspire to reflect God's unconditional love in all we do.

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