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# How can marginalized girls and young women access quality learning opportunities

Compared to their male counterparts, girls and young women around the world have unequal access to quality education. Today, out of the [132 million girls](https://www.unicef.org/education/girls-education) worldwide who are out of school—including 52 million in Sub-Saharan Africa alone—[16 million](https://en.unesco.org/news/twice-many-girls-boys-will-never-start-school-says-new-unesco-gender-eatlas) will never set foot in a classroom. Even for those who were previously in school, COVID-19 school closures have disrupted, and in many cases interrupted, the education of more than [740 million](https://en.unesco.org/news/covid-19-school-closures-around-world-will-hit-girls-hardest) girls and young women.

With more education, girls and young women [earn higher wages](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/What-Works-in-Girls-Educationlowres.pdf), are less susceptible to infectious diseases, have lower maternal and newborn mortality rates, are less likely to marry as children or against their will, have more productive agricultural plots, and build greater resilience in the face of the effects of climate change. If every girl worldwide received 12 years of quality education, lifetime earnings for women could [increase by up to $30 trillion](https://www.globalpartnership.org/benefits-of-education) globally, boosting the GDPs of entire countries worldwide.

Despite these gains, [significant barriers](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/What-Works-in-Girls-Educationlowres.pdf) such as poverty, early marriages, cultural and social practices, gender biases, and unsafe or unwelcoming learning environments continue to inhibit girls and young women from enrolling in school at all levels and reaching pivotal learning milestones. While great strides have been made in improving educational opportunities for girls and young women, existing barriers remain prevalent and will be exacerbated by COVID-19 and its aftermath, calling for new models and innovations to close the gap. community is looking for technology-based solutions that level the playing field for girls and young women throughout their learning journey, from birth up to age 24. To that end, Solve seeks solutions that:

* Increase the number of girls and young women participating in formal and informal learning and training;
* Strengthen practical skills, competencies, and experiential learning opportunities, particularly in STEM and digital literacy, for girls and young women to effectively transition from education to employment;
* Reduce the barriers that prevent girls and young women—especially those living in conflict and emergency situations—from reaching key learning milestones; and
* Promote gender-inclusive and gender-responsive education for everyone, including gender non-binary and transgender learners.