

# [Press release: UK is making sure one million girls across the Commonwealth get a quality education](#)

School girl Desderia in Tanzania. Picture: Eliza Powell/Camfed

Almost one million vulnerable and marginalised girls in developing countries across the Commonwealth will receive the life-changing education they need to become the thinkers and leaders of the future, the Prime Minister announced today (Tuesday 17th April).

130 million girls around the world are missing out on school, and in Sub-Saharan Africa fewer than 1 in 20 poor, rural girls are on track to complete secondary school.

DFID's Girls Education Challenge will make sure 920,000 girls continue their education through primary, secondary school and training, so they can fulfil their potential to play a transformational role in their communities, economies and political institutions.

Today's announcement will also give a further 53,000 adolescent girls in developing countries across the Commonwealth, who have never attended or dropped out of school due to poverty, motherhood, disability or conflict, a second chance to learn through catch-up classes and vital skills training.

DFID is also launching a new research partnership with the Malala Fund and the UN Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) to help governments better harness their own resources to break down barriers to education for the most marginalised girls.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

Girls across the Commonwealth have huge potential to be the world's next generation of problem-solvers, innovators and leaders.

But too many girls are still missing out on school. That's why the UK is working with our Commonwealth partners to make sure that every girl receives the life-changing quality education they need to achieve their full potential.

Getting girls into school, and then into good employment, allows them to play a transformational role lifting their communities out of poverty, growing their economies and shaping the future of their countries.

The Girls Education Challenge is making it easier and safer for girls to get

to school, training and equipping good quality teaching staff, and working with communities and families to raise awareness of the vital importance of educating girls.

Through its new Policy Lab, the UK is also sharing its world-class education expertise, to support the Commonwealth to work together to deliver for girls.

## **Notes to editors**

DFID is committing £212 million to provide almost one million vulnerable and marginalised girls in developing countries across the Commonwealth with 12 years of quality education so that they can fulfil their potential. The second phase of DFID's Girls Education Challenge (£212 million) will:

- Ensure 920,000 girls in Commonwealth countries transition through primary and secondary school and training so that they can get good jobs, support themselves and their families, and play a role in the growth of their countries.
- Give 53,000 highly marginalised adolescent girls in Commonwealth countries, who have never attended or dropped out of school as a result of poverty, early marriage and pregnancy, disability or conflict, a second chance to learn literacy, numeracy and other vital life skills.
- Launch a new Policy Lab to bring the UK's world-class expertise to work in partnership with other countries and help Commonwealth countries deliver for girls – supporting developing countries to ultimately become self-sufficient and provide quality education. This will begin with a pilot of five countries.

DFID is also launching a new research partnership with the Malala Fund and the UN Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) to help governments better harness their own resources to break down barriers to education for the most marginalised girls so they can progress through primary and secondary education.

Through the first phase of the Girls' Education Challenge (GEC I) UK aid:

- Supported over a million marginalised girls to get a quality education. Through the second phase of the GEC we will support the vast majority of these girls to continue with their learning through secondary school and training to give them the opportunity to complete a full 12 years of education.
- Benefitted many more girls and communities through 37 different projects in 18 countries across Africa and Asia, many operating in conflict and crisis settings

This is just one part of DFID's education work. In 2015-2017 DFID supported 7.1 million children to gain a decent education. This included at least 3.3 million girls.