

UK invests in future of the Commonwealth with new education programmes

- PM pledges an additional £217 million to support girls' education across the Commonwealth
- UK is committed to getting 40 million more girls into school around the world by 2026
- Announcement comes as the PM attends meetings on youth and global challenges at the CHOGM Leaders Retreat

The UK is committing a further £217 million for three major education projects across Commonwealth countries today [Saturday], on the final day of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

The funding will support global education data gathering, teacher training in Rwanda and programmes to get girls and vulnerable children into school in Pakistan.

Today's announcements build on the UK's track record. Between 2015 and 2020, the UK helped 8.1 million girls around the world to get a decent education. As President of the G7 last year, we led a collective commitment to get 40 million more girls into school and 20 million more reading by 2026.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

There are no easy fixes in this world, but the closest thing we have to a silver bullet is girls' education.

By giving all children the chance to get at least 12 years of good schooling, we create more stable, prosperous and happy societies.

The UK is proud to be a world leader in championing girls' education. The funding announced today will help end the injustice of education inequality and give millions more children the chance of a better life.

The Prime Minister also co-hosted the Global Education Summit in London last year with President Kenyatta, raising a record \$4 billion to get children into school around the world.

Up £60 million of today's pledge will go to the Girls in Rwanda Learn (GIRL) programme. Complementing Rwanda's impressive achievements in education, the project will work with the Government to improve teachers' English language skills and provide technical support, to further improve the quality of education and ensure girls remain in school.

The biggest funding allocation – up to £130 million – will go to GOAL's Action for Learning Project to help girls and vulnerable children get back into the classroom in Pakistan. The programme will reduce barriers and schooling costs for girls, and work with the local authorities to train teachers and improve school management.

The Data for Foundational Learning Programme, which will receive £27 million, supports UNESCO to track children's learning outcomes globally. With better data on literacy and numeracy, policymakers can understand what works and share resources.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

Supporting women and girls is at the heart of UK foreign policy. Investing in girls' education is vital for a more sustainable, peaceful and prosperous future.

We are working with our international partners to recover the learning lost during the Covid pandemic, getting 40 million more girls into school and 20 million more girls reading by 2026.

Every girl deserves an education and at CHOGM we are helping to make this happen.

The UK is also playing a leading role in supporting women's economic empowerment and tackling gender-based violence across the Commonwealth. This week the Government has confirmed a further £1m in funding for the SheTrades programme, which supports women-owned businesses.

Since 2018 SheTrades Commonwealth has directly supported over 3,500 female entrepreneurs in Bangladesh, Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria, helping to generate over £32m of sales for those women-owned businesses and supporting the creation of more than 6,600 jobs.

The Prime Minister will attend the Leaders Retreat today for discussions on youth, innovation, and global challenges like rising food prices, on the final day of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.