

Empowering marginalized women with a second chance

UN Women's Second Chance Education Programme is working to enhance educational and learning pathways available to women and young women ensuring no one is left behind.

This Project is enabled through the BHP Billiton Foundation's [Education Equity Global Signature Program](#).



The marginalization and discrimination of woman is pervasive and takes on many forms. Women and young women are often the most disadvantaged despite differing contexts such as indigenous women, refugees and displaced women and girls, socially or economically isolated women in developed countries as well as developing countries.

Today, an estimated half a billion women are illiterate. Tens of millions of girls are also unable to access education around the world and 48 per cent of 'out-of-school' girls are likely to never enroll in school.

This is depriving them of the knowledge, skills and opportunities to find decent work, participate fully in society and improve their quality of life.

Achieving education equality

The scale of the global education challenge faced by marginalized girls, young women and women alike is enormous. This reflects the socio-economic and gender-based barriers to education faced by girls and young women, including poverty, early marriage and pregnancy, geographic isolation, harmful social norms, discriminatory laws, unsafe learning environments, poor infrastructure and learning content. However, through context specific, affordable, scalable learning and employment pathways, the world's most disadvantaged girls and women will have a second chance to achieve quality learning, entrepreneurship and employment outcomes.

The UN Women's Second Chance Education and Vocational Learning Programme aims to bring about transformative change in the lives of these vulnerable women and young women. This will ensure no one is left behind.

Investing in education for resilience

Educating a woman has a multiplier effect in society with benefits resonating to her family, her community and beyond. A woman is likely to invest her earnings back into her family. Additionally, an educated woman is better equipped to educate her own children and is more likely to send her children to school. This contributes to improved education rates, economic growth and development in the long term.



The Second Chance Education and Vocational Learning Programme targets vulnerable women and young women who have missed out on an education. The programme leverages technology to provide women with access to learning, improves pathways to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities tailored to individual needs as learners and their future as earners.

In order to achieve this, the programme will seek to address the barriers that caused the women to drop out of education in the first place; and to break down harmful social norms and barriers preventing women from pursuing meaningful employment and actively participating in society.

Through these efforts, the programme will work towards enhancing gender-balance policy and fiscal changes at local and national levels, ensuring an enabling environment for long lasting change is created and sustained.

The three-year pilot project aims to unlock opportunities for women and young women across ten diverse countries including Australia, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia*, Ethiopia*, India, Jordan, Kenya*, Mexico and South Africa* in an effort to break the cycle of disadvantage.

Enabling education equity

BHP Billiton Foundation's Education Equity Global Signature Program was developed to catalyze systemic change in education, with a focus on improving outcomes for young people. We do this by driving changes in education systems, through investment, engagement and advocacy.

BHP Billiton Foundation supports projects which complement and enhance existing education initiatives. These projects are underpinned by two overarching principles to deliver maximum reach and impact:

- Inclusion: improving access to quality education for the most disadvantaged young people
- Innovation: using the transformative power of evidence-based innovation to disrupt current trends driving disparity of education outcomes.

The Foundation believes that all children deserve services that support their development; education systems which meet their diverse needs; advocates who challenge the injustices they face; and access to the tools they need to navigate and lead the world they'll inherit.

With the support of the Foundation, the Second Chance Education Programme commenced in 2018. It will focus on six pilot countries – Chile, Mexico, India, Jordan, Cameroon and Australia – which display a diverse range of barriers, demographics, and contexts.

For more information on the BHP Billiton Foundation and the Education Equity Global Signature Program, visit bhp.com/foundation.

'We must ensure that every door to the education of girls and women remains open across the life cycle; that girls and women who drop out of education have second chances; that they have the relevant skills to transition to productive lives and full citizenship; and that the empowerment of girls and women becomes an inseparable part of the return on our investments in education.'

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women