



**GIVE GIRLS  
A CHANCE**  
Educate. Mentor. Empower

## Background

Independently, the co-founders of Give Girls A Chance (Dr. Hauwa Balami and Uloma Ogba) had dreamed of establishing an NGO in Nigeria as a means of giving back to the country that they both love and cherish. Introduced by a common friend, both women discovered their shared passion for contributing to Nigeria's development and decided to combine their efforts to turn their dream into a reality. The decision to focus on education, and more specifically girl-child education, was made after an intensive research exercise revealed this to be a major challenge facing Nigeria, which could potentially help address. They were cognizant of the fact that the quality education they had received at both the primary and secondary school level in Nigeria, had laid a solid foundation that had enabled them to compete effectively at the tertiary level and to succeed in their chosen professions. Lending further credence to this decision was the fact that when they profiled a cross-section of some of the most influential women in Nigeria, the majority of them credited their education as being the key to their success, professionally and personally.

## The current state of education in Nigeria

Did you know:

- Nigeria has the highest population of out-of-school children in the world. 1 in 3 Nigerian children is out of school.
- Less than 50% of all girls of primary and secondary school age are currently enrolled in school.
- Less than 50% of all girls enrolled in primary and secondary schools succeed in completing their education.
- Across Nigeria, enrollment in tertiary institutions remains heavily male dominated.
- The literacy rates among 15-24-year-old women is 58% (compared to 75% for men in the same age bracket)

***These statistics are an indication that the Nigerian school system is failing to adequately educate a large percentage of its youth, particularly girls.***

## What are the reasons behind the declining state of education in Nigeria?

There are a myriad of reasons behind the current state of education in Nigeria and many of them are complex and intertwined. Some of the most prevalent reasons include:

- Government inefficiencies
- Overall neglect of the education sector
- Poor infrastructure of schools
- Lack of adequate access to schools
- Low welfare and shortage of teachers
- Low levels of awareness of the importance of education



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### **Give Girls A Chance — Our vision, mission, and approach**

Our vision is a Nigeria where every girl of primary and secondary school age is enrolled in school and on track to graduate successfully and continue onto tertiary education, if she chooses to.

The primary mission of Give Girls A Chance is to increase access to quality education for girls across Nigeria. We aim to do this by addressing issues related to lack of access, low levels of awareness of the importance of education and poor infrastructure of educational institutions.

Our approach is to provide comprehensive support to girls between the ages of 10-19 years from low-income families as well as to systematically develop the schools in the communities in which we work.

We provide comprehensive support to girls in three main ways:

- through community and family engagement
- by providing need-based scholarships and
- by providing mentoring

We go into communities where these girls live to engage with their families and advocate for the importance of education, especially girl child education.

We provide a variety of need-based scholarships to cover the costs of tuition, uniforms, books and fees to mitigate the financial barriers that prevent girls from enrolling in primary and secondary schools.

We provide mentoring opportunities by linking girls to qualified affiliates of Give Girls A Chance. We realize that beyond having access to finance, there may be additional factors, of a socio-cultural or psychological nature, that have an impact on the girls overall well-being and their ability to do well in school.

Beyond providing support to the girls in the program, we realize that some work needs to be done to develop the schools that we partner with to enable them improve the quality of the services they offer to the girls in our program, and indeed to the rest of the students enrolled in those schools. At Give Girls A Chance, there will be a particular focus on technology and we will work to equip schools with computer facilities and initiate coding training programs that will equip the girls with technological skills to enable them compete with their peers across the country and the continent. We also plan to develop initiatives around book, clothing and food drives aimed at raising awareness of the needs of the schools and their students.

#### **Our approach is holistic and integrated**

When it comes to improving access to education, we realize it is not a straightforward issue but rather there are many intertwined factors involved. This is why we have chosen to adopt a holistic approach that focuses not just on the girls themselves, but on their families, their communities and their schools as well and integrates the efforts of appropriate parties beyond Give Girls A Chance such as mentors.



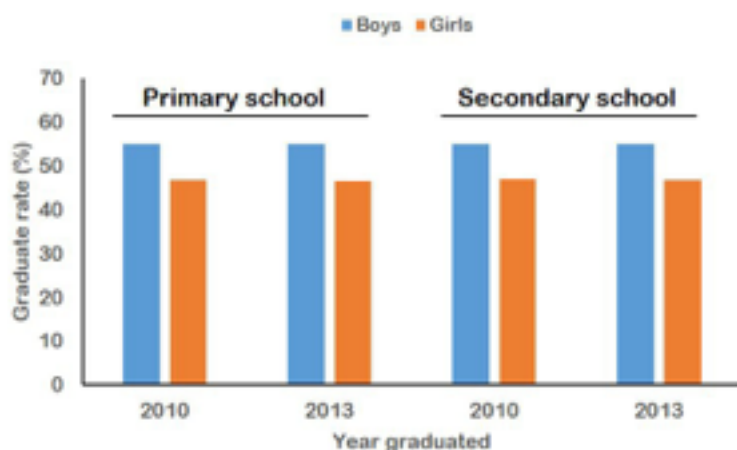
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## Why focus on girl education?

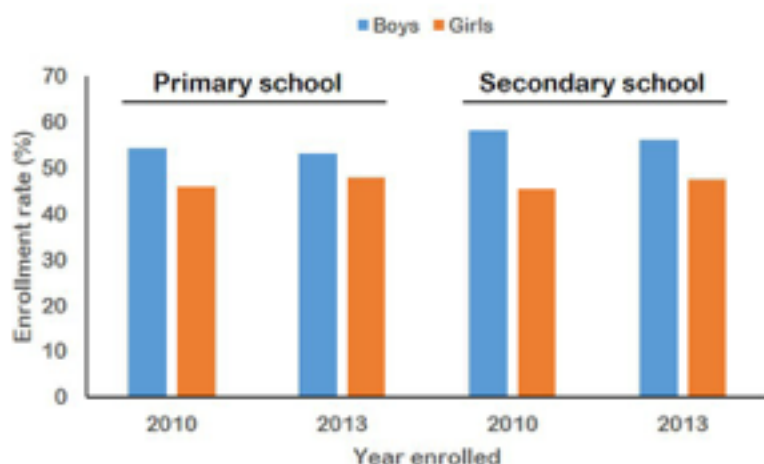
As an organization, Give Girls A Chance is committed to working towards the achievement of a world characterized by gender equality. While gender equality and women's empowerment have advanced in recent decades, there is still a lot of room left for improvement. For instance, in Nigeria, the female Human Development Index (HDI) value is 0.468 in contrast with 0.556 for males. The Gender Development Index (GDI), which is an aggregation of the HDI values for males and females, measures gender inequalities in achievement in three basic dimensions of human development: health (measured by female and male life expectancy at birth), education (measured by female and male expected years of schooling for children and mean years for adults aged 25 years and older), and command over economic resources (measured by female and male estimated Gross National Income (GNI) per capita).

What this tells us as an organization is that, by focusing on improving education for girls and working on addressing the factors related to access to quality education, we can play a significant role in helping to close the gender gap that exists between males and females in Nigeria.

Also, when looking at the enrollment and graduation rates for males and females in Nigeria at the primary and secondary school level, it is evident that on average, and even more so in specific regions of the country, there are more male students enrolled in school and a greater percentage of male students are actually staying enrolled in and graduating from educational institutions across the country (see Figures 1 and 2)



**Figure 1. Graduation rates for boys/ girls at primary and secondary school level**



**Figure 2. Enrollment rates for boys/ girls at primary and secondary school level**



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Research indicates that girls with at least a secondary education tend to lead healthier and happier lives, relative to those that did not receive an education. Girls with an education are more productive workers and have higher incomes, they tend to marry later (the median marrying age in Nigeria is 18), are more deliberate when it comes to family planning. Women with an education tend to invest more into their children's education and immunize their children 50% more than mothers who are not educated. In addition, AIDS spreads twice as quickly among uneducated girls than among girls with education. Simply put, girl's education is the single most powerful investment to further women's development and to shape a better future for Nigeria.

### **Give Girls A Chance 2020 Targets**

By the year 2020, we aim to see an additional 200 girls stay enrolled in and graduate from primary and secondary schools, and hopefully continue on to higher education. Through our holistic approach, we aim to nurture a group of girls who will not only transform, but play an active role in society as role models. In addition, we aim to improve the operational capacity of at least 10 primary and secondary schools across Nigeria to enable them improve the quality of services they offer to all of their students.

### **What we need to reach our targets**

- Donors & Sponsors
- Strategic Partnerships
- Support from individuals and community groups in and outside Nigeria

### **How you can help**

- Visit our website [www.givegirlsachanceng.org](http://www.givegirlsachanceng.org) , like us on Facebook (@givegirlsachanceng) , follow us on Twitter and Instagram (@ggac\_ng) and help us spread the word
- Make a donation
- We would like to partner with you!

*"If we educate a boy, we educate one person.  
If we educate a girl, we educate a family —  
and a whole nation." — African proverb*