

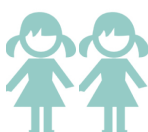
WHAT'S UP, GIRLS?!

PROJECT PROFILE

Context

The education situation in South Sudan is very challenging. At the start of the 'What's Up, Girls?!' project in Rumbek in 2013, only half of all primary school-age children in South Sudan were in school. Drop-out rates were high and few children made it to secondary school. There were gender disparities at all levels. Only around one quarter of girls aged 6-18 enrolled in primary schools, often due to a negative mindset towards girls' education. There was a significant shortage of trained teachers and many schools taught in open air or temporary structures.

3.361 marginalised girls reached



4% + in numeracy scores*
172% + in literacy scores*



89.7% teachers showed increased quality of teaching



**Differences in average scores of girls in project area from baseline (2013) to endline (2017).*

Project approach

What's Up Girls?! aimed to improve the access and quality of girls' education in Rumbek East County in South Sudan by helping girls to complete a full cycle of primary education and improve learning outcomes by the end of the project. This was done by a combination of interventions, including the following:

- Intensive community dialogues to challenge harmful socio-cultural practices and improve the mind-set towards (girls') education (What's Up, Parents?!)
- Life skills training for the girls and boys (What's Up, Girls & Boys?!)
- Introducing 'School Mothers' to track and coach girls
- A teacher training that also included a component on addressing the needs of girls in class (What's Up, Teacher?!)
- Engagement of other stakeholders including NGOs, churches and local government

The 'What's Up, Girls?!' project was funded by Girls' Education Challenge (GEC), UK Aid. The project has started in 2013 and completed in 2017.

The project aimed to improve the access and quality of girls' education in Rumbek East County in South Sudan

Main results & insights

What's Up, Parents?!

The community dialogues emphasised the importance of girls' education. This initiative resulted in parents being more supportive of education for girls in their communities. 81.3% of parents said they were committed to sending their girls to school and 70.8% said they wanted their girls to stay in school beyond primary level. Girls impacted by the project had a 43.1% increase in enrolment.



What's Up, Girls & Boys?!

This has enabled girls in schools to develop self-confidence, self-expression, decision-making and conflict management skills. The life skills training aimed to enhance girls own skills as well as educate the communities on girls' education. 81.7% of girls and boys who attended the life-skill sessions said they had changed their behaviour: girls are more confident in class, boys see girls more as equals and there is less fighting in schools. The project noted increased retention as a result of this.

"The ACROSS team has learnt a lot from the partnership with Help a Child. They have been so committed to make sure the project completed its lifetime and even struggle for extension. We thank Help a Child so much and we have enjoyed partnership with them"

- Lucy Aceng, ACROSS South Sudan

School Mothers

The introduction of 'School Mothers' helped to meet the lack of support for girls, increasing girls' attendance at school. They addressed the lack of female teachers in school by holding weekly meetings to address challenges to girls' attendance (including personal hygiene), engaging parents to ensure girls are in school and by conducting roll calls. 96.8% of girls at the end of the project said that they saw School Mothers as female role models, influencing them to go and stay in school. These activities could be enhanced by also using educated girl role models in schools to talk to and inspire girls.

"It has been such a privilege to work with the HaC team. Your dedication and positive values shine through in everything you do."

- Sara Peterson, Portfolio Manager UK Aid

What's Up, Teacher?!

Teacher training has resulted in girls receiving better teaching and support in schools. Girls reported that 89.7% of teachers showed an increase in the quality of their teaching. Additional resources such as the digital audio players have also helped to improve teaching standards, especially in English. Girls in GEC-supported classes performed better than those in control classes in literacy. Further teacher training should be conducted to build this capacity even further.



Contact us: www.helpachild.org

