



Until we are all equal

TOP: Eunice (at left) and Kumba are classmates in the teacher-training program. BOTTOM: Kumba (at right) encourages a fellow student as they prepare for exams.



Second Chances

Teacher Training for Inclusive Girls' Education (TTIGE) in Sierra Leone



Creating role models and opportunities through teacher training for young women

Project Summary

Female teachers break barriers to education and equality.

Only 28% of teachers in Sierra Leone are women, yet it's been shown that when girls have female teachers, they are more likely to attend school and excel in their studies.

The Teacher Training for Inclusive Girls' Education (TTIGE) project in Sierra Leone provides training and mentorship so young women can earn their teaching certifications and valuable classroom experience. "When you can do something on your own for the future, you feel proud," says Eunice, one of TTIGE's teachers in training. Teachers like Eunice, in turn, help address the critical shortage of trained teachers and female educators in Sierra Leone.

Currently, only 16% of children in Sierra Leone meet the expected literacy level for their grade, and 50% of students are unable to write their name by Grade 4. TTIGE is developing confident educators who can help set a different course – because, as Eunice says, "when a woman is educated, a whole nation can be educated." (Read more about Eunice on page 4.)



Participants in teacher-training classes

THE FACTS

WHO: Participants: 210 young women (ages 18 to 26) living in rural communities, including young mothers who had previously dropped out of school. **Funders:** Dubai Cares and private Canadian supporters.

WHAT: The project seeks to provide young women from rural communities with an accessible opportunity to become qualified teachers.

WHERE: Kailahun district, Sierra Leone

WHEN: September 2020 to August 2024

WHY: The TTIGE project aims to:

- Increase the number of qualified women teachers in rural communities.
- Increase economic opportunities for young women and improve learning experiences for rural students, particularly girls.
- By placing trained teachers in their own communities, schools can more quickly adapt and recover from crises that disrupt children's education, like school closures.

BY THE NUMBERS

Project Highlights

“

The project trains young women who now serve as mentors and role models in their communities for the upcoming generation.”

– Hawa Sia Alpha, Plan International Sierra Leone’s district coordinator for TTIGE

65% of the women who have completed the teacher-training certification program are working as teachers. Program participants have also launched community initiatives like discussion groups for girls and local radio broadcasts to promote girls’ education and leadership.

14,801 children are in classrooms supported by student teachers.

98% of student teachers passed their first-semester examinations in Year 3 of the program.

203 of the 210 young women in the current TTIGE program are scheduled to complete their training this year – a 96% retention rate.

97.6% of student teachers felt they exceeded expectations for preparation, classroom management and teaching methods in their classroom placements.

81% of teachers trained through this model have passed the final exam to become certified teachers (compared with a national average pass rate of 67%).



Child care is provided to the young mothers participating in the program so they can concentrate on their studies.

A STORY OF CHANGE

A Class Act!

Eunice was able to return to school, and now she's on a mission to ensure other girls get that chance.

When Eunice left school, she was living out a story that's pretty common for many young women in Kailahun, Sierra Leone, though it didn't feel that way to her.

One of five children in a family she describes as "poor," Eunice quit school when her mother died in 2019, leaving her as the primary earner for her family. "When you become a [school] dropout, you feel very much sad," she says. "You feel isolated." She became a mother herself when she was 18.

In rural Sierra Leone, 75% of girls don't continue their education after primary school. None of Eunice's siblings went to school. Eunice's experience was the norm.

But in 2021, alongside 209 other young women, Eunice was invited to join TTIGE. The project offered study

groups where tutors helped her improve her reading and writing and prepared her for the entrance exam for the teacher-training certification program. She and the other trainees received stipends, mentorship and child care to support their success and remove financial barriers. They took part in practical teaching placements in rural primary schools close to home, giving them real-life in-class experience.

The program offered its participants a different path to opportunity than most women encounter in rural Sierra Leone.

"Some people don't believe in female education," adds Eunice, "but we are trying our best to convince them that it's important. Having more female teachers shows that women can do everything."

Eunice is on track to complete the program in August 2024.



When a woman is educated, a whole nation can be educated."

– Eunice, student teacher



Scan or click the QR code to watch the mini-documentary *Second Acts*, starring Eunice and Kumba.



Eunice says her friends tell her she has become a "changed person" since she returned to school to become a teacher.

SPOTLIGHT

Bold Moves

Mariama, 26, grew up in Kailahun, Sierra Leone, a community where most girls don't graduate from secondary school.

Mariama was two credits short when, at the age of 15, she was forced to get married, which put an end to her schooling. She held out hope that she would one day continue her education, but three children later, her husband moved to Guinea and Mariama became the sole breadwinner for the family.

"The community and some family members no longer granted me respect," shared Mariama. "I became a laughingstock as a single mother left to fend for the family."

The TTIGE project offered Mariama a way forward. The stipend she receives supplements her other earnings while she completes the training program. Once she graduates, she wants to work as a teacher. And, as she progresses in her training, Mariama's confidence is blossoming alongside her academic and teaching skills.

"I'm very bold now," she says. "I express myself at home as well as in community meetings. My aim is to always stand against anything that hinders girls from climbing the educational ladder."

To do that, Mariama started a club where girls can discuss important topics that affect their lives, like menstrual hygiene and early marriage. "I am motivated to support other young girls to achieve their own lifelong ambitions," she says.



Mariama, a student teacher in the TTIGE program



"Some men say that a women's education ends in the kitchen, and I totally disagree with them all," Kumba (right) shares with fellow student Eunice.

DID YOU KNOW?

➤ Half of people over the age of 15 in Sierra Leone cannot read or write.

➤ While 82% of children enrol in primary school, only 36% make it to secondary school. This number drops to 18% for completion of secondary school –

and the majority of those are students living in urban areas.

➤ Adolescent pregnancy and child marriage in Sierra Leone are among the highest globally (40% of girls are married by 18), resulting in an estimated 20% of girls dropping out of school.

Thank you for your support.

Your dedication is offering young women in Sierra Leone an opportunity that can change the course of their lives and contribute a huge benefit to their communities.



Click or scan the QR code to learn how you can support girls until we are all equal.

WHAT'S NEW AT PLAN

Our Shared Dream

We see the world as it is and the world as it could be. No matter how complex the challenges, a better future is possible.

It takes **determination**.

It takes **optimism**.

It takes **vision**.

Our “moon shot” vision is equality for girls everywhere. By improving the lives of girls, you improve the lives of everyone in the family and the community. That understanding, which we know you share, is at the heart of our fundraising campaign, Until We Are All Equal. When you support this campaign, you’re trusting us to identify the greatest threats to equality, especially for girls, and respond to them as they arise.

Just going to school every day is impossible for many girls, with one in six living in a conflict zone. That’s why, right now, about 120 million girls are missing out on an education. What’s more, many girls – 12 million every year – are forced into early marriage, placing them at a heightened risk of dying from complications of early pregnancy or childbirth.

There are 500 million girls alive on our planet today, each filled with promise and potential and with their whole futures ahead of them. How do you transform the world? Start by investing in girls.



About Plan International Canada

Plan International Canada is a member of a global organization dedicated to advancing children’s rights and equality for girls. Plan International has been building powerful partnerships with and for children for over 85 years and is now active in more than 80 countries. We stand with children, especially girls, wherever they are oppressed, exploited, left behind or not equally valued. We’re determined optimists, and we will continue to persevere until we are all equal.

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