



**RIGHT TO PLAY**  
PROTECT. EDUCATE. EMPOWER.

## Impact of the GREAT Project

### Project Description

The Gender-Responsive Education and Transformation project (GREAT) strives to improve children's academic, social, and emotional skills in Ghana, Mozambique, and Rwanda from 2018–2023. This report covers the project's successes up to its midpoint in 2021.

GREAT aims to improve the lives of primary school children by incorporating gender-responsive play-based techniques into the classroom, and engaging parents and caregivers to be more involved in children's learning.

By the midway point reported on here, project staff had trained 1,097 teachers in 139 schools in Ghana, 1,286 teachers in 138 schools in Mozambique, and 1,089 teachers at 89 schools in Rwanda.

### Context

Despite the GREAT project's adaptation to support children and teachers during school closures, the COVID-19 pandemic has made the educational barriers children in Ghana, Mozambique, and Rwanda face more severe. Schools closed for 57 weeks in Ghana, 53 weeks in Mozambique (the entire 2020–2021 school year), and 41 weeks in Rwanda.

This left teachers rushing to make up for lost time, and in many cases falling back on older and more familiar, but less effective, teaching methods. School closures also limited the exposure children had to improved teaching and other supports, pushing more responsibility onto parents and caregivers to support them to keep learning at home.

### KEY RESULTS

- 1 Girls' literacy improved**  
73% of girls in GREAT schools in Ghana are showing improved reading, compared to 60% in other schools. On average, girls in GREAT are reading seven more words per minute.
- 2 Girls show more leadership**  
In Ghana, 89% of girls in GREAT schools are showing high levels of leadership skills mid-way through the project, compared to 75% at project start.
- 3 Better classroom experiences**  
Rwanda and Ghana saw improved use of gender-responsive play-based learning. 46% of teachers in Rwanda's GREAT schools used these methods in their classrooms at the project's midpoint, up from 10% at the start.
- 4 Improved parental engagement in learning**  
In all three countries, parents are engaging more with their children's learning. In Ghana, 43% of parents are engaging in at least four activities that promote learning by the project's midpoint, compared to 37% of parents at the start.
- 5 Corporal punishment reduced**  
In Mozambique, 52% of children in GREAT schools are reporting corporal punishment in their lessons by the project's midpoint, compared to 66% at the project's start.

### KEY LEARNINGS

- 1** Girls' clubs in Ghana improved leadership opportunities and literacy for girls. The model should be scaled up and adapted for use in other contexts.
- 2** Gender-responsive play-based learning improves classroom experiences, which positively affect children's outcomes. School belonging (in Ghana and Rwanda) and attendance (in Ghana) improved.
- 3** Gender-responsive play-based learning shows good results for girls, but new strategies to improve teachers' practices are needed to achieve stronger results for boys.
- 4** Gender-responsive play-based learning practices need to target specific life skills, especially when children are at risk of their skills eroding due to crises like the pandemic.
- 5** Innovation is needed to change corporal punishment practices embedded in the project's contexts. Other stakeholder groups must be educated and mobilized to change behaviour to replace corporal punishment with positive discipline.





**RIGHT TO PLAY**  
PROTECT. EDUCATE. EMPOWER.



## Changing Minds in Rwanda: Emiline's Story

Emiline is one of more than 400 Right To Play-trained volunteers in Rwanda who led an awareness campaign in late 2020 as part of GREAT. The campaign spanned 200 villages in rural Rwanda, where girls struggle to access education. Usually, community members would gather at local schools for awareness-building activities. But COVID-19 restrictions forced the volunteers to change their approach.

So Emiline and fellow volunteers took to the streets, using megaphones to broadcast messages about gender equality. During the three-week campaign, they spoke to close to 20,000 parents, caregivers, and community members about the barriers girls face in attending school, like being asked to do far more chores at home than boys, which can force them to miss class.

"We have been encouraging parents to treat their children equally. It is important to let both girls and boys participate in household chores and give them all enough time to play and complete their studies," Emiline says.

**Over five years, the GREAT project will help improve academic, social, and emotional learning for more than 219,000 children.**



In partnership with  
**Canada**