

## **Strategic Partnerships – Second funding round**

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

Issue date: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2013

#### **Introduction**

As part of the Girls' Education Challenge, the second funding round of Strategic Partnerships will provide up to £10 million of match-funding per partnership to support private sector initiatives that have the potential to transform learning opportunities for marginalised girls in Africa and Asia, and in turn, advance both economic progress and development.

The Girls' Education Challenge is funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). DFID's core focus is to reduce poverty through helping to drive economic growth and create jobs for the poorest and most vulnerable people. DFID recognises the important role that the private sector can play in development, which is reflected in the new UK Secretary of State for International Development's priorities as well as in its large Private Sector Development (PSD) department.

Girls' education has one of the highest development returns on investment and is a strategic priority for DFID. Although the situation around the world is improving for girls, much more work needs to be done. More background information is available in the Girls' Education Challenge Business Case summary available at [www.dfid.gov.uk/gec](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/gec). The Girls' Education Challenge represents a huge opportunity to forge ground breaking alliances with the private sector and to think creatively about how together DFID and businesses can help girls go to school, stay in school and learn.

Successful projects in the Girls' Education Challenge will share the following key principles, and you are advised to consider these when you develop your ideas. More information is provided in the FAQs below.

- DFID's ultimate goal for the Girls' Education Challenge is to increase the number of girls in primary and secondary school, ensure that they stay in school, and improve their learning. The first key principle to emphasise is, therefore, the importance of **retention and learning** outcomes.
- The Girls' Education Challenge is focused on benefitting **marginalised girls - gender equality in education at all levels** is the underlying rationale. This includes long-term community-level changes in attitudes towards marginalised girls. Therefore, initiatives should seek to raise awareness about, and address barriers to, girls' education by engaging families, men, boys, and other relevant stakeholders.
- In addition to directly improving girls' learning outcomes, the Girls' Education Challenge seeks to support initiatives that will maximise the **wider health, social and economic benefits** of girls' education, including improving marginalised girls' life skills and future employment prospects.
- It is important to look at the **sustainability** of DFID's investment so eventually it no longer needs to invest. Networks, lesson learning, etc, need to be established to achieve sustainable initiatives.
- DFID is interested in seeing new girls' education solutions that respond to local contexts with the potential for impact at scale. **Innovation** is therefore also important.
- The **theory of change** underpinning the anticipated outcomes and impacts brought about by the partnership needs to be clearly articulated and evidenced.

- The marginalised girls who will improve their learning as a result of the initiative need to be clearly identified and tracked. DFID needs robust evidence so that it can increase its knowledge of those girls' education initiatives that work well - along with those that do not - so that it can invest government funding wisely. DFID therefore wants to see strong **monitoring and evaluation** components in all Girls' Education Challenge projects.
- All initiatives must be able to demonstrate **value for money** in terms of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

It will be important that all Strategic Partnerships have the requisite technical expertise and experience to implement partnership activities successfully, as well as to monitor and evaluate the progress of these activities. However, we do not expect Lead Partners to have all the answers themselves - DFID is keen to attract multi-stakeholder coalitions where Lead Partners work with NGOs (local or national), local private sector organisations, social enterprises, universities, community groups and others in order to combine the specific expertise, experience and networks of different organisations in new and creative ways. The Fund Manager is also available to support Lead Partners in brokering relationships and identifying potential coalition members.

In this funding round of Strategic Partnerships, in addition to the eligibility and selection criteria, there is a particular focus on receiving applications from the following:

- Organisations that intend to implement activities in Burma and/or Occupied Palestinian Territories;
- National/regional companies with strong local presence in the proposed countries of implementation, or international companies that will engage with local private sector companies;
- British companies, as part of DFID's role in promoting British private sector investment in developing countries to drive economic growth and create jobs;
- Proposals that leverage the applicant's core business activities rather than philanthropic initiatives;
- Organisations that propose to use innovative technological solutions to address barriers to girls' education; and
- Proposals that will develop solutions for measuring learning in a simple, efficient, and effective way, particularly at higher grades (i.e. secondary rather than primary levels).

The FAQs that follow are designed to help you to decide whether to apply to Strategic Partnerships, and to guide you through the application process itself. The questions are divided into the following categories:

- About Strategic Partnerships
- Application and selection process
- Designing your partnership
- Match-funding
- Monitoring & evaluation (M&E)
- Contracting.

Strategic Partnerships is intentionally designed to allow for as much flexibility as possible, in order to allow the most innovative and effective solutions and partnerships with DFID to develop. The Fund

Manager will actively help to broker relationships between DFID, Lead Partners, and their coalitions, and will work directly with applicants with high potential ideas to help them develop propositions that meet the standards required by DFID and the Girls' Education Challenge. Certain aspects of the Strategic Partnerships process (e.g. timelines) may be subject to change. Relevant parties will be notified of such changes at the earliest possible opportunity.

If you have any further questions, please write to the Fund Manager at the following e-mail address: [girlseducationchallenge@uk.pwc.com](mailto:girlseducationchallenge@uk.pwc.com).

### **Key dates**

The table below sets out key dates and activities in the Strategic Partnerships process. Please note that these dates are subject to change at any time by the Fund Manager.

Dates (2013 – 14)	Activities
30 <sup>th</sup> April	Second funding round open for receipt of Partnership Ideas
24 <sup>th</sup> June	Deadline for receipt of Partnership Ideas
June – August	Fund Manager and DFID review of Partnership Ideas
September	Notification of which Lead Partners have been selected to submit a Partnership Proposal. Those that have been selected will be sent guidance on Partnership Proposal requirements so they can begin developing their proposals.
12 <sup>th</sup> September	Workshop in London for Lead Partners to provide guidance from the Fund Manager and DFID on developing Partnership Proposals
15 <sup>th</sup> November	Deadline for receipt of Partnership Proposals
November - January	Fund Manager and DFID review of Partnership Proposals
February	Notification to Lead Partners of which Partnership Proposals have been selected to contracting stage
April	Launch of second round Strategic Partnerships (subject to successful contracting)

### **About Strategic Partnerships**

#### **1. What do you mean by marginalised girls?**

Marginalised girls are defined as girls who have either had no access to education, or have dropped out of school, or are in danger of doing so. This is an intentionally broad definition so as to give Lead

Partners flexibility in designing their propositions. However, it will be important for Lead Partners to articulate clearly in what way the girls they are focusing upon are marginalised and how the partnership will help them overcome the barriers that prevent them from learning. In the Strategic Partnerships window, there is a focus on adolescent marginalised girls i.e. those aged 10 – 19.

## 2. What do you mean by 'Strategic Partnership'?

A Strategic Partnership will be established between DFID and successful Lead Partner organisations.

DFID is keen to encourage an integrated and multi-disciplinary response to the challenge, so Lead Partners may - although they are not obliged to - involve a coalition of diverse organisations in the design and delivery of the project. DFID is particularly keen to attract global businesses as Lead Partners, working with NGOs (local or national NGOs), social enterprises, universities, community groups and others in order to combine the specific expertise, experience and networks of different organisations in new and creative ways.

One of DFID's development policy priorities is to promote responsible British private sector investment in developing countries as an engine for driving economic growth and creating jobs. Therefore, the Girls' Education Challenge actively welcomes proposals from British companies.

There is also a particular focus on local business linkages within this funding round. As a result, multinational Lead Partners without a local presence in proposed countries of implementation are encouraged to demonstrate in their Partnership Idea how and why they will engage with local national/regional companies. Furthermore, applications from national/regional companies within the focus countries are actively encouraged.

## 3. Has DFID worked with the private sector before?

Yes. DFID has a Private Sector Development (PSD) department that works with private sector organisations to maximise the role of business in development. DFID's work focuses on promoting responsible and successful business, accelerating growth by creating an enabling environment for businesses, and developing new approaches to businesses that generate profits and have a strong development impact. DFID has a number of funds where the private sector can either access funding or work in partnership with DFID, including:

- The Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund (AECF) offers grants on a competitive basis to private sector companies to support new and innovative business models in Africa. Since launching in mid-2008, AECF has run fourteen rounds of its competition, supporting new investment in the agribusiness, renewable energy and adaptation to climate change technologies, rural financial services, and media and information sectors. Over 4,230 applications have been received and 89 projects have been awarded funding (commitment US\$65m). A further US\$24m has been committed to these projects by the private sector. For more information, please visit [www.aecfafrica.org](http://www.aecfafrica.org).
- The Business Innovation Facility (BIF) helps the development and uptake of inclusive business models by companies in developing countries through providing practical, hands-on advice and technical expertise to support companies. BIF draws on a global network to find technical experts who can assess routes to market, develop supply chains, "stress test" a business model and tackle a host of other bottlenecks that companies face. Currently, the Facility supports businesses operating in Bangladesh, India, Malawi, Nigeria and Zambia, and also supports knowledge exchange on inclusive business at the international level through 'The Practitioner Hub' ([www.businessinnovationfacility.org](http://www.businessinnovationfacility.org)).

For more information on DFID's work with the private sector, please visit:

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Work-with-us/Funding-opportunities/Business/>

#### **4. What will DFID's role in the partnership be?**

DFID views Strategic Partnerships as a mutually beneficial opportunity for the UK government and private sector to collaborate on shared goals. DFID is eager to support organisations whose goals and objectives are aligned with its own and those of the Girls' Education Challenge, even if the organisation has not previously worked in the education sector before, through knowledge sharing and providing technical advice where relevant. However, DFID will not engage in project delivery/day-to-day implementation of Strategic Partnerships. DFID's specific role in each partnership will be determined on a case-by-case basis, and the emphasis is on the Lead Partner to communicate clearly what role they envisage DFID will play in order to achieve the partnership's objectives.

#### **5. What is the role of the Fund Manager?**

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, in alliance with FHI 360, Nathan Associates Ltd and Social Development Direct Ltd, has been appointed by DFID as the Fund Manager for the Girls' Education Challenge (the 'Fund Manager').

The Fund Manager is responsible for managing the Girls' Education Challenge throughout application, selection, and implementation. The Fund Manager will also monitor all projects funded by the Girls' Education Challenge throughout the lifetime of the programme. The Fund Manager's responsibilities include:

- Managing the application and selection process, and making recommendations to DFID on which projects should receive Girls' Education Challenge funding;
- Signing Contracts with Lead Partners as agent for DFID;
- Monitoring and tracking the progress of each initiative toward the achievement of their targets;
- Providing support and guidance to Lead Partners in the design and implementation of their partnership to maximise the impact of the Girls' Education Challenge;
- Proactively working with the Lead Partners to identify opportunities to maximise impact and share lessons across Strategic Partnerships; and
- Working closely with DFID (including DFID in-country advisers) on all aspects of the Girls' Education Challenge.

The Girls' Education Challenge is unique in how closely DFID has been working with the Fund Manager. All documentation and guidance issued by the Fund Manager has been designed in consultation with DFID. Applicants should therefore feel confident that their interactions with the Fund Manager reflect DFID's views, and the Fund Manager should always be the first point of contact.

#### **6. Who can be a Lead Partner?**

The Strategic Partnerships window seeks to attract match funding primarily derived from *for-profit, commercial* businesses. Lead Partners therefore need to be:

- For-profit, commercial businesses of any size, including multinational companies (MNCs), national or regional companies, and for-profit social enterprises; or
- Foundations that derive the majority of their funding from one or more for-profit, commercial businesses.

Greater emphasis will be placed on companies who have not partnered with DFID before, although those that have worked with DFID may also apply.

Greater emphasis will also be placed on Lead Partners that are national or regional companies with strong business presence in one or more of the 21 Girls' Education Challenge focus countries.

## 7. Do you have eligibility criteria for Strategic Partnerships?

Yes, all proposed Strategic Partnerships must satisfy all of the following eligibility criteria:

- The Lead Partner is a for-profit, commercial business or a foundation that derives the majority of its funding from for-profit, commercial business(es).
- Partnerships will be implemented in one or more of the 21 Girls' Education Challenge focus countries.
- Lead Partners are expected to provide match-funding that is at least an equal amount to that provided by DFID. The match-funding can be a combination of in-kind and financial contributions. All DFID funds will be disbursed by March 2016.
- Partnerships will have a measurable impact on the quality of marginalised girls' education.
- Partnerships will address barriers to girls' education such as cost, distance, lack of appropriate staff and/or resources, social/community norms etc.

Organisations that are **not eligible** to apply as a Lead Partner include:

- Governmental agencies and departments, including donor organisations; and
- Inter-governmental organisations (e.g. UN agencies).

## **Application and selection process**

### 8. How much funding can we apply for?

The Girls' Education Challenge will provide match-funding of up to £10 million for any one Strategic Partnership initiative. The minimum amount of Girls' Education Challenge you can apply for is £1 million. Please note that Lead Partners will need to commit at least 1:1 match-funding, of which a significant proportion (50% or more in most cases) must be in cash. Please see section below for more information on match-funding.

The average level of DFID funding available is £2 million to £5 million *per annum* i.e. a two year partnership can access a minimum of £4 million and a maximum of £10 million.

### 9. How long should partnerships last?

All Girls' Education Challenge activities must be completed by March 2016. Partnership initiatives should have a sustainable exit from Girls' Education Challenge funding.

## 10. Where can I implement the partnership?

Strategic Partnerships must be implemented in one or more of the 21 Girls' Education Challenge focus countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burma, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

There is a particular emphasis on partnerships that would be implemented in Burma and/or Occupied Palestinian Territories.

## 11. I have applied to both the Girls' Education Challenge Step Change Window and the Innovation Window. Can I also apply to Strategic Partnerships?

Yes, there is no restriction on organisations that have already applied for funding from the Girls' Education Challenge, as long as the organisations meet the eligibility criteria mentioned above. However, it should be noted that DFID is particularly keen to attract new partners or new combinations of partners working together to address girls' education.

## 12. I applied in the first funding round of Strategic Partnerships. Can I apply again?

Organisations that applied as Lead Partners in the first funding round of Strategic Partnerships that were not selected to receive Girls' Education Challenge funding can re-apply in the second funding round. Organisations that have contracted or are in the process of contracting as Lead Partners with DFID to receive funding through the first funding round of Strategic Partnerships may not re-apply.

## 13. What are the differences between the first and second funding rounds?

The differences between the first and second funding rounds include:

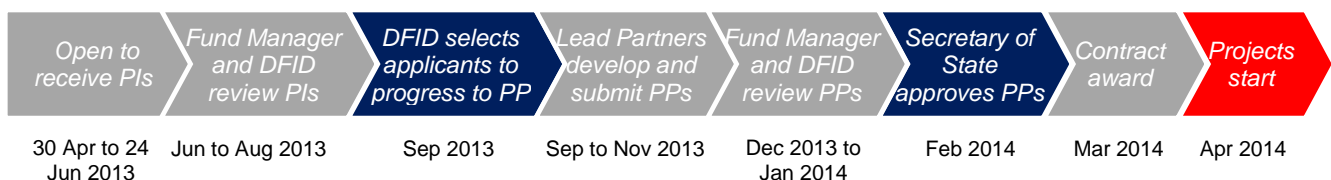
- The eligibility criteria for Lead Partners have been slightly modified so as to allow a broader range of organisations to apply.
- Successful partnerships in the second funding round will only have approximately two years to implement their initiative (as opposed to three years in the first round). As a result, the maximum amount of Girls' Education Challenge available for each initiative has been adjusted accordingly from £15 million to £10 million.
- In the second funding round, in addition to the eligibility and selection criteria, there will be an emphasis on the following:
  - Partnerships that propose to leverage the Lead Partner's *core business* (rather than philanthropic initiatives)
  - Proposals from British companies and from national/regional companies with a local presence in the countries of implementation;
  - Proposals that will be implemented in Burma and/or Occupied Palestinian Territories;
  - Proposals that will use innovative technological solutions to address barriers to girls' education;
  - Proposals that will develop simple, efficient, and effective way(s) to measure learning at a secondary level. There are a number of accepted and standardised methodologies for assessing early grade literacy and numeracy, which are already used across a range of

countries in a variety of national and local languages. These allow education providers, donors, and schools to assess their pupils' learning in a relatively quick and easy way, and react to this feedback without relying on national level examinations (which often entail a long time-lag between assessment and results).

There is a need for a comparative solution that assesses learning at a more advanced level i.e. beyond basic literacy and numeracy. A relatively low-cost, standardised solution that could be applied across a broad range of curricula, systems and countries would allow education providers, authorities and other stakeholders to readily test the health of secondary school systems. This feedback could then be used to more quickly and effectively adjust learning approaches and/or content, thereby increasing and improving students' learning outcomes.

#### 14. How do I apply?

The diagram below sets out the key stages of the Strategic Partnerships application process as well as provisional timing for the second funding round. Please note that these dates are subject to change at any time by the Fund Manager.



Lead Partners will need to submit two applications as part of the Strategic Partnerships process:

- **Partnership Idea:** The Partnership Idea (PI) form is a simple, two-page template that asks you to provide basic details about your organisation and your proposed project so that DFID can identify ideas that show potential.

Completed PI forms should be sent by e-mail to the Fund Manager ([girlseducationchallenge@uk.pwc.com](mailto:girlseducationchallenge@uk.pwc.com)). Please specify "Strategic Partnerships PI form submission" in the subject line of your e-mail.

- **Partnership Proposal:** Based on the quality of the proposed PIs, DFID will select applicants that will be invited to submit a full Partnership Proposal. Details of what is required will be shared with Lead Partners invited to submit a Partnership Proposal.

#### 15. What is the time-frame for the second funding round?

Provisional dates are set out in the diagram above (see Question 14). Please note that these dates are provisional and are subject to change. Any significant changes to the timetable will be communicated to you by the Fund Manager at the earliest possible opportunity.

Organisations can submit their PI forms any time from 30<sup>th</sup> April 2013 until noon (British Standard Time) on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2013. It is expected that in September 2013, shortlisted applicants will be notified and invited to submit a full Partnership Proposal. Successful initiatives are expected to launch in April 2014, subject to contracting.



## 16. How will you select the projects that will be shortlisted from the Partnership Idea to the full Partnership Proposal stage?

Only those Partnership Ideas that satisfy the eligibility criteria and show high-potential concepts will be selected to provide a full Partnership Proposal. Ultimately, successful Strategic Partnerships will be:

- **Business-led** – Lead Partners must be a for-profit commercial organisation, or a foundation that derives the majority of its funding from for-profit commercial organisation(s).
- **Multi-stakeholder** – the Lead Partner is encouraged to work in partnership with other non-state organisations (such as social enterprises, local businesses, local and national NGOs etc)
- **Innovative** – partnerships should be innovative and contribute to developing new approaches/methodologies to address one or more barriers to girls' education at scale.
- **High impact** – partnerships should clearly demonstrate that they have a measurable impact on the educational outcomes of marginalised girls in a selection of the Girls' Education Challenge's 21 focus countries.
- **Transformative** - partnerships should demonstrate the potential to catalyse transformational change for adolescent girls and deliver wider benefits across sectors (i.e. demonstrating new approaches to address educational challenges at scale).
- **Sustainable** – all activities should be completed in the specified time-frame but results should be long-lasting beyond DFID's support.

## 17. How will you select the partnerships that receive funding at Partnership Proposal stage?

The selection criteria at Partnership Proposal stage are:

- Organisational capacity to implement and quality of proposed partnership (25%)
- Expected results and impact on marginalised girls' education (30%)
- Business case (25%)
- Value for money (10%)
- Additionality (10%).

Full proposals will be reviewed and scored in detail, and successful Lead Partners will be selected by DFID, and approved by the UK Secretary of State for International Development.

### *Designing your partnership*

## 18. Can I apply for funding for purely philanthropic purposes (e.g. if the charitable foundation of my business intends to donate £5 million to a charity that provides education to marginalised girls)?

One of the main objectives of the Strategic Partnerships process is to foster working partnerships between businesses and other organisations, and develop new multi-stakeholder approaches to addressing challenges to girls' education. Therefore, only propositions where the Lead Partner is an

*active participant* in implementation are likely to be successful. Also, there will be a strong focus on partnerships that propose to leverage the Lead Partner's core business activities.

### **19. Do I have to have coalition members lined up when I submit my Partnership Idea?**

No, you do not have to have firm arrangements with coalition members in place when you submit your Partnership Idea. As part of its support, the Fund Manager will provide opportunities to applicants to meet potential partners and also help to broker new partnerships. However, it would be useful as part of our initial selection of Partnership Ideas that will progress to the full Partnership Proposal stage to understand the types of organisations that you would consider partnering with and/or any organisations you have already approached.

There is a focus in the second funding round for proposals from Lead Partners that are national/regional companies with a strong local presence in the proposed countries of implementation. Where the Lead Partner itself does not have a strong local presence, the coalition should include local private sector representation.

It is worth noting that DFID is not likely to be involved in your partnership on a day-to-day basis nor will it be in a position to provide significant technical assistance. Therefore your coalition will need to have the requisite technical expertise and experience to implement partnership activities successfully, as well as monitor and evaluate the progress of these activities. The Fund Manager should be able to provide details of networks / databases that may help you to find potential coalition members with this expertise.

### **20. Do I have to involve local organisations in the countries that I plan to implement my partnership in?**

Although it is not a strict eligibility requirement, we would strongly recommend that all partnerships involve at least one coalition member that has significant experience operating in-country and has good understanding of the local context and culture. During the selection process, we will evaluate the partnership's track record in the focus countries.

### **21. Do partnerships have to supply education directly to girls?**

No, but your partnership must be underpinned by a 'theory of change' which clearly demonstrates how the activities you carry out will directly improve the learning outcomes of marginalised girls. Learning outcomes are the results of education, and serve as a measure of the quality of education provided.

Learning outcomes can be divided into three broad categories:

- **Attainment:** this is usually measured with reference to national or regional examinations e.g. the primary leaving exam or a national secondary examination;
- **Ability:** This is a specific assessment which tests a student's ability to apply knowledge in a specific subject e.g. an Early Grade Reading Assessment or an Early Grade mathematics assessment; and
- **Awareness:** this type of assessment will cover a student's awareness of new knowledge such as attitudes to girls' empowerment or knowledge of HIV.

Depending on programme and the level of education that the project covers, one or more of these may be most applicable. There is a preference for learning indicators to address attainment or ability primarily, with awareness as an extra measure in certain types of projects.

## **22. Can my partnership benefit other stakeholders (e.g. a school that teaches both boys and girls), or must it only be aimed at marginalised girls?**

Partnerships can benefit other stakeholder groups, and engagement with men and boys is specifically encouraged (e.g. to reduce risk of backlash). However, increasing the number of marginalised girls in education and/or improving their learning outcomes should be the key focus area. While there is no prescribed minimum numbers or percentages to maintain a high degree of flexibility, DFID's preference is that at least 50% of any initiative's target student beneficiaries should be marginalised girls.

## **23. Does vocational training count as "education"?**

Yes. Partnerships that deliver vocational training skills (e.g. accountancy, leadership, IT) could qualify for Girls' Education Challenge funding, particularly where the vocational training complements the applicant's core business.

## **24. Can I apply for funding for an existing project, or does it have to be new?**

Strategic Partnerships are intended to be new partnerships that are adopting an innovative approach to improving educational outcomes for marginalised girls. Such new partnerships could conceivably build upon previous initiatives or projects.

## **25. Can we include an inception phase in our partnerships for market testing, pilot studies, proto-typing etc?**

Strategic Partnerships can incorporate an inception phase to build the foundation for their initiative. However, to demonstrate their commitment to the partnership and to reflect the increased level of risk, Lead Partners will be encouraged to invest their own match-funding for inception activities rather than use GEC funds. Also, given the relatively short timeframe for implementation of partnership activities (i.e. two years in total), the inception period should be kept to a minimum.

Your approach (including budget and timelines) to any proposed inception phase should be clearly referenced in your Partnership Idea, along with clear rationale explaining why it is necessary.

### ***Match-funding***

## **26. Does the match-funding have to be committed solely by the Lead Partner, or can it be pooled from a coalition?**

Match-funding must be committed by the Lead Partner, but contributions can also be made by other organisations. As the Contract will be signed with the Lead Partner and the amount of match-funding (both in-kind and financial contributions) will be included in the Contract, the Lead Partner must ensure that the agreed amount of match-funding is made available to the project.

## **27. Does the match-funding committed by the Lead Partner have to be a financial contribution?**

No, the match-funding committed can be financial or in-kind. In-kind funding should be valued based on market values (evidence/calculations of market values will be required). The balance of cash and in-kind funding, as well as the type of in-kind funding, will be considered as part of the scoring criteria. You should therefore articulate why your match-funding arrangement is the right one for your proposed partnership.

Lead Partners should commit at least 50% of their match-funding in cash, unless there is strong rationale to justify a smaller percentage, which will need to be explained clearly in the Lead Partner's application. Those proposals that commit higher levels of cash will be scored more favourably. It is important that Lead Partners plan how much of their own finance and how much Girls' Education Challenge funding is needed to achieve the overall results of the initiative year on year.

## 28. Does the match-funding have to be on a 1:1 basis?

No. Lead Partners must commit at least the amount requested from DFID, but can commit more than this amount. Proposals where the Lead Partners' contribution is greater than DFID's will be scored more favourably. The match-funding committed can be a combination of cash and in-kind contributions, but proposals that commit higher proportions of match-funding in cash will be scored more favourably. In any event, at least 50% of the match-funding should be in cash, unless the Lead Partner has strong rationale to justify a smaller percentage.

## 29. What does providing 'value for money' (VfM) mean?

"Value for money is the optimal use of resources to achieve intended outcomes" (*National Audit Office*).

DFID is committed to ensuring that Girls' Education Challenge projects deliver VfM. In the Girls' Education Challenge, VfM is about the "3 Es": economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. Essentially, we need to make sure that every pound spent enables a girl to learn at the end of the process.

VfM in the context of education can be defined in terms of inputs, outputs, and/or outcomes:

- Cost per input e.g. cost per pupil reached, average fee rates, cost per classroom;
- Cost per output e.g. cost per pupil attending, cost per teacher trained; and
- Cost per outcome e.g. cost per pupil retained, cost per girl achieving specified test score.

10% of the Strategic Partnerships' selection criteria relates to VfM, which reflects the importance that DFID places on VfM. Therefore, the more evidence you can provide to support how your proposition delivers VfM, the stronger your proposal will be.

DFID has published guidance around its approach to VfM, which is available on its website.

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications1/DFID-approach-value-money.pdf>

## **Monitoring & evaluation (M&E)**

### 30. Why is there such a strong focus on M&E?

M&E is important for a number of reasons:

*Accountability:* When working on development projects, we need to be accountable to the marginalised communities we are supporting. We need to ensure that we are effecting positive change, so it is important to understand what works and what does not.

*Evidence:* Public-sector funded development is subject to a high level of scrutiny. DFID has to be able to show the impact and value of what it is funding, and supporting evidence must be accurate and reliable.

*Improving and adapting approach:* Girls' Education Challenge projects will be implemented in marginalised communities. Working in these new environments inevitably involves making some assumptions at the start of different initiatives. However, as we learn more about the communities we are working in, we need to make sure we continuously adapt and improve our processes throughout the life of the programme.

*Communicating results:* In order for the Girls' Education Challenge to have a transformative effect on education, we need to be able to communicate results credibly and convince others that approaches are replicable and scalable.

### **31. What will Strategic Partnerships monitor and evaluate?**

All Girls' Education Challenge projects – including Strategic Partnerships – should contribute to the programme's overall outcome (i.e. to enable up to 1 million marginalised girls across 21 countries to complete a full cycle of education and demonstrate learning) and impact (i.e. to improve life chances of marginalised girls). Therefore, as part of your M&E activities, you will be expected to evaluate the impact of your programme on marginalised girls in terms of retention, learning, and leverage (RLL). However, your M&E activities will also need to consider the wider impact of your programme on all affected stakeholders. This will likely include broader outcomes such as getting girls into jobs and unlocking their entrepreneurial potential, as well as impacts on your business.

### **32. Can you tell me more about RLL?**

RLL stands for Retention, Learning, and Leverage.

*Retention:* It is important to know how many girls complete a full cycle of education through the Girls' Education Challenge. You will therefore need to estimate how many girls will enrol in your initiative when it starts, which will form the baseline. This then needs to be monitored at regular intervals throughout the duration of the initiative, taking into account any new entrants as well as those girls who may leave and return ('re-enrolments').

*Learning:* We need to ensure girls are supported by the Girls' Education Challenge with improved learning outcomes. These are measured through attainment (e.g. national exams), ability (ability to apply knowledge), and awareness (awareness of new information). See also response to question 21 above.

*Leverage:* Leverage refers to the amount of additional funds secured alongside Girls' Education Challenge funds to support marginalised girls. Leverage is measured through demonstration effects and policy changes i.e. the extent to which the Girls' Education Challenge has had a transformative effect.

### **33. Who will undertake the M&E activities?**

Responsibility for partnership-level monitoring and evaluation will lie with the Lead Partners and with the Fund Manager. Organisations will be expected to provide regular monitoring data and to appoint an external organisation to evaluate performance and impact of their activities.

The independent Evaluation Manager for the Girls' Education Challenge is Coffey International. The Evaluation Manager will provide support to the project-level evaluations, while undertaking an independent and rigorous evaluation of effectiveness, impact and value for money of the Girls' Education Challenge programme. The Fund Manager will work with the Evaluation Manager to ensure that all successful propositions funded through the Girls' Education Challenge have concrete

M&E activities that will allow collection of systematic baseline data, and consistently monitor progress against milestones and targets.

### ***Contracting***

#### **34. How will you contract with successful Lead Partners?**

The legal agreement governing Strategic Partnerships will be between DFID and the Lead Partner, with the Fund Manager signing in their capacity as agent for DFID. The Lead Partner will be ultimately responsible for meeting the terms set out in the legal agreement, including but not limited to match-funding commitments, financial management arrangements, and M&E requirements. Template contracts can be requested from the Fund Manager at the Partnership Proposal stage.