



Burkina Faso and Millennium Challenge Corporation: Investing in People by Promoting Girls' Education

Millennium Challenge Corporation and the Government of Burkina Faso have signed a Threshold Agreement for \$12.9 million that focuses on improving performance on the “Girls’ Primary Education Completion Rates” indicator.

Burkina Faso’s Threshold Program is a pilot program that demonstrates a commitment by the Government of Burkina Faso (GOBF) to improve its performance on the “Girls’ Primary Education Completion Rates” indicator, one of the indicators used in determining Millennium Challenge Account (“MCA”) eligibility. This program will allow the GOBF to both expand and measure the impact of various types of interventions known to have a positive impact on girls’ primary school completion rates and, if as effective as believed, will form the basis for practical solutions that could be utilized in a broader, country-wide effort.

Investing in the primary education of women is critical to increasing the role of women as contributors to a country’s economic growth and the role of women in society is a major part of the MCA eligibility process.

Threshold Program assistance is intended to help countries make necessary policy reforms and institutional changes in areas in which the country has performed poorly. This program will support Burkina Faso’s efforts to improve girls’ primary education.

The objective of the GOBF Threshold Country Program is to improve access to, and the quality of, primary education for girls in 10 provinces that have historically achieved the lowest levels of girls’ primary education completion rates.

- Through the construction of new schools in provinces that lack sufficient schools, more girls will be able to attend primary school. The program aims to enroll 1,650 new female students within the first year.
- Through the construction of day care centers in these schools, school-age girls will be relieved of the responsibility for caring for younger children and will thus be able to attend school.
- By providing take-home dry rations to girls who maintain a 90% school attendance rate, this program provides an incentive for parents to keep their girls in school.
- By constructing separate girls’ and boys’ bathrooms in the schools, institutionalizing female mentoring programs, conducting social awareness campaigns and offering financial merit rewards to the best

female teachers in the targeted region, this program will encourage girls to attend schools, mitigate factors that presently deter girls' school attendance, and provide needed reassurance to parents that their daughters will be best-served attending school.

- Approximately 68 percent of the total budget, or \$8.8 million, is devoted to constructing 132 'girl-friendly' schools with on-site canteens, day care centers and separate bathrooms for boys and girls, as well as a water supply for these facilities, housing units for teachers, etc.
- The remainder of the funds will be used primarily for teacher training, literacy training for mothers, mentoring services and management oversight.
- The evaluation component of the program will enable the GOBF to determine which activities of the program are most effective in increasing girls' enrollment and attendance in school so they may consider expanding those activities to other parts of the country.

The GOBF has developed a strong Threshold Program to address its performance shortfall in the area of girls' primary education completion rates.

- This Plan will educate girls in rural areas of Burkina Faso and identify those interventions that provide the most positive results. These lessons will then be used in broader, country-wide efforts.
- An additional benefit of this program is the expectation that the lessons learned will contribute to development knowledge and practice globally.