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Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy and Private Sector Engagement in Education: Considering action for girls' and women's education in Asia

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**CANADA'S FEMINIST
INTERNATIONAL
ASSISTANCE POLICY
AND PRIVATE SECTOR
ENGAGEMENT IN
EDUCATION:**

**Considering Action for Girls'
and Women's Education in
Asia**

Policy Brief

International Policy Ideas

Challenge 2019

November 2019

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Executive Summary

This brief aims to inform potential action in view of two significant developments in Canada's international assistance strategy — the \$400 million commitment to girls' and women's education in response to the *Charlevoix Declaration on Quality Education for Girls, Adolescent Girls and Women in Developing Countries* and the strategy for engaging in private sector partnerships in the *Feminist International Assistance Policy*. The brief is based on original analysis of data on activity by private foundations and private sector impact investors in girls' and women's education in East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia, drawing on a larger regional-level database of private sector investors.

The analysis finds that girls' and women's education is an underserved priority area. It is an urgent area of unmet policy action in the regions, and in low-income countries and countries with gender disparities in education in Asia. Existing priorities by education sub-sector and regarding programming areas in education initiatives targeting girls and women in East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia supported by philanthropic and impact investors align with FIAP focus. Adult, basic, and continuing education and secondary education were the top two sectors addressed by the initiatives under analysis. Skills, workplace transition, and continuing education; advocacy; and access to education constituted the main programming areas. Tracking financial flows and specific actors in private sector partnerships is impeded by a lack of consistent and publicly accessible data. The opacity of partnerships has potentially critical implications for Canada's engagement in girls' and women's education in view of broader concerns associated with partnering with private sector actors.

Recommendations

- To act with urgency on expanding Canada's engagement in girls' and women's education in conflict-affected contexts, low-income countries, and countries with gender gaps in education in East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia.
- To critically consider the appropriateness of partnerships as a feasible strategy. If considered viable, to be explicit about the types of private actors that Global Affairs Canada will partner with and/or support in girls' and women's education.
- Given FIAP's articulated modality of engaging in private sector partnerships, to undertake exercises to ensure public transparency of any partnerships in girls' and women's education, including the composition of actors in partnerships and on financial flows.

Overview of Policy Context and Relevance of Analysis

The *Feminist International Assistance Policy* (FIAP) posits a fundamental change in the partnership modalities through which Canada may engage. It states: ‘effective and productive partnerships are no longer restricted to government-to-government relationships’, and aims to ‘increase and diversify the range of mechanisms for working with the private sector to support sustainable development’.¹ Thus, FIAP details a concrete policy change for action in Canadian international assistance, yet, a specified plan on how it will engage in partnerships, with which actors, or the feasibility of this approach in education is lacking. The need is urgent in view of FIAP’s proposed modalities and Canada’s recently reinforced commitment to investing \$400 million over three years to support girls’ and women’s education in response to the *Charlevoix Declaration on Quality Education for Girls, Adolescent Girls and Women in Developing Countries*.²

Canada will engage in private sector partnerships that attract co-financing and investment, help identify new solutions to development challenges and generate more opportunities for the poorest and most vulnerable to benefit from economic growth.

– FIAP

The private sector is generally seen to unlock new resources given the gap in domestic education finance and in international official development assistance (ODA) for Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), i.e., to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong

¹ Global Affairs Canada. (2017). *Canada’s Feminist International Assistance Policy*. Ottawa: GAC.

² Global Affairs Canada. (2019). *Minister Monsef concludes successful G7 development ministerial meetings in Paris and announces support to improve access to education for women and girls*. Ottawa: GAC. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2019/07/minister-monsef-concludes-successful-g7-development-ministerial-meetings-in-paris-and-announces-support-to-improve-access-to-education-for-women-an.html>

learning opportunities for all.³ However, the role of the private sector is highly contested.⁴⁵⁶⁷ Little is known about its diverse activities, range of actors, or how governments and donors may (or whether they should) work with the private sector while protecting the principle of education as a human right.⁴⁵⁶⁷⁸⁹ These concerns are highlighted in achieving education inclusion for the most vulnerable and marginalized, including for girls and women, who are at the core of FIAP.

In the wider context, there is a critical literature on partnerships in education, including multi-stakeholder and donor- or government-supported public-private partnerships (PPPs).¹⁰ That literature calls on the need for transparency of actors and financial flows and accountability mechanisms. It asks whether the agency of domestic governments and local citizens are compromised in complex partnerships involving multiple actors, especially with private sector actors.¹¹¹²¹³ It further questions the legitimacy of arrangements where private sector actors may

³ A note on terminology follows. We are aware of the conflation of terms, such as ‘non-government’; ‘non-public’; ‘non-state’; ‘non-state private’; and ‘private’ in the literature. ‘Private’ is used in this brief, in keeping with the terminology in FIAP. Other terms are used in cases where they appear in external quotes; have been used consistently by the agency, actor, country, or donor to refer to specific distinctions; or the usual nomenclature so demands.

⁴ Ashley, L. D., Mcloughlin, C., Aslam, M., Engel, J., Wales, J., Rawal, S., ... & Rose, P. (2014). The role and impact of private schools in developing countries: A rigorous review of evidence. *Education Rigorous Literature Review*. London, UK: Department for International Development.

⁵ Moumné, R., & Saudemont, C. (2015). Overview of the role of private providers in education in light of the existing international legal framework: Investments in private education: Undermining or contributing to the full development of the human right to education?. *UNESCO Working Papers on Education Policy N°1*. Paris.

⁶ Srivastava, P., & Read, R. (2019). *Towards transparency: A report on piloting the Invest-ED Tool with philanthropic and impact investing actors in Asia*. University of Western Ontario/Brookings Institution.

⁷ Steer, L., Gillard, J., Gustafsson-Wright, E., & Latham, M. (2015). Non-state actors in education in developing countries: A framing paper: Draft for discussion. In *Annual Research Symposium of the Center for Universal Education* (pp. 1-38). Washington, DC: Centre for Universal Education at Brookings.

⁸ United Nations. (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. New York: United Nations General Assembly.

⁹ A note on terminology: We are aware of the conflation of terms, such as ‘non-government’; ‘non-public’; ‘non-state’; ‘non-state private’; and ‘private’ in the literature. ‘Private’ is used in this brief, in keeping with the terminology in FIAP. Other terms are used in cases where they appear in external quotes; have been used consistently by the agency, actor, country, or donor to refer to specific distinctions; or the usual nomenclature so demands.

¹⁰ Menashy, F. (2019). *International aid to education: Power dynamics in an era of partnership*. New York: Teachers College Press.

¹¹ Draxler, A. (2012). International PPPs in education: New potential or privatizing public goods. In, S. Robertson, K. Mundy, A. Verger & F. Menashy (Eds.), *Public private partnerships and education: New actors and modes of governance in a globalising world*. London: Edward Elgar.

¹² Menashy, F. (2019). *International aid to education: Power dynamics in an era of partnership*. New York: Teachers College Press.

¹³ Verger, A. (2012). Framing and selling global education policy: The promotion of public-private partnerships for education in low-income contexts. *Journal of Education Policy*, 27(1), pp. 109-130.

form ad-hoc partnerships that fall outside formalized state governance structures.¹³¹⁴ These concerns are heightened where profit-motivated actors may be involved.

In response, some donors have announced changes or have made their positions on private sector engagement more explicit. The EU Parliament passed a resolution on EU development assistance in the field of education stating the EU ‘must not use ODA to support private, commercial educational establishments.’¹⁵ The Global Partnership for Education (GPE), of which Canada is a donor, released its *Private Sector Engagement Strategy 2019-2022*, which states: ‘no GPE funds can be used to support for-profit provision of core education services’.¹⁶

This brief is of further relevance prompted by the changing global education financing architecture. In addition to GPE, the three new funds, Education Cannot Wait, Education Outcomes Fund, and the International Financing Facility for Education, all have strategies to integrate private with government actors and bilateral and multilateral institutions to catalyze resources through partnerships. Canada is considering its role in the funds, alongside its existing involvement with GPE. However, policy-relevant analyses which may inform Canada’s action are lacking.

Finally, while not the original context for the brief, the document, *A Canadian Approach to Innovative Financing for Sustainable Development*, was released at the time of writing. That document outlines the intention to ‘draw on innovative financial instruments to support the achievement of its [Canada’s] Feminist International Assistance Policy objectives and the SDGs’.¹⁷ It describes ‘innovative financing’ for development as a set of modalities and practices beyond traditional donor-country ODA, involving ‘an increasingly diverse set of investors with different expectations of returns—from philanthropists and foundations, to impact investors, financial institutions, and institutional investors including pension funds and retail investors’.¹⁷ It

¹⁴ Ball, S.J., & Junemann, C. (2012). *Networks, new governance and education*. Bristol: The Policy Press.

¹⁵ European Parliament. (2018). *European Parliament resolution of 13 November 2018 on EU development assistance in the field of education*. Strasbourg. Retrieved from http://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2018-0441_EN.html

¹⁶ Global Partnership for Education. (2019). *Private Sector Engagement Strategy 2019-2022*. Washington, DC. Retrieved from <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/private-sector-engagement-strategy-2019-2022>

¹⁷ Global Affairs Canada. (2019). *A Canadian Approach to Innovative Financing for Sustainable Development*. Ottawa: GAC.

cautions, however, that proposed innovative financing modalities ‘may not be appropriate for all sustainable development initiatives’.¹⁷

This brief responds to a number of areas of strategic focus in the approach document on innovative financing. That document: positions philanthropic and impact investment as two sources to catalyze finance; focuses on education skills for employment and technical and vocational education training for girls and women as responding to the challenge of ‘gender transformative impact’; and prioritizes low- and middle-income countries as investment areas.

This brief focuses on financing partnerships in girls’ and women’s education in East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia. It is based on an analysis of an original database constructed in a larger research program.¹⁸ Initiatives in the analysis for this brief were financed by private foundations and private-sector impact investors, often in partnership with other private and public actors, and sometimes with bilateral and/or multilateral institutions. Given the dearth of publicly available data on private sector engagement in education, it provides a unique analysis of geographic, sectoral, and programmatic concentrations of education initiatives explicitly targeting girls and women in the two regions, and the nature of the partnerships. It adopts an integrated approach to consider how Canada may engage in girls’ and women’s education in view of the changing global policy context for action.

The analysis finds that girls’ and women’s education in the two regions in Asia is an underserved priority. The analysis is in line with emerging evidence elsewhere that while increasing, current engagement in education by philanthropic and impact investing actors may not be as pronounced or widespread throughout Asia as potentially thought.^{19,20} Partnerships between bilateral and multilateral donors and private-sector actors constituted a small proportion of co-financing

¹⁸ The larger research program on non-state private actors and the right to education is directed by Srivastava and was funded by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

¹⁹ OECD netFWD. (2019). *Philanthropy and education - quality education for all: Lessons and future priorities*. Paris: OECD Development Centre. Retrieved from https://www.oecd.org/site/netfwd/NetFWD_PolicyNoteOnEducation.pdf

²⁰ Srivastava, P., & Read, R. (In press). New education finance: Exploring impact investment, networks, and market-making in South Asia. In, P. Sarangapani & R. Pappu (Eds.), *Handbook of education systems in South Asia*. Springer.

partnerships of the initiatives under analysis. Canadian co-financing through private-sector partnerships in girls' and women's education were extremely rare.

There is significant scope for Canada to expand its interventions in girls' and women's education in Asia. However, given the dearth of publicly available data on private sector engagement and the opacity of partnerships in girls' and women's education, the brief urges Global Affairs Canada to analyze the appropriateness and the nature of the actors involved when considering such partnerships as a potentially viable strategy.¹⁷

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Linking with the SDGs

Canada's feminist vision and international assistance policy are rooted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDG 1, the eradication of poverty. 'Canada firmly believes that promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls is the most effective approach to achieving this goal'.¹ In addition to SDG 5, to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, this policy brief centres on SDG 4, to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, and addresses SDG 17, to strengthen and revitalize global partnerships for sustainable development.



FIAP and Education-Related Commitments

Launched by Global Affairs Canada in 2017, FIAP targets the following action areas through a ‘gender-equitable lens’, focusing on the empowerment of women and girls – human dignity, growth that works for everyone; environment and climate action; inclusive governance; and peace and security. Canada has made the following commitments in FIAP to support equal educational opportunities for women and girls and to achieve SDG 4:

- ✓ support programs and advocacy efforts that help women and girls get the skills training and education they need to succeed
- ✓ actively promote awareness of the need for curricula free of gender stereotypes, including at international forums, bilateral talks and informal meeting
- ✓ ensure that investments in education include provisions for separate and appropriate washroom facilities, including systems to help manage menstrual hygiene, and that support programs that help prevent and respond to school-related gender-based violence
- ✓ support programs and partners that provide life skills, and technical and vocational education and training, with an emphasis on assisting women and marginalized youth find work, including in non-traditional and better-paying fields.

Canada has made the following recent commitments in education:

- ✓ September 2016: The Prime Minister pledged \$20 million to Education Cannot Wait (2016-2018).²¹
- ✓ June 2017: Canada launched the Women’s Voice and Leadership Program of \$150 million over five years in support of grassroots women’s rights organizations.²²
- ✓ 2017-2018: Canada invested \$274 million in education initiatives.¹
- ✓ Between 2014 and 2018: Canada provided \$120 million to GPE. In January 2018, the Government of Canada announced it would double its annual investment in GPE by providing a further \$180 million between 2018 and 2020.²²
- ✓ June 2018: Commitment to invest \$400 million over three years in support of the G7 Charlevoix Declaration.²³

²¹ Global Affairs Canada. (2017). *Report to Parliament on the Government of Canada’s Official Development Assistance 2016-2017*. Ottawa: GAC.

²² Global Affairs Canada. (2018). *Report to Parliament on the Government of Canada’s Official Development Assistance 2017-2018*. Ottawa: GAC.

²³ Prime Minister of Canada. (2018). *Canada and partners announce historic investment in education for women and girls in crisis and conflict situations*. Ottawa. Retrieved from: <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2018/06/09/canada-and-partners-announce-historic-investment-education-women-and>



FIAP and the Imperatives for Investing in Girls' and Women's Education in Asia

While Asia has been identified as a priority area for support on climate action and resilience and in the Canada-Asia Trade and Investment for Growth (TRIGR) Program,¹⁷ there are several imperatives for Canada to further engage in girls' and women's education to advance FIAP objectives.

The first is a financing imperative. Despite the increase in aid to basic education between 2015 and 2016, the share of aid to basic education to low-income countries fell from 36% in 2002 to only 22% in 2016; and while the share to least developed countries 'increased from 31% in 2015 to 34% in 2016, it is still well below the 2004 peak of 47%'.²⁴ This resulted in South Asia, alongside Central Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, experiencing a fall in the share of total aid to basic education disbursements between 2015 and 2016.²⁴

The second is to alleviate existing gender gaps in education. South Asia has one of the highest proportions of girls out of school.^{25,26} It also has the greatest discrepancies in youth and adult

²⁴ UNESCO (2018) Migration, displacement and education: Building bridges, not walls. *Global Education Monitoring Report 2019*. Paris: UNESCO Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0026/002658/265866E.pdf>.

²⁵ UNICEF South Asia. (n.d.). *Gender Equality in Primary and Secondary Education*. Nepal: UNICEF. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.org/rosa/what-we-do/education/gender-equality-primary-and-secondary-education>

²⁶ UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (2017). *Closing the Gender Gap*. Montreal: UIS. Retrieved from <http://uis.unesco.org/en/news/closing-gender-gap>

gender parities, and it had the second-lowest youth and adult literacy rates after Sub-Saharan Africa in 2016.²⁷ Relative wealth and social group affiliations continue to determine the educational opportunities of girls and women throughout Asia.

Thirdly, Asia has been faced with crises associated with conflict. Conflict crises are known to have deleterious effects on the education of all children and to increase the vulnerability of girls and women, particularly when displaced. Refugee children are five times less likely to attend school, and over half do not have access to a school.²⁸ In 2017, South Asia hosted the largest number of refugees globally in view of resurgences in Afghanistan and displacement from Myanmar, 50% of whom were under the age of 18, a large number, girls and women.²⁹

There is optimism in attracting new sources of investment in Asia. East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia, led by the economies of China and India, have been successful in attracting increased domestic and international private sector investment in development sectors and for education.¹⁹³⁰ Canada has taken some steps towards invigorating investment in girls' and women's education in Asia. Through the Women's Voice and Leadership Program, Canada has contributed \$38,130,000 in investment (21.8% of its total contribution) since 2017 towards projects in East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia – including in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.³¹ This interlocking context highlights significant need for Canada to consider its actions, particularly, in conflict-affected contexts and in low-income and countries with high gender disparities in education in Asia.

²⁷ UNESCO (2017) Accountability in education: Meeting our commitments. *Global Education Monitoring Report 2017/18*. Paris: UNESCO. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0025/002593/259338e.pdf>.

²⁸ UNHCR. (2016). *Missing Out: Refugee Education in Crisis*. Geneva: UNHCR. Retrieved from <https://www.unhcr.org/57d9d01d0>

²⁹ UNHCR. (2018). *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2017*. Geneva: UNHCR. Retrieved from <https://www.unhcr.org/statistics/unhcrstats/5b27be547/unhcr-global-trends-2017.html>

³⁰ Sattva Knowledge Centre and Consulting. (2017). *Funding education with impact*. Singapore: Asian Venture Philanthropy Network. Retrieved from <https://avpn.asia/insights/funding-education-impact/>

³¹ Global Affairs Canada. (2019). *Women's Voice and Leadership*. Ottawa: GAC.

Approach for the Analysis

This brief extracts preliminary data from the original Invest-ED Database on East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia.³² The Invest-ED Database gathered publicly available data on a range of private-sector financiers of education,³³ their co-financing partners (private, state, multilateral, international organizations), and funded education initiatives. The focus on the first round of analysis was on the sub-sample of private foundations and private-sector impact investors and their funded education initiatives in the two regions.^{34,35}

For the purposes of this study, private foundations were operationalized as those that: use their own financial resources, usually from an endowment; are led by an independent board of trustees or CEO; aim to face issues for common good; can be grant-making or operational; are not-for-profit; and are not part of the public sector. They include independent private foundations (family and individual), corporate foundations, and community foundations (not primarily publicly supported). Following the ‘ideal type’ defined by the Global Impact Investing Network, private-sector impact investors were defined as those with the explicit intention to address issues of the common good; expect a return on investment; use a range of financial instruments; and have an explicit commitment to measure impact.³⁶ Additional criteria include organizations that use their own financial resources, have an exit strategy, and that can also be not-for-profit oriented.

³² The Invest-ED Database was developed with funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (Principal Investigator, Srivastava). Regions were operationalized using the World Bank country and regional groupings. Analysis reported here is based on preliminary data. At the time of writing, data analysis on the sub-sample of private foundations and impact investors was being conducted. The full database had n~650 private-sector financiers, n~1200 initiatives, n~5500 co-financers, n~1100 implementers at the time of writing.

³³ Private-sector financiers were extracted from five global and regional sources: Asian Venture Philanthropy Network membership list, Center for Education Innovations programs database (tracing initiatives to funders), Forbes Asia’s 2017 Heroes of Philanthropy List (tracing individuals to philanthropic organizations), Global Impact Investing Network members list, The Asia Foundation donor list.

³⁴ Private-sector financiers were classified according to a typology derived for the study (Srivastava & Read, 2019).

³⁵ Srivastava, P., & Read, R. (2019). Philanthropic and impact investors: private sector engagement, hybridity and the problem of definition. In N. Ridge & A. Terway (Eds.), *Philanthropy in education: diverse perspectives and global trends*, pp. 15-36. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.

<https://www.elgaronline.com/view/edcoll/9781789904116/9781789904116.00010.xml>

³⁶ Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN). (n.d.). *What you need to know about impact investing*. Retrieved 26 May 2018 from <https://thegiin.org/impact-investing/need-to-know/#what-is-impact-investing>.

Web-based data from organizational websites and financial and annual reports were used. Only initiatives that were launched and/or operational between January 2015 and December 2017 were included. Data on education initiatives were collected in a number of fields, including: launch year, launch country and all countries of operation, education sub-sectors, programming areas, focus activities, financing partners, and implementing partners. The preliminary analysis reported in this brief is based on extracting all education initiatives from the database that explicitly targeted girls and/or women in South Asia and East Asia and the Pacific, and that were financed by the private foundations and impact investors in the Invest-ED Database.

RESULTS SNAPSHOT

Of all education initiatives, only **10% explicitly targeted girls and women**

Of the sub-sample:
64% were operational **in India**
followed by **12% in China**
and **11% in Indonesia**

12% of these initiatives **were funded in partnership with a bilateral ODA donor**

11% of these initiatives **were funded in partnership with a multilateral institution**

2 initiatives were funded by Canada:
Marie Stopes China (Global Affairs Canada)
Institute of Social Studies Trust (International
Development Research Centre)

Figure 1. Concentration of Education Initiatives Targeting Girls and Women by Country

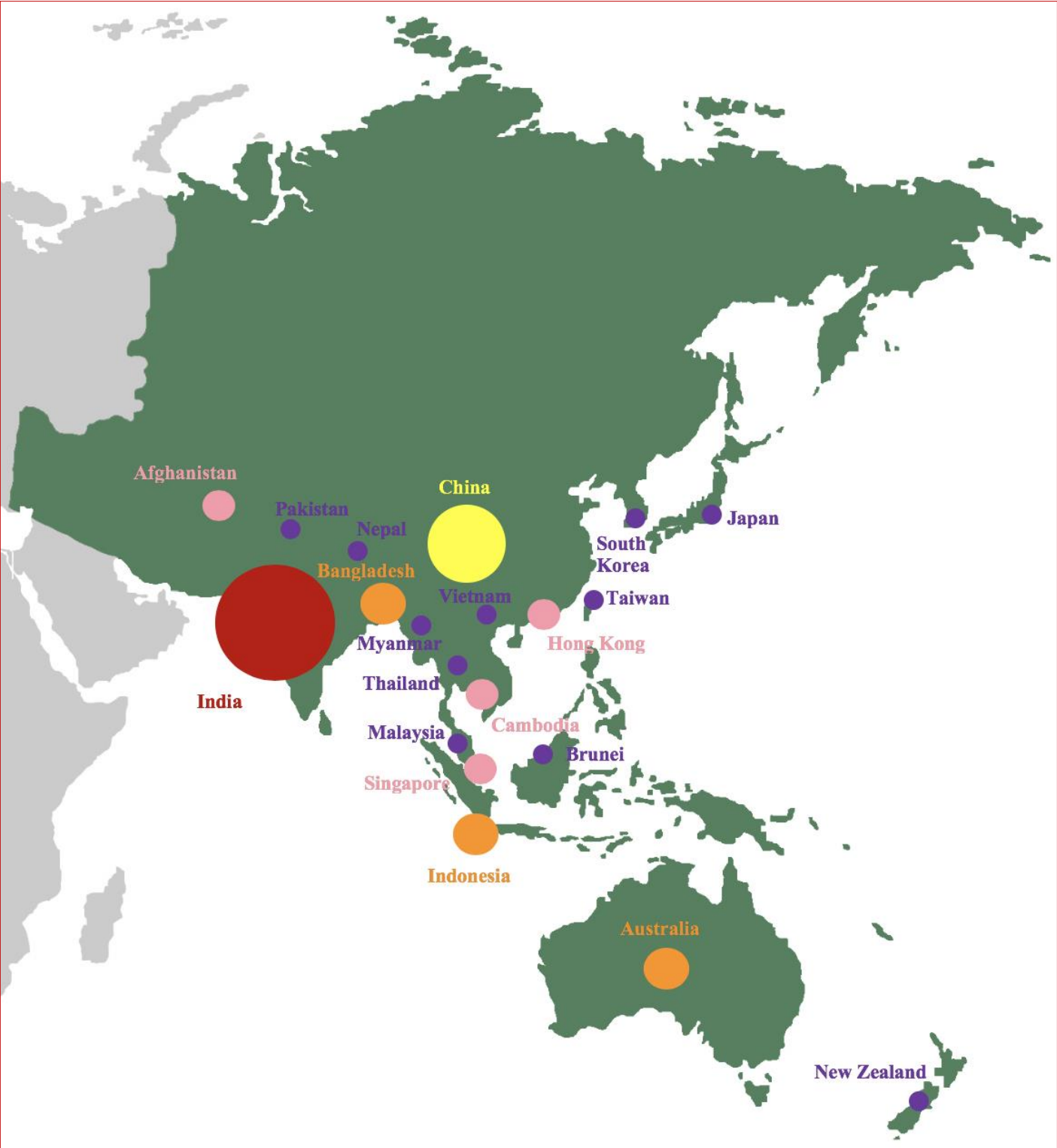


Figure 2. Proportion of Initiatives Targeting Girls and Women by Education Sub-sector

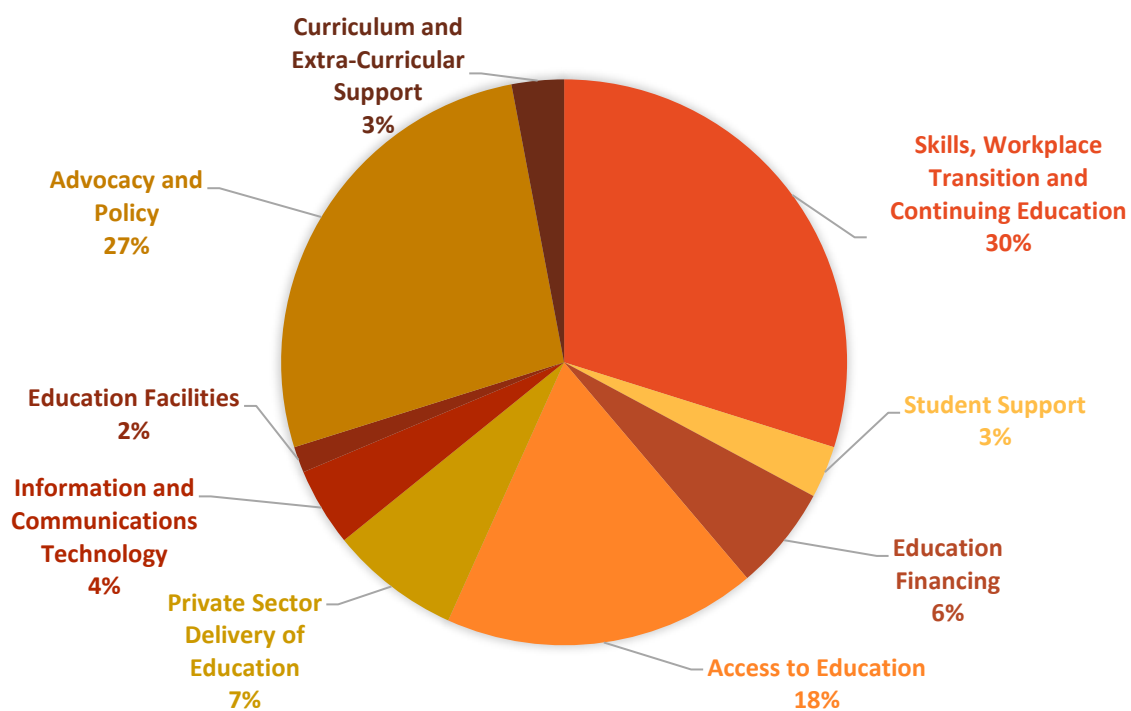
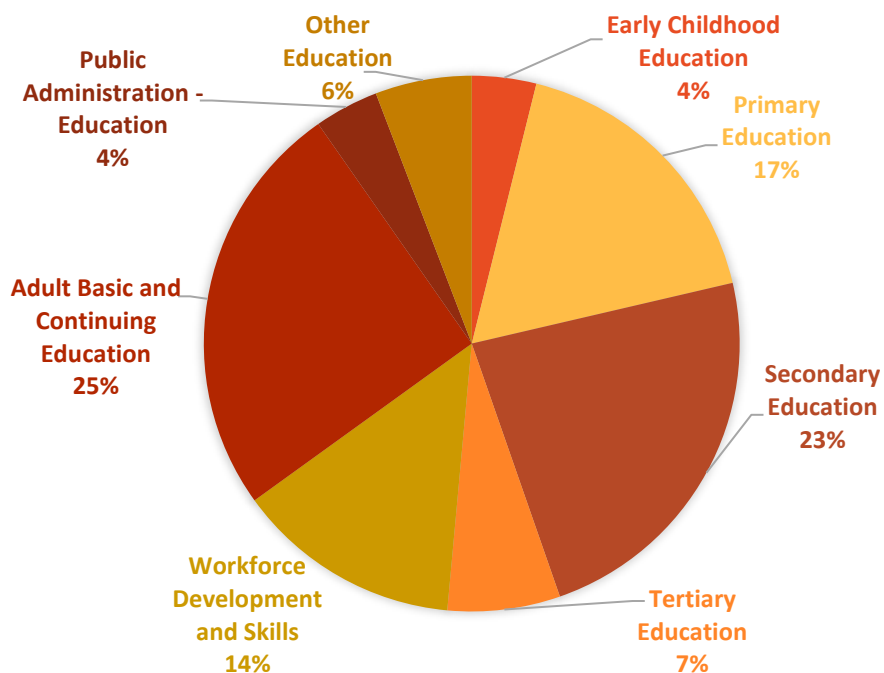


Figure 3. Main Program Area Addressed by Education Initiatives Targeting Girls and Women

Philanthropic and Impact Investor-Supported Education

Initiatives Targeting Girls and Women: landscape and partnerships

Only 10% of the education initiatives in the sample explicitly targeted girls and women.

This indicates that the focus on girls' and women's education is an underserved priority in the two regions despite global acknowledgement on its need. Thus, there is significant potential for Canada to invigorate its engagement in view of its commitment.

Geographic Concentration of Activity

By far, India had the strongest concentration of education initiatives targeting girls and women in the sample (64% of initiatives), followed by China (12%), and Indonesia (11%). The remaining initiatives were disparately located in a range of countries of varying income-level classifications (Figure 1). Afghanistan and Nepal were the only low-income countries to attract education investment for girls and women. Amongst lower-middle-income countries, there were initiatives in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Pakistan, and Vietnam, in addition to India and Indonesia, although the concentration in the former four countries was less than the latter. This indicates potential for Canada to expand its engagement in girls' and women's education in low- and lower-middle-income countries in Asia, in view of its stated priority on these country income groupings in its approach document to advancing FIAP.¹⁶

Education Sub-Sector and Programming Area Priorities

With regards to education sub-sector priorities, the majority of education initiatives targeting girls and women under analysis addressed adult, basic, and continuing education (25%), followed closely by secondary education (23%). Primary education was addressed by 17% of initiatives in this sample. These sectoral priorities align with those of FIAP, particularly with the focus on supporting continued education opportunities throughout the life cycle of girls and women. FIAP acknowledges that 'not all young people are able to finish school, which puts them at a disadvantage...Canada will support programs and partners that help those who have missed out on the opportunity to complete a quality education'.¹

Results for the main program area addressed by the initiatives show that the stated strategic focus in FIAP is in line with existing activity by private foundations and private-sector impact investors found in this analysis. Skills, workplace transition, and continuing education was the main programming area for 30% of the education initiatives targeting girls and women. This was followed by advocacy as the main programming area for 27% of the initiatives, and access to education for 18% of the initiatives. These are all predominant focus areas in FIAP and in the approach document to advance FIAP.

Private Sector Delivery

As requested, the analysis conducted a review of the initiatives targeting girls and women that also had an explicit focus on private sector delivery. Within the sub-sample, only 7% of initiatives explicitly had private sector delivery of education as their core focus (see Box 1 for examples)³⁷³⁸³⁹. This does not mean that none of the other initiatives in the database addressed private education delivery. Simply, that it was not the core focus of those initiatives.⁴⁰

Though small in number, these initiatives had a range of modalities. They included early childhood provision, formal elementary or secondary education, and non-formal technical and vocational education. Some were fee charging, while others were fee-free. Initiatives could be run independently or in partnership with government. They could be run by independent

Happy Chandara School is a stand-alone school, founded by the French NGO, Toutes à l'école, in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Its stated aim is to provide free education to disadvantaged girls from primary to high school. It has created its own curriculum, based on the official program established by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of Cambodia.

Project Mera Sahara is run by the Joint Women's Programme in Nithari, Noida, India. It is a stand-alone centre providing schooling (up to Class 5), crèche facilities, and adult literacy programming for young adults and women, including legal literacy and women's empowerment. There is also a skill development centre to provide skill-based classes to women, including computer skills and tailoring.

Sudiksha operates early childhood centres in Hyderabad, India. Its stated model is to operate a franchise system where branches are run by local women trained by Sudiksha, under an 'incentivised profit sharing scheme'. In 2014, the Pearson Affordable Learning Fund (now Pearson Ventures), an education fund making minority equity investments in for-profit education companies, was reported to have invested \$USD 50,000.

Box 1. Examples of Private Sector Delivery Initiatives

³⁷ Toutes à l'école. (2019). *The Happy Chandara School*. Retrieved from <https://toutes-a-l-ecole.org/en/3hOgBC/our-teaching-program.aspx>

³⁸ Samhita. (2019). *Sudiksha Knowledge Solutions*. Retrieved from www.samhita.org/social-organisation/sudiksha-knowledge-solutions-pvt-ltd/

³⁹ Joint Women's Programme. (2019). *Project Mera Sahara*. Retrieved from www.jwplndia.org/project-mera-sahara/

⁴⁰ This brief is based on the preliminary analysis of data. It is premature to make further claims in this regard.

providers with commercial interests, private foundations and charitable trusts, or NGOs. Of the initiatives that explicitly targeted private sector delivery, none were financed in partnership with bilateral donors or multilateral institutions. Where co-financing partners could be tracked, they included other philanthropic organizations and private foundations, NGOs, private corporations, and state or government actors.

Co-Financing Partnerships

While Canada's proposed strategy is to leverage new partnerships to advance FIAP, rigor in assessing suitable partners for co-financing activities is of utmost importance. This is a difficult exercise owing to the overall opacity of the sector. For example, the analysis for this brief could track only a small number of initiatives in this sample with a larger number of co-funders. It was more common for initiatives in the analysis to be associated with one or two funders. It is difficult to ascertain whether this finding is reflective of the norm for financing partnerships in girls' and women's education, or if the result was due to the difficulty of tracking financial flows and specific actors in partnerships.

Bilateral and Multilateral Co-Financing Partnerships

Amongst the education initiatives targeting girls and women, a much larger number of partners were tracked for those that were co-financed in partnership with bilateral or multilateral organizations (Table 1 through Table 4). The range of partners in initiatives co-financed with multilateral and bilateral institutions were diverse. They included other private foundations and charitable organizations, NGOs, state and government actors, private firms and corporations, and education institutes, amongst others. The programming area priorities mirrored those in the overall sub-sample for education initiatives targeting girls and women, and focused on one of three main areas: skills, workplace transition, and continuing education; access to education; or advocacy and policy.

India had the highest number of initiatives co-financed with bilateral or multilateral institutions. Aside from one initiative that operated in multiple countries in East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia (Technovation Challenge), the remaining operated in just one of either Bangladesh,

China, India, or Indonesia. This suggests that the strategic co-financing priorities for girls' and women's education of the bilateral and multilateral institutions in the sample were concentrated in a smaller number of countries in Asia as compared to those overall.

A Note on Canadian Co-Financing Partnerships

FIAP seeks to 'ensure that Canada's contributions have the greatest positive impact.' The many imperatives highlighted in the section of the brief above, 'FIAP and the Imperatives for Investing in Girls' and Women's Education in Asia', provide a strong rationale for expanding action. Results of this analysis point to a further opportunity and need to this effect (Table 4). However, determining the suitability of private-sector partnerships and the nature of proposed partnerships (including the composition of particular partners) would need to be carefully assessed.

The analysis found only one initiative to be co-financed by Global Affairs Canada (i.e., Marie Stopes China). The other initiative with Canadian assistance (i.e., Institute of Social Studies Trust in India) was funded by the International Development Research Centre, a federal Crown corporation. Both initiatives had a large number and range of partners. The low number of co-financed initiatives in Asia uncovered in the database may be due to Canada's shift towards investing in sub-Saharan Africa, which is undoubtedly a priority region.⁴¹ Alternatively, this finding may indicate the need to more explicitly publicly report Canadian engagement and partnerships in the sector.

⁴¹ FIAP states that "Canada will ensure that no less than 50 percent of its bilateral international development assistance is directed to sub-Saharan African countries by 2021-22".

Table 1. Bilateral Donor Co-Financing Partnerships

Initiative Name	Implementer	Funder(s)	Countries of Operation	All Education Sub-Sectors	Main Programming Area	All Programming Activities
Access Academy Program	Asian University for Women	Chevron Corporation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Goldman Sachs Gives, IKEA Foundation, MetLife Foundation, Open Society Foundation, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Takeda, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, The U.S. Department of State , The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Victor and William Fung Foundation	Bangladesh	Tertiary Education	Skills, Workplace Transition, and Continuing Education	Transitional support, Community engagement in support of students, Curriculum and extra-curricular support, Extra-curricular activities, Student assessment and progress
Azad Foundation Research and Advocacy	Azad Foundation	American Jewish World Service, Cartier Philanthropy, C&A Foundation, COMO Foundation, DMI Finance, EdelGive Foundation, Emerging Markets Foundation, Ford Foundation, Giving Women, Global Giving, HT Parekh Foundation, Human Dignity Foundation, iPartner India, John Wood Group PLC, Kingdom of the Netherlands , Mahindra Finance, Mahindra Insurance Brokers, Oak Foundation, pictet, Planeterra Foundation, Publicis Sapient, Reliance Foundation, Romeera Foundation, Satyamev Jayate, Shell Foundation, Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Trafigura Foundation, Vivel	India	Workforce Development/ Skills	Advocacy and Policy	Linking research and evidence with policy or implementation, Regulatory analysis focused on government policy, Advocacy campaigns/ initiatives/ movements
Education For All	Reliance Foundation	AARAMBH, Akanksha Foundation, Aseema, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, CRISIL Foundation, Goat Trust Lucknow, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Government of Gujarat, Government of Maharashtra, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (including regional Krishi Vigyan Kendras), Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services, Jan Vikas Beed Maharashtra, Magic Bus India Foundation, MelJol Mumbai, MSD India, Ministry of Earth Sciences, RedR-India Pune, Reliance Foundation, Society of Pollution and Environmental Conservation Scientists Dehradun, Tata Trusts, The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) , Uma Educational Society, Ummeed Mumbai Maharashtra, University of Chicago	India	Primary Education Secondary Education	Access to Education	Programs to improve access and equity in education, Life skills and personal finance training, Parental or community engagement in support of students, Programs targeting special needs or people with disabilities, Programs targeting other marginalized groups, Increasing or sustaining enrollment
Expanding Economic Opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs	Asia Foundation, iDE	GRSD Foundation, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency	Bangladesh	Adult Basic and Continuing Education Workforce Development/ Skills	Skills, Workplace Transition, and Continuing Education	Entrepreneurship and business skills programs, Employment skills programs, Professional certification/skills, Computer-assisted instruction/ learning programs/ products, Mentorship/ internship/ job placement

Table 2. Multilateral Donor Co-Financing Partnerships

Initiative Name	Implementer	Funder(s)	Countries of Operation	All Education Sub-Sectors	Main Programming Area	All Programming Activities
Anudip Foundation	Anudip Foundation	Accenture Services Pvt Ltd, America India Fund, Anudip Foundation USA, Bank of America, Cisco Systems Inc., Citi Foundation, Cognizant Foundation, eBay Foundation, e-Junction, Global Giving, ICRA, ITC, Michael and Susan Dell Foundation, Microsoft, Mphasis F1 Foundation, NetHope Inc, Nvidia, Omidyar Network Services, Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Tata Power, Tata Steel Processing & Distribution Ltd, The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) , United Way Worldwide, Wadhvani Foundation	India	Workforce Development/ Skills	Skills, Workplace Transition, and Continuing Education	Short-term technical/vocational course, English/language materials, Computer-assisted instruction/learning programs/products, Programs targeting special needs or people with disabilities, Mentorship/ internship/job placement, Employment skills programs, Entrepreneurship and business skills programs, Programs targeting other marginalized groups
Educate Girls	Foundation to Educate Girls Globally	Abhati Suisse, Accenture, APCO Worldwide, Bank of America, Bloom&Give, Bohemian Foundation, British Asian Trust, Cartier Philanthropy, The Circle, COMO Foundation, Cotopaxi, Crisil Foundation, Dasra, Educate A Child, Eros Foundation, Fossil Foundation, Fondation Albatros, Girls Not Brides, Give2Asia, GiveIndia, GlobalGiving, Government of Rajasthan, HDB Financial Services, International Finance Corporation , iPartner India, Jasmine Social Investments, Jester Foundation, LGT Venture Philanthropy, Lionbridge, Marico Limited, Mercuri Urval, Montpellier Foundation, Mulago Foundation, National Stock Exchange, Oracle, Piaget, Pratham, Sandhan, Skoll Foundation, STIR Education, Strategy&, Students Stand With Malala, UBS Optimus Foundation, University of Michigan, Vodafone Foundation, Vodafone Foundation India, Womanity Foundation, World Bank , 10x10 The Girls Education Project	India	Primary Education Secondary Education	Access to Education	Transitional support, Programs to improve access and equity in education, Increasing or sustaining enrollment, Parental or community engagement in support of students, Capacity building at the system level, Learning materials for students, Advocacy campaigns/initiatives/movements, Linking research and evidence with policy or implementation, Education sector research studies/surveys/assessment, Maths materials, English/ language materials, EMIS/Data systems, Computer-assisted instruction/ learning programs/ products, Programs targeting tribal or Indigenous groups, Teacher training, Mentorship programs, Standardized teaching materials, Student assessment and progress, School feeding programs and other non-financial targeted incentives, School operations or management
Technovation Challenge	Iridescent	Adobe Foundation, BNY Mellon, Google.org, MIT Media Lab, Oracle, Peace Corps, Salesforce.org, Samsung, Uber, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) , UN Women , Walmart Foundation, 3M	India, Pakistan, South Korea, Japan, China, Hong Kong, Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Australia	Secondary Education	Skills, Workplace Transition, and Continuing Education	Entrepreneurship and business skills programs, Learning materials for students, Mentorship programs

Table 3. Bilateral and Multilateral Donor Co-Financing Partnerships

Initiative Name	Implementer	Funder(s)	Countries of Operation	All Education Sub-Sectors	Main Programming Area	All Programming Activities
Rumah Kita Bersama (Rumah KitaB)	Yayasang Rumah Kita Bersama	Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade , Australia Indonesia Partnership for Justice 2, Ford Foundation, Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) , The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	Indonesia	Public Administration – Education	Advocacy and Policy	Linking research and evidence with policy or implementation, Advocacy campaigns/ initiatives/ movements, Education sector research studies/ surveys/ assessment, Programs targeting special needs or people with disabilities, Programs targeting other marginalized groups
The Samdhana Institute Gender and Women's Rights	The Samdhana Institute, Inc.	American Jewish World Service, Climate and Land Use Alliance, Ford Foundation, Global Green Grants Fund, ICCO Cooperation, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation , The Ecology Trust, The International Union for Conservation of Nature, The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Indonesia	Adult Basic and Continuing Education	Advocacy and Policy	Linking research and evidence with policy or implementation, Advocacy campaigns/ initiatives/ movements, Programs targeting tribal or Indigenous groups

Table 4. Initiatives Co-Financed by Canadian Institution

Initiative Name	Implementer	Funder(s)	Countries of Operation	All Education Sub-Sectors	Main Programming Area	All Programming Activities
Institute of Social Studies Trust	Institute of Social Studies Trust	American Jewish World Service, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, External Affairs Spouses Association Charitable Trust, Ford Foundation, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Heinrich Boll Foundation, HomeNet South Asia, Institute of Development Studies (IDS) Sussex, International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Canada, International Labour Organisation , International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation, International Society for Better Tomorrow, Johns Hopkins University, J.R.D. and Thelma J. Tata Trust, Ministry of Women & Child Development - India, SEWA Bharat, Swiss Network of International Studies, Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), UN Women , Wipro Cares	India	Public Administration – Education	Advocacy and Policy	Education sector research studies/ surveys/ assessments, Advocacy campaigns/ initiatives/ movements, Linking research and evidence with policy or implementation, Regulatory analysis focused on government policy, Textbooks/ books, Programs targeting other marginalized groups, Knowledge production/ mobilization, Education sector research studies
Marie Stopes China	Marie Stopes International	Agence française de développement (AFD), Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade , Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, CARE International, Children’s Investment Fund Foundation, Direct Relief, Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust, European Commission International Cooperation and Development , Ford Foundation, Global Affairs Canada , Global Health Corps, Government of the Netherlands , John Templeton Foundation, KfW Development Bank, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation , PAI.org, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency , The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) , The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) , Vitol Foundation, The Waterloo Foundation, West Wind Foundation, World Bank Group	China	Adult Basic and Continuing Education Secondary Education	Advocacy and Policy	Advocacy campaigns/ initiatives/movements, Life skills and personal finance training, Mentorship programs, Online learning portals, Chain of schools/centers, Programs targeting other marginalized groups, Regulatory analysis focused on government policy

Note: *IDRC is a Canadian federal Crown corporation. It is not counted as a bilateral ODA donor. It is simply included here as an additional indication of Canadian support as uncovered in the analysis.



Image: Magnus Wolfe-Murra/DFID Flickr, 2011

Conclusions

This brief is based on an original analysis of data on activity by private foundations and private-sector impact investors in girls' and women's education in East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia. It aims to inform potential action in view of two significant developments in Canada's international assistance strategy — the \$400 million commitment to girls' and women's education in response to the Charlevoix Declaration and the private-sector partnerships modality intimated in FIAP. The following conclusions are based on the analysis.

Girls' and women's education is an underserved priority area in East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia. Education initiatives explicitly targeting girls and women accounted for only 10% of all initiatives in the regional database under analysis. This indicates an **urgent area of unmet policy action** and a significant opportunity for Canada to meet its commitment. The bulk of initiatives targeting girls and women were concentrated in a small number of countries, both in co-financing partnerships with or without bilateral and multilateral institutions. There is

further potential for Canada to **expand its commitment** to girls' and women's education **in conflict-affected contexts, low-income countries, and countries with significant gender gaps in education in Asia.**

Existing priorities of initiatives targeting girls and women by education sub-sector and programming areas in the regions align with FIAP focus. Adult, basic, and continuing education and secondary education were the top two sectors addressed by the initiatives under analysis. Combined, the areas of skills, workplace transition, and continuing education, advocacy, and access to education constituted the main programming areas for the initiatives under analysis. This falls squarely within FIAP's articulated strategy for improving the life chances of girls and women through education.

There is a widespread need to increase the transparency of financial flows and partnerships involving private-sector actors. Tracking financial flows was extremely difficult. While the intention of the larger research project was to track cross-border, inter- and intra-regional investment levels, the lack of consistent and publicly available data significantly impeded this objective. Lack of such granular analysis hinders targeted action on where best to make investments and will require additional information for Canada to maximize the impact of its contributions.

Co-financing partnerships are opaque. Accurately ascertaining co-financing partners for particular initiatives was not straightforward. This is partially linked to the lack of transparency on data on financial flows. The opacity of partnerships has potentially critical implications given FIAP's strategy and concerns associated with partnering with appropriate private-sector actors. Furthermore, given the interest of some national governments in entering into co-financing initiatives and the diversity of partnerships, there is substantial work to be done to understand them. It is **strongly recommended that any potential areas for partnership are thoroughly investigated** for detailed information on the status of partners, the nature and size of their contributions, roles, and length of partner involvement in partnerships.