

# **SENDING GIRLS TO SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

**"A project of hope"**



**A report for all the generous donors who have contributed  
to an increase in empowerment, self-confidence and well-  
being for girls in Lawra.**



**Christabel,  
General Arts  
Ko SHS**



**Blessing  
General Arts  
Jirapa SHS**



**Mavis  
Business Studies  
Ko SHS**



**Lydia  
General Arts  
Daffimah SHS**

**With your support, Action Through Enterprise is enabling 29 young women to attend Senior High School - all the first in their family to do so - including two girls we've been working with in our SNAP disability programme. We are so proud of everything they have already achieved - and excited about what they will achieve in the future.**

### **A message from Lucy**

**“I am very happy for what you have done for me. I always feel comfortable on campus with the provisions which also contribute to my well-being in school.**

**With the help of Action Through Enterprise, I can be a role model, because we are the first girls that have access to Senior High School. I want to be a midwife in the future so that I will help my village people. That is my dream.”**

**Lucy Dapilah, Student, St. Francis Girls Senior High School,  
Jirapa**

**Click on the video below to hear from Lucy**



**"This is a project of hope. The positive impact of keeping girls in education ripples through the whole community."**

**Sarah Gardner, CEO, Action Through Enterprise**

Agnes is at the start of her adventure as a first year SHS student. She's from a small village called Biro, and has just collected the provisions she'll need for school. ATE provides girls with £300 of equipment, including a mattress, chop box, toiletry and sanitary items, educational resources and uniforms. Most rural families would not be able to afford this without our support - or would prioritise sending boys to school rather than girls.

In Agnes' case, her parents are elderly subsistence farmers, both illiterate, and she is the first person in her family to go to SHS. Maybe her three younger siblings will now follow in her footsteps?

Agnes hopes one day to become a teacher or a nurse - she certainly looks like she means business and will make everyone proud.



**Agnes**

**Food & Nutrition, Eremon SHS**



Rosemary is a brilliant example of how sending one girl to SHS can have an impact across a whole community. Because of ATE's support, she's now getting great grades at SHS and is a role model for other people with disability - proof that with the right backing, people can achieve great things. Her parents have a small farm and she helps out when not at school – but attending SHS means she will have other choices after she graduates, bringing new income and hope to her community .

**"You have given us a lot of things and through this we have known the importance of education. You have not given them in vain, we will use them and make sure that we bring success to you."**

**Rosemary**

**General Arts, Piina SHS**



**“The scholarship programme is really one that can have good future impact for these girls. When they come home from break, we see how good and decent they appear. They’re in school and they have hopes of a better life. They’ll have choices, professions and good families.”**

**Edith Karbo, Teacher, Karbo JHS**

Globally, there has been extensive research on the impact of keeping girls in education. Here are some headlines:

- Educated women reinvest 90% of their earnings back into their families, compared with 35% for men. They invest in their children's education and support their studies. (Clinton Global Initiative)
- Women with a secondary school education earn twice as much, on average, as women without an education. Lack of girls' secondary education costs countries between \$15 and \$30 trillion in lost lifetime productivity and earnings. (World Bank, 2018)
- The benefits of educating girls include faster poverty reduction, better maternal health, lower child mortality, greater HIV prevention and reduced violence against women. Girls’ right to education is integral to virtually every aspect of development, including economic growth and prosperity. (UN Women, Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, The Gender Snapshot, 2022)
- Each additional year of schooling can boost a girl's earnings as an adult by up to 20%. (The Gender Snapshot)
- Females in the rural areas are the most at risk of exclusion from Ghana’s higher education. (Ghana: tracing good and emerging practices on the right to higher education; policy initiatives on the right to higher education in Ghana, 2023)



**"This programme is an important element in our quest to eradicate poverty, stop early marriage and advocate for girls' education. None of the girls we supported have gone south to labour for money, because we are not just giving them what they want for school but also sensitising them and their parents on the dangers of this rural-urban migration at their tender age. They understand why we are helping them."**  
**Rexford Benon, Manager, Girls to School Project**

To get a sense of how the experience is affecting their lives, Rexford and the team conducted a questionnaire among 22 young women ATE has funded into SHS , across several communities.

Compared to girls who did not attend SHS:

- All thought they were likely to get better jobs and earn more
- All thought they were less likely to marry in their teens
- All said they had more confidence
- 95% said that in 3 years they hoped/expected to be doing more study

None of the girls' parents had attended any level of school at all – and, unlike their non-SHS counterparts – none of the girls had married, become pregnant or become economic migrants.



**“If not for the ATE Senior High School scholarship, most of these girls would have ended up pregnant and given out for early marriages.”**

**Iryuo Gaeten, PTA Chairman, Karbo JHS**

As part of our community engagement, we also spoke to a number of girls who have not attended SHS, to compare their life chances.



Jennifer, 19, has a very familiar story. She has dropped out from school, is already married and has a child. Her mother-in-law works for ATE as a cook, so we are in a good position to support her in the future – but the prospect of continuing in education is unlikely.



Mercy, 17, dropped out from school last year, knowing she couldn't afford to go to SHS and doubting she would even be able to keep up after an under-resourced education. “I have struggled to get some basic provisions for school and when I asked my parents, they complain they do not have to help me buy.” Now, she is training as a hairdresser, funded by the man she married last year.



Felicia, 25, is training as a seamstress – but it's not what she wanted for herself. Looking back at her childhood, she said: “I did not have uniforms and books. They did not take care of me. They say we girls don't have any importance to them - that we eventually marry and leave the house and do not help. More attention is paid to the boy than the girl.”

When girls' options are curtailed, another cycle of early marriage and teen motherhood begins. Of course, there is always hope – and we also provide apprenticeships and business grants to give them another chance – but their lives will likely be harder, poorer and less free than the girls who make it to SHS.



**“Every girl we support through Junior High into Senior High is part of the vital change our community – and our country – needs. This virtuous circle of resources and hope will reap benefits in the short, medium and long term.”**

**Gabriel Maanibe, ATE Country Director**

The girls, parents and teachers of Lawra have felt the impact of the Girls to SHS funding – and join us in hoping that we can continue supporting more and more girls into the future.

Of course, we also support hundreds of pupils through Junior High School, boys and girls, as well as funding and mentoring dozens of apprentices, small businesses and dry season farmers every year. And our work with disabled children is changing lives in many ways - including for a few who are accessing SHS with our support, something never before dreamed of.

Our co-ordinated projects enable us to make a broad impact on the widest number of pupils as well as a profound impact on a smaller group of girls – which in turn motivates and inspires the wider group.

With your generous support, we plan to fund another cohort of promising girls to further their education at SHS, in the knowledge that investment in girls’ education is a cost effective way of bringing change to families and whole communities.

**The work we’ve begun together is making such a difference – and we want to build on it. Every girl we can send to SHS is one more girl protected from early marriage and pregnancy, another girl with choices who can bring new skills, income and confidence into her family - and a new, inspiring role model for her community.**

