

Global Fund for Children in Asia

Global Fund for Children (GFC) partners with community-based organizations around the world to help children and youth reach their full potential and advance their rights. By pairing flexible funding with a range of support services and access to networks that can bring about social change, we seed transformative, cost-efficient solutions that help our partners to grow stronger and more effective in their work. Since 1997, GFC has supported more than 200 community-based organizations in Asia, working across issues such as youth entrepreneurship, girls' education, integration for displaced children, and health education. Guided by our four programmatic focus areas of **education**, **gender equity**, **Youth empowerment**, and **freedom from violence and exploitation**, we continue to unlock the potential of local organizations to transform their communities.

Current Asia Initiatives

Combatting Child Trafficking in India and Nepal

In 2018, Global Fund for Children launched a five-year initiative aimed at combatting child trafficking in India by strategically supporting local leaders who are working at the forefront of this critical issue. Informed by a landscape analysis and mapping to understand trends and gaps in anti-trafficking efforts, this project focuses on developing a network of local actors in the source and destination “hubs” of Mumbai and Kolkata.

Our partners provide direct services to affected children and youth – working to reduce risk, remove children from harm, and rehabilitate and reintegrate them into safer and more nurturing environments. They also conduct extensive prevention work, outreach, and advocacy, working to raise awareness of these critical issues and influence relevant policy. GFC also supports anti-trafficking organizations in Nepal, which is a source country for trafficking to India and the Middle East, with a focus on rescuing girls from exploitation in the commercial sex industry, and rehabilitating and reintegrating them in society through education, family strengthening, and foster care.

Sexual and Reproductive Health Education in Indonesia and Thailand

Around the world, girls, young women, and LGBTQ youth – particularly those who are ethnic minorities or refugees, live in rural areas, or belong to other highly marginalized populations – face exclusion, violence, and discrimination. Too often, they are left out of decisions that determine their futures. Our partners in Thailand and Indonesia are providing access to health education and strengthening supportive systems for children and youth to make informed decisions and live healthy and fulfilling lives.



Ph: Global Fund for Children

Countering Child Labor in Bangladesh

Through a three-year partnership with WE Trust, Global Fund for Children supports a network of organizations in Bangladesh that are dedicated to combatting child exploitation and hazardous labor in their communities. With a special focus on the slum regions of Dhaka, these community-based organizations are providing young people in challenging contexts with basic necessities, such as meals and shelter, and new opportunities – like education, vocational training, mentoring, and life-coaching – to break the cycle of hazardous labor and exploitation. Our partners help children leave and recover from dangerous situations, and work to prevent those situations in the first place.

Inclusivity in India, Pakistan, and Thailand

Funded in partnership with the Dorothea Haus Ross Foundation and Echidna Giving, GFC partners in India, Pakistan, and Thailand are improving access to and quality of education, and ensuring that girls have safe, girl-friendly places to learn. For refugees, children with disabilities, child laborers, and more, our partners provide inclusive, innovative educational programming that meets children and youth where they are and addresses their unique needs.

Looking Ahead: Strategic Directions for the Future

Global Fund for Children is committed to continuing our support to locally led, innovative, and strategically aligned child- and youth-centered organizations that work on the intersections of education, gender equity, youth empowerment, and freedom from violence and exploitation. We seek to expand and deepen our impact in the following areas.

Combatting Trafficking and Forced Labor in Asia

Multiple countries in Asia are source, transit, and destination points for trafficking, with children and youth left especially vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Within South Asia, Nepal and Bangladesh continue to be source countries for trafficking to India. From India, which is a source, transit, and destination country, victims from Bangladesh and Nepal are often taken to the Middle East and the Gulf States. Forced migration due to religious persecution and climate change has expanded the population of minority groups in some areas, such as the Rohingya in Bangladesh, and has increased their risk of exploitation and trafficking. In East

Asia, Thailand too is a hub, acting as a source, transit, and destination for trafficking from neighboring Asian countries. Across the regions, the lack of clarity about the laws and legal responsibilities of source, transit, and destination countries allows traffickers to continue to operate without the fear of legal repercussions.

With more than 20 years of experience in grassroots grantmaking and capacity development, Global Fund for Children is uniquely positioned to tackle these challenges by supporting local organizations at the heart of affected communities. Our partners will address the root circumstances that allow trafficking to exist in the source countries, such as generational poverty, gender-based violence, limitations on girls' education, and lack of knowledge and information. They will shift gender norms, social practices, and legal systems that create space for trafficking and prostitution in the transit countries. And across source, transit, and destination countries, GFC will focus on changing social practices and legal systems that protect and support traffickers, and social welfare systems that fail to provide effective rehabilitative services.

Youth Education, Entrepreneurship, Employability, and Employment in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka

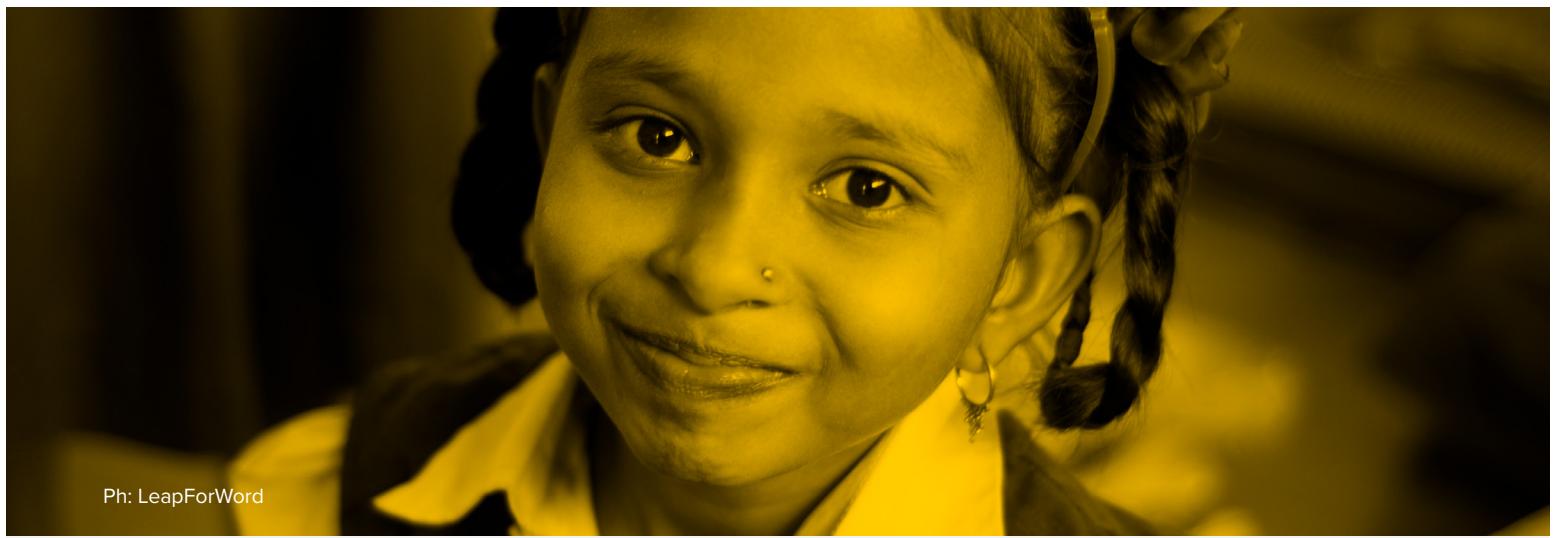
India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka all have large – and growing – youth populations, but limited resources to support their safe and gainful future employment. While certain issues are country-specific, the shared interests, histories, and cultures of this region allow for collaboration and opportunities for replication of successful interventions across borders. GFC is committed to bridging the educational, entrepreneurial, employment, and life-skills gaps that youth are currently facing by equipping them with the skills and knowledge they need to lead lives of dignity, purpose, and economic stability based on the fast-paced growth of their countries.

Promoting Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for Young People in Thailand, Cambodia, and Indonesia

Overall, funding and support for sexual and reproductive health related programming in Southeast Asia has gradually decreased over the last five years. Indonesia presents an exception to this trend, with development funding in this sector increasing significantly from approximately \$63 million in 2016 to over \$90 million in 2017. However, grassroots organizations in these countries still struggle to educate young people and their families about reproductive health; they also struggle with laws that create barriers to accessing reproductive health information and services. Global Fund for Children seeks to support efforts that are providing sexual and reproductive health education through schools, informal institutions, hospitals, and community centers. We also intend to support organizations working with LGBTQ+ communities to provide sexual health education in Indonesia, Thailand, and Cambodia, and to support organizations shifting gender norms and government policies as they pertain to LGBTQ+ communities and their access to information and healthcare in Indonesia.



Ph: Child Rights Protection Centre



Ph: LeapForWord

Advancing Girls' Education and Leadership in Nepal

Investing in girls' access to consistent, high-quality, formal education and in their leadership development throughout their formative years can create stronger and more prosperous societies. Supporting girls' education – particularly through secondary school – leads to significant economic benefits and improved health outcomes, including the reduction of child marriage and early childbearing. In Nepal, girls face numerous barriers transitioning from primary to secondary school, from accessing higher education, and from finding their way to positions of authority in the workplace. Global Fund for Children is committed to supporting girls' education and leadership, and to leveraging the currently untapped but enormous potential of girls and women in Nepal. In partnership with locally innovators, we seek to address and shift underlying social norms and practices that hinder girls' education and leadership.

Ensuring Access to Justice for Young People in Conflict with the Law in South Asia

In many countries in South Asia, children and youth in conflict with the law usually come from socio-economically challenged households for a number of reasons. Their families cannot afford proper legal representation, education, rehabilitation, or other services during their time in prison, or afterward. Laws pertaining to children's rights and how juveniles are supposed to be treated vary from country to country. In Pakistan, children and adults in police custody usually share the same cells, and children can become targets of torture, violence, and sexual abuse. They are also at risk for gang inductions, drug abuses, and disease while in prison. In India, laws are more child-friendly but their application remains biased against those children and families that cannot access quality representation or education about their rights and processes.

Rehabilitation is lacking across South Asia as a state-provided resource, and often, a traumatic childhood involved in the legal system leads to a lifetime of trauma and potential repeated conflict with the law. To ensure all children and youth have access to child- and youth-friendly justice systems, GFC intends to engage with nonprofits that are addressing multiple aspects of the problem – from advocating for separate laws and facilities for minors, to providing legal support, to creating rehabilitation-centered systems for young people.

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