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# 6 Nike Foundation

# The Nike Foundation in 2005 began investing in adolescent girls as powerful agents of change in the developing world.

This focus emerged from the company's desire to support the world's developing countries, recognizing the benefits that both Nike's business and consumers derive from emerging economies. Funded by Nike, Inc. the Foundation leverages the brand's drive for innovation and positive change, and its ability to inspire both. We believe that when girls receive support and realize opportunity for their futures, they can become an unexpected and powerful force in transforming their families, communities and the world.

Though our mission is simple, the issues are not. Most of the 500 million girls in the developing world face intertwined social and economic barriers that can easily derail their life path. Home chores prevent her from attending primary school. Early marriage and childbirth come between her and secondary school. A lack of income renders her vulnerable to violence and HIV/AIDS, leaving her twice as likely to be HIV-positive as a boy her age. Her passage into womanhood can be marked by an irreversible lack of health, independence and security.

We focus on keeping girls on the course of learning, toward a goal of empowerment. Just one additional year of schooling – costing as little as \$100 – can increase her future income by 10 to 20 percent. We invest in smoothing that path, and in two powerful drivers along its way: job preparation and income generation. Girls who successfully navigate these transitions will improve their lives, and over time, those of their brothers and sisters, husbands and children, communities and nations.

## Going beyond grant giving

The Foundation has so far committed \$28 million in multi-year agreements. We distributed \$14.7 million of those funds in FY05-06, impacting 500,000 girls primarily in Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Kenya, India, China and Brazil. Our findings from these investments have seeded the Foundation's future. Through this work, we experienced the paucity of girl-focused programs on the ground. We've seen the need for rigorous and consistent measurement alongside capacity building to accommodate higher levels of investing. At all levels, we've found low awareness of the opportunity girls hold to break cycles of poverty. To convert the raw potential of girls to real change, we apply Nike assets, networks and knowledge to address all of these factors.

## Helping long-term change

We work with governments and non-governmental organizations, businesses and advocates, communities and individuals to fund the programs, tell the stories, demonstrate the success and build the case for investment in girls.

### FY05: Laying the groundwork

In our first grant cycle, we sought out successful models for girls, and the means to measure them. For example, we supported BRAC (the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee), one of the world's largest non-governmental organizations. With Nike Foundation support, a new hybrid program, called ELA Kendras, created 225 new safe spaces for girls in Bangladeshi rural areas, providing income generation training for approximately 30,000 girls. To date, 199,900 girls have enrolled and the program eventually aims to reach 240,000 girls across Bangladesh.

We also started our work with the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) to apply a common measurement framework across the programs we fund to measure impact and evaluate cost effectiveness. Monitoring and evaluation efforts are central to our philosophy as a learning organization. These efforts continue to help assess the impact of our programs, document effective programs, and build the case for additional investment.

Alongside investments in Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED), Instituto Promundo, Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) and Population Council, these investments completed a portfolio comprised of those who had developed some of the best models addressing the unique challenges and opportunities for girls.

### FY06: Expanding our approach

Our second grant cycle expanded to include advocacy and building girl-focused capacity at two levels: grassroots and large scale.

To reach the grassroots, we sought out and supported six re-granting organizations that extended our reach to 92 community-based organizations. These partners – the Global Fund for Children, the Global Fund for Women, the Firelight Foundation, the Emerging Markets Foundation (EMpower), MamaCash and American Jewish World Service – support smaller, innovative organizations working at the community level. The Foundation's funding increased direct investment in programming targeted to adolescent girls.

In addition to supporting these grassroots organizations' work on the ground, we supported collaborative work and measurement methods. Today, they share best practices and enhance the impact of their individual and collective work through a network we have convened. We are hopeful this collaboration will spur program and organization growth. Someday, we hope to see these small but excellent programs grow in both breadth and depth, realizing exponential returns from investment that will allow them greater individual impact, as well as the ability to reach not hundreds of girls, but tens of thousands.

At the other end of the scale, we invested in larger infrastructures by funding and challenging bigger organizations – including Freedom

from Hunger, Mercy Corps, Save the Children, Catholic Relief Services, Millennium Promise, the Earth Institute at Columbia University, International Women's Health Coalition and others – to make focused investments that benefit girls and young women. With these partners, we are developing the criteria for best-practice girl programs, as well as methods for better supporting girls within broader, more traditional community programs.

Our work with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (MIT J-PAL) is helping us achieve this goal. MIT J-PAL is conducting rigorous, randomized research to document the impacts of various strategies to address the unique issues of adolescent girls in poverty. The most comprehensive of these efforts is a collaboration with Save the Children, and will investigate the interplay of basic skills training, safe spaces, community mobilization and livelihood preparation for 70,000 adolescent girls in western Bangladesh. Together, these projects will identify critical gaps in the evidence base and strengthen the case for investing in programs for adolescent girls.

In FY06, we used our convening power and communication expertise to influence the global visibility and resource allocation for adolescent girls' issues. In January 2006 and 2007, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, we co-hosted gatherings with the Women's Leaders Program that convened prominent global leaders to elevate the issue of adolescent girls and poverty onto the global agenda.

In May 2005, the Nike Foundation and the Global Business Coalition (GBC) on HIV/AIDS announced a unique partnership to develop strategies to reduce the burden of HIV/AIDS on girls, by identifying and galvanizing a committed group of companies from all sectors to engage in and advocate for action. The Healthy Women Healthy Economies Initiative hosted a four-day trip to Kenya in 2006 to provide GBC members the opportunity to discuss policy recommendations with government officials and visit successful girl-focused programs. Going forward, this initiative aims to support women and girls through increasing the accessibility and quality of education, health services and information, and economic opportunity.


As part of the Clinton Global Initiative in September 2005, we funded a \$1 million challenge grant to the Coalition for Adolescent Girls, alongside our partners ICRW and the United Nations Foundation. This multi-sector partnership's goal is to make girls central to the global discussions on poverty and development, through research, advocacy and mobilizing new allies. The gathering started with six organizations in 2006 and now comprises five UN Agencies, nine funders and 18 non-governmental organizations.

The Nike Foundation joined the Starbucks Foundation and Standard Charter Bank in supporting women and girl leaders in Africa through the Vital Voices Summit in Johannesburg in January 2007.

# FY07: Moving Forward


Our next grant cycle will continue to apply lessons learned from our first two years of work and will refocus and amplify our efforts to accelerate positive change for girls.

In FY07, the areas we will fund reflect the Foundation's theory of change: tackling the barriers girls face at life transitions and girls' economic empowerment. Each represents investment gaps we believe to be full of potential. They include:

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**The Power of Girl Networks** – Poverty breeds silence and isolation for girls. The energy of connection and a combined voice can break through, in cyberspace and real space.

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**Microinsurance and Girls** – Girls are often a family's insurance policy in times of sickness or need. Innovative insurance for girls and their families allows them to remain students, not caregivers.

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**Men and Boys: Seeking Leaders** – The attitude held by fathers, teachers and peers will accelerate or slow girls' progress. Cultural norms do change; these programs and individuals prove it.

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**A Brain Trust of Practitioners** – Giving those who know what works for girls the forums and resources to share learnings and quicken the pace of change.

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**The Business of Chores** – Products and services that lighten girls' time burden of domestic work, while introducing sustainable commercial models for their communities.

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**She's an Economic Powerhouse** – Transforming an unpaid labor force into a growth engine, through job preparation for adolescent girls and livelihood opportunities for young women.

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**Massive Scale for Girls** – Few large-scale, successful, girl-focused programs exist. We seek to make what's big even bigger, through linking infrastructures, increasing resources or informing policy.

We'll continue to seek creative, new solutions that address these gaps, and make direct, measurable impact on adolescent girls. We expect that impact to include the distribution of knowledge to other organizations, and the ability to be replicated or scaled. As we move into the future, we want to see exponential benefits from this funding, and seed best practice around the world – unleashing the potential of adolescent girls.

Nike has always believed in the power of one person to change their life, and inspire the lives of others. The Foundation is no different.