

End of AID Impact of Nepal's Girls' Education. *Devex*, 7 Jan 2026

Education interrupted

For one brief year, **Apsana Khatun** glimpsed a different future in Nepal. At 16, she had never set foot in a formal classroom. While her brothers went to private school, her days were spent cooking, hauling water, herding goats — and preparing a younger brother for the school she herself was never allowed to attend. **What she wanted instead was an education.**

“I have never dreamed,” she says. “If I had gone to school, maybe I would have had dreams. Dreams I could have held onto. But I don’t even know what those dreams would have been.”

That changed in January 2024, when the United States Agency for International Development launched its Equity and Inclusion in Education program, **sending teachers directly to villages and enrolling girls in accelerated classes** to make up for years of lost schooling. “I was so excited when I found out I could enroll in grade eight after just two years of schooling,” Khatun says.

In one year, she advanced to Grade 6. Then U.S. foreign aid cuts **suspended the program in January 2025 and terminated it in April**. Teachers stopped coming. Classes dissolved. [The fragile bridge back to school vanished](#), writes Sunita Neupane for Devex.

“With these programs ending, dropout rates will soar, irregular attendance will rise, and child marriage will become an even bigger threat in villages like Khatun’s,” says **Deepak Majhi**, equity and inclusive education officer at local implementing organization Center for Education and Human Resource Development. With classes gone, **Khatun’s mother has revived plans to marry off both her daughters**. “I want school, friends, and real learning,” says her 14-year-old sister, Anjum. Khatun agrees: “We don’t know where destiny leads.”

Read: [US aid cuts yank Nepal's girls out of school and into child marriage](#)