## The Batonga Foundation

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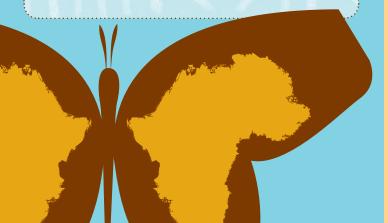
West African singer, songwriter and UNICEF International Goodwill Ambassador

John Phillips

Partner, Phillips & Cohen LLP and Director, Opportunity Fund

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#### What We Do

**Grant scholarships** for girls to attend existing secondary schools (grades 7 to 12) and provide continued support as they progress through university, vocational school or other skill-based adult learning activities.

**Build secondary schools** in select communities that can guarantee that a minimum of half the students will be girls and where the school, once built, will be operated through ongoing government and community support.

**Increase enrollment** of girls in existing schools by providing clean water and separate bathroom facilities as well as housing in cases where the distance from school to home is too great.

**Provide school supplies** in the form of textbooks, library books, pencils and other basic items which are often non-existent or in short supply.

**Support mentor programs** for female students that link them with older women who can serve as guides and elder 'protectors' as the girls face challenges during the course of their education.

**Explore alternative education models** such as mobile secondary schools and radio-based distance learning for remote communities or for families with cultural restrictions on girls being sent away from home for schooling.

Advocate for community awareness to promote and support girls' education by addressing the gender prejudice and cultural traditions that restrict the empowerment of women in general, and their access to education in particular.

## Where We're Going

Batonga's goal is to strengthen and develop initiatives currently in place while expanding our programs and presence in other African countries. Through identifying, supporting and learning from the most successful, cost effective programs in place, we hope ultimately to help them become replicable and self-sustainable.

The average American family spends more on backto-school supplies than it would cost for Batonga to send a girl to school in Sierra Leone for one year.



## Reine, Benin

"I was so happy to see my mother. I saw her and said, 'Mama, I'm saved.'"

Reine was removed from primary school and forced to move away when her parents could

no longer support her. After being beaten and mistreated, she escaped and returned home. Her family had been unaware of the consequences of sending her away, and when the director of her school asked her to re-enroll, her mother was relieved. A Batonga Girl Scholarship will allow girls like Reine to continue their education in secondary school, providing tuition their parents could never afford.

## Angelique Kidjo

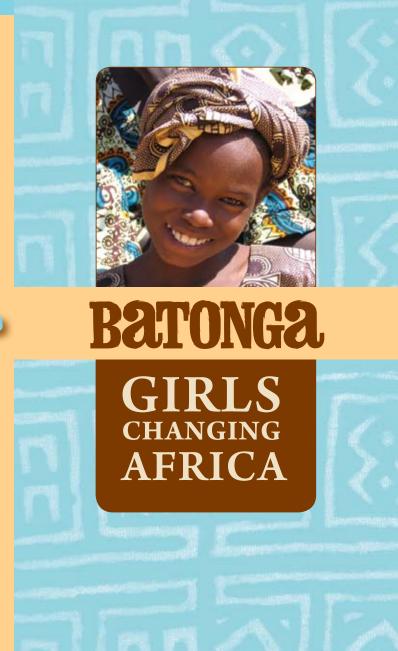
Angelique Kidjo, founder of Batonga, Grammy Award-winning West African singer, songwriter, and UNICEF International Goodwill Ambassador, made up the word "batonga." At a time when education for girls was not socially acceptable in her native country of

Benin, Angelique invented the word as a response to taunts on the playground. The word stuck with her long after her playground days, and Angelique internalized it as an assertion of girls' right to education.

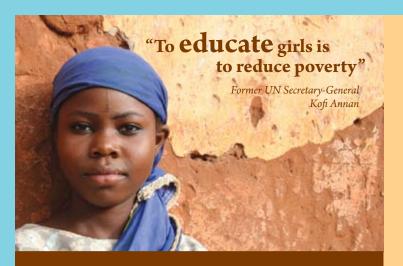
Although some members of Angelique's extended family argued that only boys should be educated, Angelique's mother, who had been educated herself, fought for her daughter's right to attend school. Angelique, in turn, has ensured that her daughter receives an education. Angelique has experienced firsthand how educating one girl leads to a whole lot more—it initiates a cycle of education, and a current of change.



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www.BatongaFoundation.org



Batonga is giving girls a secondary school and higher education so they can take the lead in changing Africa. Batonga believes that educating girls is the most cost effective way to help African nations improve quality of life for their citizens.

You do the math:

**ONE GIRL** 

**EDUCATION** 

**ONE GIRL Desire to Educate Others EDUCATION ONE GIRL** More **Educated** DESIRE TO Girls **EDUCATE OTHERS Higher Economic Productivity Reduced Maternal** MORE and Child Mortality EDUCATED Improved Family **GIRLS Nutrition and Health Increased Prevention** of HIV/AIDS We've come to one conclusion:

**A BRIGHTER** 

**FUTURE** 

**FOR AFRICA** 

## Why Now?

For over a decade, the UN Millennium Development Goals have focused international support on universal primary education. Today, more girls are graduating from elementary school in Africa than ever before.

But prejudice, poverty, travel distance and cultural traditions currently keep fewer than 17 percent of girls in sub-Saharan Africa from completing secondary school. Only a handful goes on to university, vocational school or some form of job training. So now, more than ever, there is an urgent need for support of secondary and higher education if this progress in elementary education is to take full effect. Batonga is taking steps now that will enable girls to improve the future of Africa.

### **Our Mission**

Batonga currently operates in five countries: Benin, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Mali and Sierra Leone, and is expanding to include others. Batonga believes that helping girls in Africa achieve success depends on more than access to schools.

A Batonga Girl can go to school in sub-Saharan Africa for one year for less than what it costs a child to go to private school for in the United States for three days.

"For me, education is so crucial because everything goes with it, like healthy politics and development... Educating girls in Africa gives them the strength and the tools they need to be mothers of change."

– Batonga Founder, Angelique Kidjo

Batonga aims not only to give girls secondary education, but also to provide them with the financial and emotional support they need to put it to good use. That's why in addition to building secondary schools, increasing enrollment, providing school supplies and granting scholarships, Batonga supports mentor programs, explores alternative education models and advocates for community awareness of the value of education for girls.

## **Our Strategy**

In choosing the individual girls, schools and communities to receive support, priority is given to the most disadvantaged populations within the target countries. Particular attention is given to girls who are AIDS orphans or whose families are affected by AIDS.

Batonga implements its mission at a country level by working in partnership with existing non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that have successful onsite experience in girls' education.

## Sarah, Sierra Leone

"I am sure that education is very important for my future. I want to be an accountant."

Sarah lives in a group home in Freetown; her parents were both killed during the civil war and

she was then adopted by an aunt who was unable to care for her. Sarah has to travel a long distance to school but she says that all her teachers look out for her due to her good behavior and academic performance. Sarah says that being a Batonga Girl will enable her to pursue her academic career.

The Batonga Foundation works because individuals like you give their time or resources to make a difference. Join us in helping girls change Africa.

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ZIP

# Nanaïssa, Mali

"I think education is important because it opens the spirit."

The third of five children, Nanaïssa has always loved math. "My proudest moment this past

year was when I went from being thirteenth in the first semester, to fifth in the second semester. This is because I didn't have the all the books or the materials in the first semester." Nanaïssa dreams of becoming a doctor. It is girls like her who are Batonga Girls in Mali.