GENDER ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROSPECTS IN EDUCATION

THE GAP REPORT
PART ONE

For every child
Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY

unicef

This report is the first step in an ongoing evaluation of progress towards gender parity in education that will lead to a comprehensive technical review to be released in the near future – *GAP Part II*.

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SECTION I

OVERVIEW

The progress towards gender equality in education by 2005 is outlined in Section I. The chapters provide a chronicle of the history and an analysis of the challenge to get all children – girls as well as boys – in school, or know why they are not.

CHAPTER

1

THE CLOCK STRIKES MIDNIGHT

These accomplishments are baby steps compared to what could have – and should have – been achieved.

On 1 January 2006, the world will wake up to a deadline missed. The Millennium Development Goal – gender parity in primary and secondary education by 2005 – will remain unmet. What is particularly disheartening is that this was a realistic deadline and a reachable goal. The tragedy of this failure is that an unthinkable number of children, the majority of whom are girls, have been abandoned to a bleak future.

The road to gender equality in education has had its successes, but the journey with its twists and turns is far from over. The fact that the total number of school-age children who are missing from school is projected to fall below 100 million for the first time since data have been recorded is a small victory.[1] In 81 developing countries, participation in education will rise to 86 per cent in 2005, up from 82 per cent in 2001.[2] But these accomplishments are baby steps compared to what could have – and *should* have – been achieved.

RATIONALIZATIONS AND REGRETS

Many reasons are given for missing this deadline. Bolstering security took precedence over, and precious resources from, girls' education. The hurdles for getting girls into school – poverty, gender roles and cultural traditions, HIV/AIDS, armed conflict and other emergencies, lack of accountability and inadequate management – are too high and cannot be readily scaled. However, each argument can be countered with an example of a country that succeeded despite the barrier. Kenya and Uganda, for instance, have closed the gender gap in education despite intractable poverty and the scourge of HIV/AIDS. Afghanistan's primary school enrolment rates have increased dramatically since 2002 despite ongoing conflict.

The *Gender Achievements and Prospects in Education (GAP)* report is not meant to chastise or shame world leaders for not meeting their commitment to girls' education. But failure to acknowledge that the first deadline for the Millennium Development Goals was missed would undermine credibility and derail any chance of meeting future timetables. Additionally, letting the missed deadline go by unmentioned would contribute to goal fatigue – the cynical appearance of setting meaningless 'feel-good' targets that are just window dressing, rather than genuine commitments.

WHAT IS GAP?

The *GAP* report, a multimedia project, is more than a wake-up call. Building on what people who work in development and education know and understand, it is designed to assess progress towards universal primary education, highlight innovations, identify obstacles, generate discussion and provide guidance. GAP begins at the point of agreed upon and established assessments and ends with a concrete

action plan. It includes this report and a website <www.ungei.org/gap>, which can be used together or separately, with each contributing to the total picture of the state of girls' education at the end of 2005.

The GAP multimedia project is the result of extensive reporting in the field; ongoing dialogue among people committed to girls' education; interviews with economists, educators, development specialists, field workers, community leaders, parents and children; statistical analyses; and a review of the literature. The website includes a LISTSERV to keep the discussion and progress moving long after 2005 comes to a close.

The report is unique in that it tries to provide something for everyone who is invested in seeing a world where all children receive their right to quality education. It is divided into four parts that can be read separately or as part of the overall action packet on gender parity in education. It includes a narrative about the state of girls' education, stories from the field, candid assessments and observations from reporters, interviews with renowned experts, report cards on each region and the latest statistics from UNICEF's '25 by 2005' acceleration initiative in girls' education[3] (*see Resources*).

THE EVIDENCE

As governments, development agencies and donors attempt to ascertain what went wrong and what went right in their work to narrow the education gender gap, there are certain realities that are indisputable.

None of the Millennium Development Goals will likely be met unless there is significant progress in girls' education. Educating girls is a surefire way to raise economic productivity, lower infant and maternal mortality, improve nutritional status and health, reduce poverty and wipe out HIV/AIDS and other diseases. All other development goals hinge on meeting the goals of gender parity and universal quality education.

Illiteracy is a catastrophe for any child, but particularly devastating for girls. Girls who are denied education are more vulnerable to poverty, hunger, violence, abuse, exploitation, trafficking, HIV/AIDS and other diseases and maternal mortality. If they become mothers, there is a greater chance that they will bequeath illiteracy and poverty to the next generation.

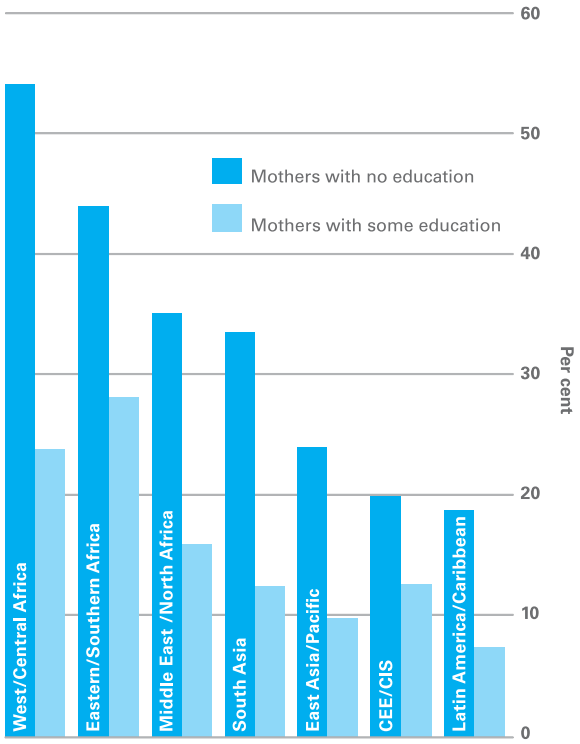
Educating girls has cascading benefits. Educated women are less likely to die in childbirth; more likely to have healthy babies; more likely to send their children to school; are better able to protect their children and themselves from HIV/AIDS, trafficking and sexual exploitation; and are more likely to contribute fully to political, social and economic development *(see Chart, below)*.

Educating girls benefits both boys and girls. The most effective way to ensure quality education for all children is to eliminate the barriers for girls: schools that are long distances from home, school fees and other hidden costs, lack of safe water and sanitation, discrimination and the threat of violence.

Gender parity in education will lead to gender equality in society. Educating girls is a means to an end. Quality education is the gateway to equal access to information, opportunity, self-determination, and political and social empowerment.

The clock strikes midnight and opportunities have been missed. The time for promises and declarations is over. Today, global leaders stand at the crossroads. Choosing the right path will lead to the dawning of an era of hope and equality.

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL, BY MOTHERS' EDUCATION



Source: *Progress For Children: A report card on gender parity and primary education*, No. 2, UNICEF, New York, April 2005, p. 8.

CHAPTER
2

Girls' education is good social policy.

AMBITIOUS GOALS, PRAGMATIC ACTION

A country would never consider sending its national football team to the World Cup if half the team were unprepared. Yet, many countries attempt to tackle their greatest development challenges with half their populations ill equipped to contribute to society. Failure to achieve gender parity and universal education has tragic results, the least of which is underdevelopment.

Gender parity in education is the backbone of the Millennium Development Goals, coming due a full 10 years before the other Goals. Decades of research have shown that investments in girls' education yield great dividends, what development experts call the 'multiplier effect'. An erudite citizenry is an asset for every country. Education has similar income-producing benefits for boys and girls, men and women. Generally, the more education one has, the greater the individual income potential. But educating girls goes beyond individual status and achievement. The benefits trickle down to the next generation, with improved health and survival rates for infants and children, reduced rates of fertility, higher rates of schooling for the next generation and greater spheres of influence within the family, community and political arena. When an entire generation of girls is educated, the trickle turns into a gush of possibility.

WORLD LEADERS IDENTIFY GIRLS' EDUCATION AS A DEVELOPMENT TOOL

The global struggle for universal education is nearly 60 years old, and those involved over the decades can often recount the milestones by heart. Universal education was recognized as a right in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and again in 1989 when the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In March 1990 at Jomtien, Thailand, the World Education For All Conference reiterated that every child has a right to complete primary education.

Girls' education was identified as a development tool in September 1990 at the World Summit for Children, when the global community agreed to the *Goals for Children and Development in the 1990s*, including "universal access to basic education and achievement of primary education by at least 80 per cent of primary school-age children through formal schooling or non-formal education of comparable learning standard, with emphasis on reducing the current disparities between boys and girls."[4]

A decade later, at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, six goals were endorsed – two-thirds pertaining to gender parity and equality in education. The next year, the Millennium Summit gave birth to the Millennium Development Goals, which also focused on girls' education as being crucial for development.

The push for gender parity in education has produced three UN flagships for girls' education: Education for All, headed by UNESCO; the

Fast-Track Initiative, under the auspices of the World Bank; and the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, coordinated by UNICEF. Each lead agency, active in all the enterprises, coordinates various partners including development agencies, donor nations and non-governmental and community-based organizations.

CAN REGIONS GET ON TRACK AND REACH THE NEXT EDUCATIONAL GOAL?

Girls' education is good social policy. Yet, three regions – Middle East/North Africa, South Asia and West and Central Africa – will fail to meet the gender parity goal in primary education by 2005. In addition, some of the 125 countries on course for meeting gender parity have such low total enrolment that gender parity translates into boys and girls equally out of school, rather than a jump in girls' enrolment.

If countries meet the next deadline of universal education by 2015, they will have fulfilled two goals – gender parity and education for all. The question is, can the next goal be met if the initial deadline was missed? The answer to this question lies in assessing what has been done and what still must be done.

Analysis of household survey data from 1980 to 2001 found a high average annual rate of increase in the net enrolment/attendance ratio of 1.4 per cent per year for the Middle East and North Africa, and a low average annual rate of increase of 0.35 per cent for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Regions with relatively high starting points for gender parity made the least gains in average annual rate of increase, underscoring the difficulty of achieving those last few percentage points. Regions with the lowest level of school participation can achieve high average annual rates of increase despite looming poverty and disasters.

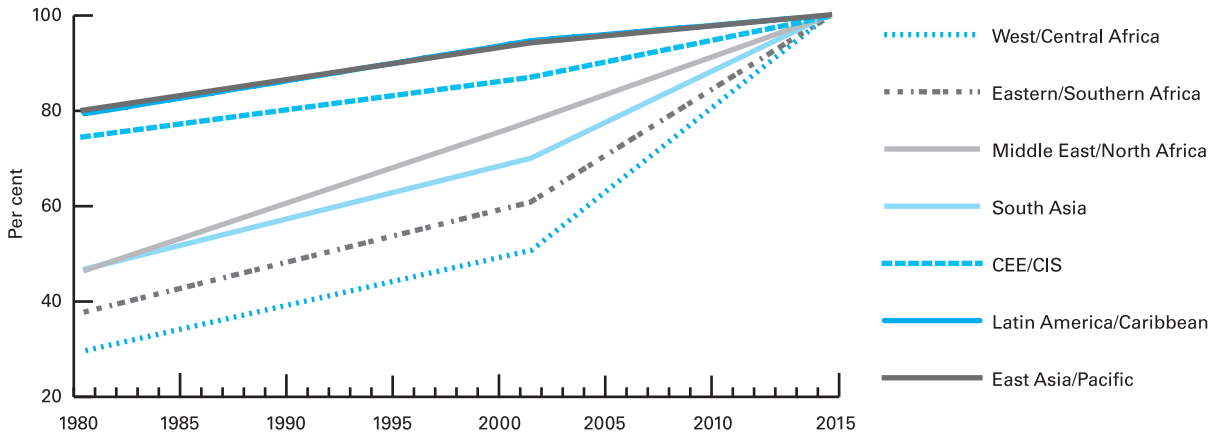
The projected average annual rate of increase required to meet the goal of universal primary education by 2015 is 1.3 per cent over the next 10 years – about the rate achieved in the Middle East and North Africa over the past two decades. Three regions – West and Central Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, and South Asia – would need to achieve higher average annual rates of increase to meet the goal: 3.2 per cent, 2.8 per cent and 1.9 per cent, respectively (*see Chart, below*).

There is cautious optimism about the chances of the Middle East/North Africa, East Asia/Pacific, and Latin America/Caribbean regions meeting the 2015 deadline. And while Central Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States must redouble their efforts, it is certainly possible for that region to reach universal education by 2015.[5]

Most countries in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia will need a significant boost in their average annual rates of increase in order to reach the 2015 goals. Some 37 countries, most in sub-Saharan Africa, will need to have an average annual rate of increase of over 2 per cent in order to reach the goal. Some 800 million illiterate adults living in the world today are grave testimony to what lies ahead if these regions fail to achieve this goal.[6]

The lesson from other regions is that Herculean efforts do pay off. The true test of the world's intention is if it will expend the resources required to meet these commitments.

AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE OF INCREASE IN TOTAL NET ENROLMENT/ATTENDANCE RATIOS, 1980-2015



Source: *Progress For Children: A report card on gender parity and primary education*, No. 2, UNICEF, New York, April 2005, p. 5.

CHAPTER 3

NO EASY JOURNEY

Obstacles, big and small, continue to thwart efforts to get girls into school.

The 2005 timetable for gender parity in education was realistic and attainable. It was also ambitious and demanding. Yet, obstacles, big and small, continue to thwart efforts to get girls into school. They are not secrets: intractable poverty, insidious gender roles and cultural traditions, HIV/AIDS, armed conflict, other catastrophic emergencies and a lack of basic infrastructure deprive girls of their rightful place in the classroom.

POVERTY

Poverty extinguishes hope of going to school for many children *(see Chart, page 9)*. Girls are more likely than boys to lose educational opportunities due to poverty. Destitute families often cannot afford to send all their children to school. If it means choosing between sons and daughters, girls usually lose out.

Even in cases where primary education is free, hidden costs such as books, supplies, uniforms or food may prohibit sending daughters to school. In societies where married women live with their husbands' kin, parents find little value in investing limited funds in a daughter's education only to see another family reap the rewards.

Other costs, such as lost income or household labour, also derail girls' chances of attending school. If household money or chores are needed, girls often land in the paid child labour force or are required to fetch water, find firewood and care for younger siblings or ill family members. There is a high correlation between work and girls' school enrolment and completion rates. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, for instance, total hours worked per week strongly predicted the rate of girls' school attendance.[7]

In Cambodia, poverty drives innumerable girls into the labour market. Seng Srey Mach, 15, was forced to drop out of school for two years to work in the fields when her mother became ill. She thought that her education was lost forever.

"I used to cry when I saw my friends on their way to school," said Seng Srey, who lives with her mother in Prey Veng Province. She's not crying anymore. An OPTIONS scholarship, run by World Education, CARE International, The Asia Foundation and Kampuchean Action for Primary Education, with support from UNICEF and the United States Department of Labor, has allowed her to attend classes at Dey Thoy School in Bung Preah Commune.

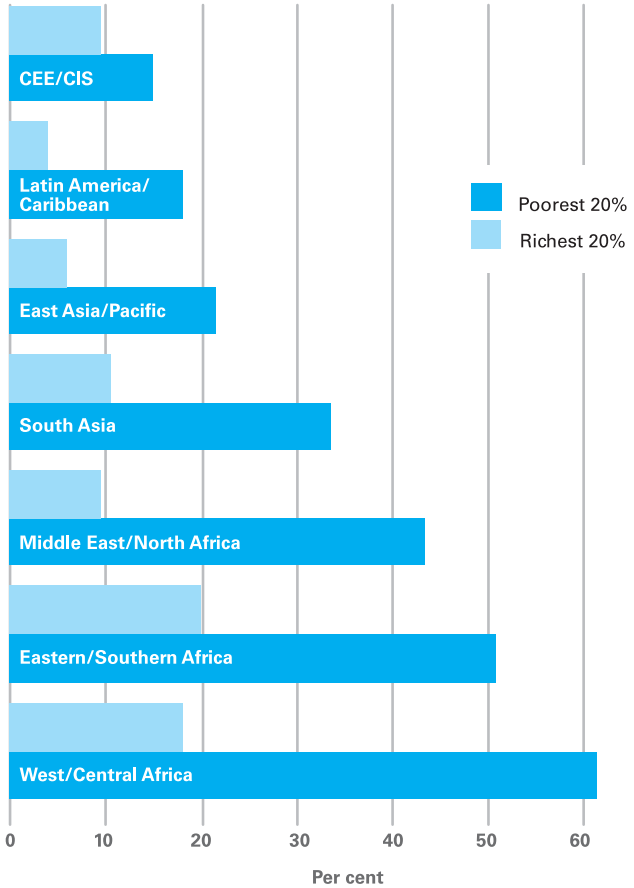
In poverty-stricken areas like Prey Veng, families frequently migrate because of alternating bouts of flood and drought. Impoverishment and instability put girls in further danger of illiteracy and exploitation. The scholarships help protect children like Seng Srey from child labour, trafficking and sexual exploitation, which swallow indigent girls. OPTIONS is bringing hope to girls in other provinces as well, including Kompong Cham, Banteay Meanchey and parts of Phnom Penh.[8]

National poverty also makes schooling inaccessible. When countries are mired in debt and large portions of their budgets go to loan repayment, education is often the first casualty of cost cutting. Dilapidated schools are not fixed or replaced, roads are not built or maintained, books and other supplies go missing, teachers are not trained or paid adequately and school fees soar. When these conditions exist, few families can send their daughters to school and in many cases would not want to send them even if they could. Families are afraid to permit daughters to travel distances on unsafe roads or see little value in the education provided by under-funded schools.

GENDER ROLES AND TRADITIONS

Girls and women are often shackled by gender roles and outdated traditions, with male privilege and entitlement ensuring that when educational opportunities are limited, boys will take available classroom space.

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL, BY HOUSEHOLD WEALTH QUINTILE



Source: *Progress For Children: A report card on gender parity and primary education*, No. 2, UNICEF, New York, April 2005, p. 7.

Early marriage for girls is pervasive in many cultures. Bride prices are incentives for parents to forgo educating their daughters and instead marry them – sometimes as young as 10 – to older husbands. Many girls become mothers in early puberty. In many places, official or informal educational policies prohibit married or pregnant girls from attending school. If a girl was attending school, once she is married or pregnant her education often stops.

Pregnancy may also result from rape, involvement with 'sugar daddies' who provide money or gifts, or sexual liaisons with male students or teachers. Many girls are victims of sexual harassment and violence inside and outside of school. When parents are afraid that their daughters will not be safe going back and forth to school or in the school environment itself, they keep them home.

Too often, schools themselves hurt the cause of girls' education. There are few women teachers, or if there are female instructors, the head teachers are male. Textbooks may reinforce gender stereotypes, with boys depicted as active and girls as passive. Curricula often exclude girls from mathematics, science and technology. Girls drop out when classes are not relevant, if there are no role models or if completing school fails to prepare them for meaningful employment.

Gender roles and traditions that keep girls from school contribute an additional barrier to universal education – illiterate mothers. Children whose mothers have no education are more than twice as likely to be out of school as children whose mothers have some education. In developing countries, 75 per cent of the children not in primary school have uneducated mothers.

Following decades of war, Somalia faces innumerable challenges, including low enrolment and attendance rates in primary education – 12 per cent for boys and barely 10 per cent for girls. Building from scratch, the country has an opportunity to create gender-sensitive schools and an inviting learning environment for all children.

With no central government, locally-managed Community Education Committees have been formed and many are attempting to take advantage of this opportunity. The committees exist in 90 per cent of schools across the country, with women making up nearly a quarter of their membership.

United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and community-based groups have helped

to develop a countrywide curriculum and textbooks for primary grades. A series of workshops with all stakeholders has crafted a 'home-grown' curriculum that respects cultural differences while advocating for children's rights. For the first time, girls in Somalia are seeing images of themselves in non-traditional roles.

"Gender training is a key issue," said Mohammed Abdirahman Jama, a 39-year-old teacher trainer. "In the past, male teachers – and even bigger boys – harassed the girl students and teachers. Now we discuss how to involve girl students and how to encourage women head teachers and community leaders...." [9]

HIV/AIDS

The devastation wrought by HIV/AIDS takes its toll disproportionately on young people, especially young women. A quarter of the almost 40 million people living with HIV/AIDS are between the ages of 15 and 24. Of the new infections in 2003, more than half were among this age group, with the vast majority being young women. Worldwide, 62 per cent of 15- to 24-year-olds living with HIV/AIDS are female. In sub-Saharan Africa, young women are three times more likely than young men to be living with the disease.[10]

The high infection rate among women is directly tied to gender roles in which women have no power to negotiate relationships. Women often do not have access to information about HIV/AIDS prevention or contraception, or, if they do, are powerless to use this information to protect themselves. Additionally, the age of infection decreases when young girls are married off to older men or are victimized by males.

The execrable toll on young people goes beyond living with HIV/AIDS. It has left countless children orphaned and vulnerable, has derailed decades of gains in development benchmarks, including life expectancy, and has diverted precious resources from social services. The pandemic has ravaged the education sector, which is losing not only crucial funds and supplies but also

its most important resources – teachers and administrators. In hard-hit countries, school availability has plummeted.[11] As education opportunities dwindle, girls are sacrificed.

Girls are regularly taken out of school to care for ailing family members or forced to work to replace lost income. The pandemic has created a generation of orphans, unprotected and left to fend for themselves. In sub-Saharan Africa, the epicenter of the orphans crisis, children aged 10 to 14 who have lost both their parents are less likely to be in school than their peers who are living with at least one parent. Studies in Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia found that those children orphaned by HIV/AIDS who are in school are less likely to be at the correct grade level for their age group.[12]

The cruel irony is that without an education, children are deprived of the most effective means of preventing HIV/AIDS. Life skills education that includes accurate information about the virus and its transmission is directly correlated to decreases in infection rates. A 2001 UNICEF survey in Zambia found that women with secondary and higher education are more likely to delay sex, while those with no education are more likely to have sex without a condom. Educated young men are more likely to use condoms.[13]

ARMED CONFLICT AND OTHER CRISES

Whether an all-out internecine war, a series of deadly eruptions, an economic crisis or a natural disaster, calamities wreak havoc on education. Schools are often used as barracks by the military, shelters for refugees, triage centres for victims or sites for administering emergency services.

Girls are especially vulnerable during catastrophes because gender inequality is exacerbated and social norms break down. Women and girls often carry the heaviest burden of day-to-day family life during crises. Domestic violence surges during stress and turmoil. And throughout history, rape has been used as a weapon of war.

Education is critical during times of emergency. Along with sports, education can help children recover from trauma, assist them in piecing their lives back together and restore routine to an otherwise fractured existence. Essential services can be provided at school, including psychosocial interventions. Girls' education is particularly crucial in that it can provide a protective environment, and enable young women to learn assertive behaviour and develop the necessary skills to cope with adversity. Schools can be a salve for all children during times of crisis.

The deep scars of fierce battles are etched on the countryside of Angola after three decades of civil war. A newfound peace has dawned. New schools, emerging from the ashes of demolished buildings, are the foundation of renewed optimism. Leandro Duarte Bandeira, an 8-year-old traumatized by the violence, looks forward to a place where he can learn peacefully.

"I remember the war, bombs falling, houses falling, children being taken off their mothers' back and shot at," said Leandro. "I used to have nightmares that I was being chased by the military and they were shooting at me."

Today, Leandro dreams of school. UNICEF has teamed up with the Nelson Mandela Foundation with support from the German National Committee for UNICEF and the private sector to make his dream come true. Over the next three years, 1,500 schools will be repaired or built in Angola.

"Now I think about my perfect school," said Leandro. "This for me would be a school with proper windows, doors, desks, electricity, a vase with flowers in my classroom, a garden, a playground and breakfast so we can study properly."[14]

LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Universal education depends on an infrastructure that supports quality education. Requirements for accessible, gender-sensitive schooling go beyond the physical structure of a building or the classroom content. If schools are located far from communities or students must travel on unsafe or nonexistent roads, creative solutions to these problems must be found. Otherwise children, especially girls, will simply stay away.

During the week, three sisters from Bhutan – Chandra, 9, Tika, 8, and Lela, 7 – live six hours away from their family in a hut built of mud and sticks. The girls stay there to attend the closest school to their community. They walk back to their village, Pakhey, on Saturdays to see their parents and return to their temporary dwelling on Sunday with food for the week.

"I like studying," said Chandra, "but I don't like staying here, away from mother and father. I want to study and live with my parents."

The Bhutanese Government is working to put an end to the girls' long journey. The government is constructing 137 new community schools by the end of 2005 to ensure that parents will not have to choose between their children's education and their safety. One of those schools will be built near the sisters' village and the girls will once again live at home as a family.[15]

There are many non-curriculum considerations that support girls' education, and failing to provide them makes education inaccessible, especially for girls. Schools need safe water and separate, clean sanitation facilities. Too often, schools have polluted water supplies and filthy, broken latrines. In many cases there are no water or sanitation facilities at all. Health education curricula are undermined if children are unable to practise what they learn about drinking safe water or washing their hands. If parents think that schools are hazardous places, they will keep their children home. Many times girls who put up with deplorable conditions drop out once they begin to menstruate.

Improving water and sanitation in schools will not only shift gender parity in education into high gear, it will also improve the odds of meeting the health-related Millennium Development Goals. Getting children to wash their hands could reduce diarrhoeal disease among children by 40 per cent to 50 per cent and respiratory illnesses by 30 per cent, according to the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.[16]

Demand for education has outpaced availability of schools in some regions. Advocacy campaigns have been overwhelmingly successful – sometimes too successful. Families and children recognize that education is a human right, and they want to stake claim to it. But there may not be enough schools. What results are overcrowded classrooms, untrained or overworked teachers, and children who crave an education only to find out that the

closest school is too far away. Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia saw huge jumps in primary school enrolment when they eliminated school fees, resulting in packed classrooms and overtaxed teachers. The Malawi Government estimated that it was 18,000 teachers short of reaching its goal of a teacher-student ratio of 1 to 60.

Quality education is lost when children are jammed into classrooms with insufficient textbooks and untrained teachers. If the curriculum or the teaching methods are poor, schools will neither engage children nor prepare them for the job market. If the classroom replicates gender inequality, girls are shortchanged and remain powerless within families and society.

Responding to the influx of students after Kenya eliminated school fees, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology implemented a pilot programme of child-centred and participatory learning in nine districts. It did this by ensuring optimum physical structures, that had safe water, adequate sanitation, clean, well-ventilated and lit classrooms, and stimulating, active and child-centred spaces; relevant and appropriate curriculum; and ongoing teacher training and assessment.

By using locally available resources and low cost teaching aids, the average Kenyan Standard One classroom was transformed into a stimulating oasis for about KES 2,000 (about US $27). The new child-friendly schools are receiving rave reviews.

For Ayub Yusuf, 25, teaching has taken on a new excitement. "The training on child-friendly, gender-responsive and stimulating classrooms made me realize that I could do a lot to make learning fun," he said.

Elisheba Khayeri, the head teacher at Ayany Primary School in Nairobi, underscores the new enthusiasm that flourishes in these schools. "The teachers have become so positive in their outlook to work," she said. "They are friendly to the children and are working closely among themselves more than ever before."

And the District Commissioner notices a refreshing din as he travels throughout the school. "The teacher is no longer the voice we hear in the classroom, we now hear the voices of children, too. There is a lot of movement in the classrooms. Children are no longer confined to desks. The teachers and pupils are engaged in dialogue and consultation. The role of the teacher has changed a lot. It looks like they are also learning from the pupils and there is a friendly atmosphere in the classroom."[17]

A CONFLUENCE OF CIRCUMSTANCES

Every barrier to girls' education is challenging in and of itself. But none of these obstacles exists alone. Poverty and discrimination are underlying causes of gender disparity in education wherever it exists. If girls are more likely than boys to be out of school for whatever reason, poverty and oppression will factor in. Even in regions where overall gender disparities affect boys more than girls, such as in Latin America and the Caribbean, girls are less likely to be educated in groups affected by poverty and bigotry, such as ethnic minorities, indigenous populations and those living in rural communities.

The fact that there is no single cause for girls being denied their right to education underscores the importance of intersectoral approaches in the struggle to meet the education Millennium Development Goals. It further highlights the need for national interventions over narrowly focused projects, because poverty and discrimination are pervasive and need to be systematically tackled.

The journey to gender parity and universal education will continue to be slow and perilous unless the interweaving tentacles of poverty, discrimination, inequality, violence and disease are unraveled and dismantled.

SECTION II

TODAY'S CHALLENGE, TOMORROW'S PROMISE

Gender parity in education is the first milepost of the journey towards achieving universal primary education. Section II examines the current state of gender parity in education in each region, identifying the obstacles and presenting effective interventions. Through reporters' notebooks it provides candid observations from field visits, while the last chapter points the way forward.

CHAPTER 4

Poverty, armed conflict, emergencies, HIV/AIDS, the rural-urban divide and gender roles build walls around educational opportunities, fencing children out rather than inviting them in.

EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

EQUALLY OUT OF SCHOOL

"Adults make promises and don't keep them. That's why we don't have change. When you don't give a child an education… you are losing someone who makes the world different and a better place."

Elleni Muluneh, 18, one of the founders of Ethiopian Teenagers Forum

The picture of Eastern and Southern Africa is deceiving. Overall, gender parity in primary education is 98 per cent for the region and is on target for meeting the 2005 goal of equal numbers of boys and girls in school. But when 21 million children are out of primary school, as is the case in Eastern and Southern Africa, gender parity is hardly cause for celebration.

Gender parity in this region translates into boys and girls equally out of school *(see Chart, page 17)*. Regardless of gender, regionally 38 per cent of school-aged children were not in school in 2001. When comparing urban and rural areas, the percentages of children missing their education were 22 and 42, respectively.

The degree to which gender parity in education will be met varies from country to country. Based on primary net enrolment/attendance ratios of 2001, there are 12 countries in the region on track to achieve gender parity in primary education by 2005 – Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

But of these 12, only 3 countries have more than 90 per cent of children in school: Mauritius (99 per cent), Seychelles (95 per cent) and South Africa (94 per cent). Four of the 12 countries have fewer than 75 per cent of their children in school: Kenya (70 per cent), Madagascar (69 per cent), Zambia (67 per cent) and United Republic of Tanzania (54 per cent).

Furthermore, seven countries – Angola, Burundi, Comoros, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Somalia – will have fewer girls than boys in primary school. In addition to their overall meagre percentages of children in school in 2001, ranging from a low of 11 per cent in Somalia to a high of 62 per cent in Angola, there is also a significant gender gap.[18]

BARRIERS

What is particularly noteworthy in Eastern and Southern Africa is the region's dilemma of demand versus availability. By and large, enrolment has increased because of reforms to end school fees. Yet, there are many children who now clamour for an education, only to find out that there is no room.

Quality, retention and learning achievement have often been sacrificed in the quest to get as many children into school as possible. Gains in enrolment are sometimes countered by high dropout rates. In Rwanda, for instance, free basic education swelled classrooms. But in return, the dropout rate jumped from 14 per cent to 18 per cent in 2004. In spite of increased enrolment, particularly in Kenya, Rwanda, The United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda, all of which abolished school fees, the number of children in school region-wide remains treacherously low.

Heroic efforts to reach school-age children, especially girls, have been thwarted by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Education systems have been devastated by the loss of teachers and administrators to illness and death. Schools in rural areas are especially hard hit because teachers often relocate to urban areas where they or their family members can access medical care in hospitals and health clinics. Malawi saw this firsthand as pupil-teacher ratios ballooned to 96 to 1 as a result of HIV-related illness.[19] High absenteeism among teachers and students brought on by HIV/AIDS has contributed to the decimation of national education systems.

The epidemic's direct toll on Africa's children is immeasurable. Because of HIV/AIDS, they may have never seen the inside of a classroom. Orphans and other children affected by HIV/AIDS are kept from school to care for sick relatives, or they join the labour market to bring extra income into the household. Girls are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS and represent the fastest-growing segment of new infections.[20]

Countries on target to meet the gender parity goal have pockets of gender disparity in rural areas and among nomadic groups. Long distances between villages and schools and poor infrastructure, including lack of water and sanitation facilities, shut girls out of school. When girls must trudge many kilometres for water or wood, they have neither the time nor the energy for class. Fetching water becomes increasingly difficult during times of drought, a common occurrence in the region. Although Kenya has achieved gender parity, girls are more likely to be kept from school in arid and semi-arid regions because of drought.

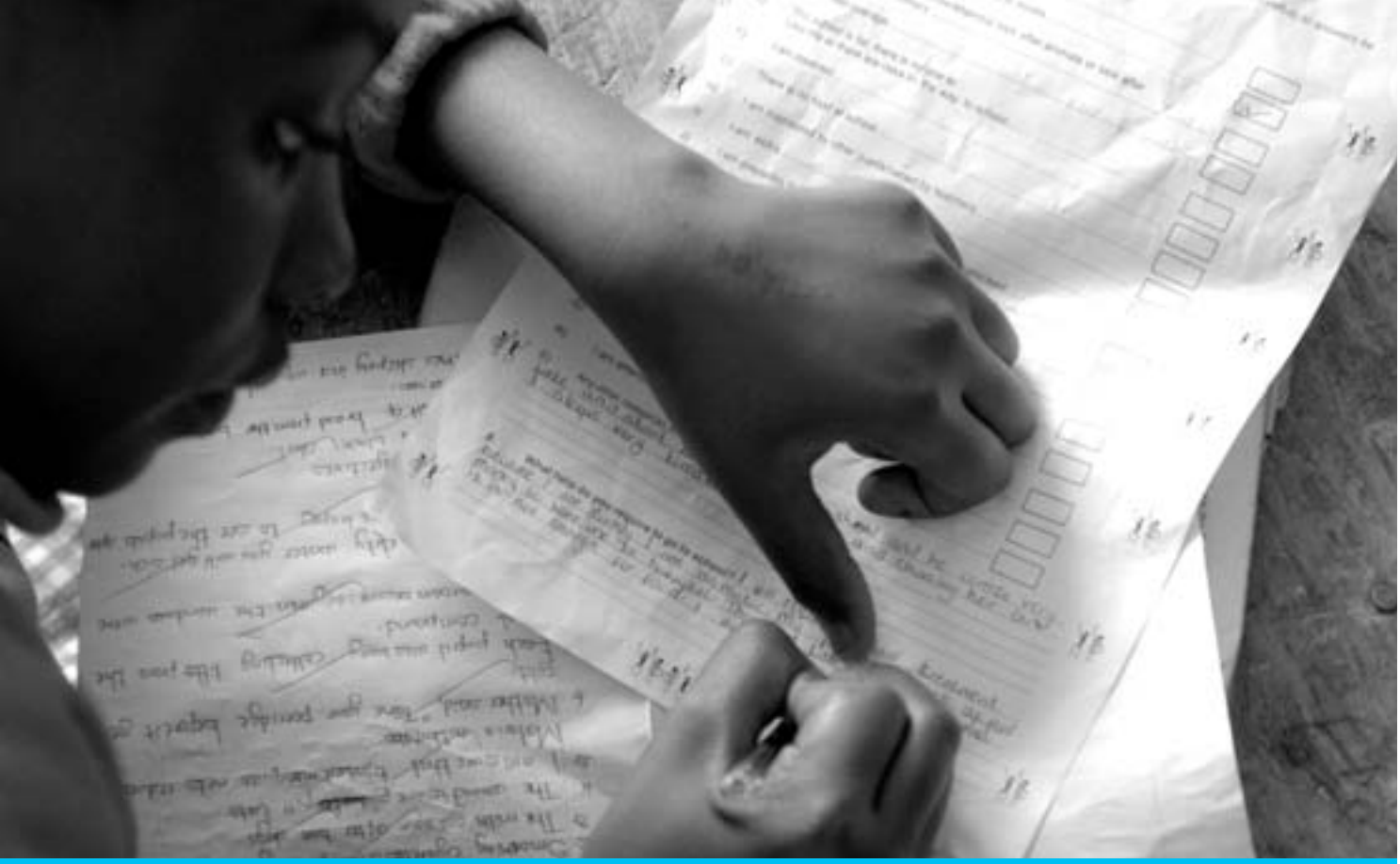
Sexual harassment and violence in and around schools also threaten girls' education. Parents may keep girls away because they fear for their daughters' safety.

While on the one hand, gender bias plays a role in the protection of daughters from potential danger, it also jeopardizes their development and right to freely choose their life paths. Arranged marriages and early pregnancy are tied to poverty in part because of bride prices, payments made to a girl's parents on her wedding day. Destitute parents are often more concerned about how much their daughter is worth than the value of her education.

WHEN GENDER PARITY FAILS TO EQUAL CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

	Gender Parity Index	Primary NE/AR
Botswana	1.05	81.1
Kenya	1.02	70.2
Lesotho	1.08	84.7
Madagascar	1.01	69.0
Malawi	1.00	81.5
Mauritius	1.02	99.2
Namibia	1.07	78.4
Rwanda	1.03	84.3
Seychelles	1.00	94.8
South Africa	1.02	93.9
Swaziland	1.01	77.0
Tanzania, United Republic of	1.00	54.4
Uganda	1.01	78.9
Zimbabwe	1.01	80.5

Source: *Progress For Children: A report card on gender parity and primary education*, No. 2, UNICEF, New York, April 2005, p. 28.



Gender violence is a deadly side effect of armed conflict in which failure to attend school is one of many toxic consequences. Several countries in this region, including Angola, Burundi, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia, have been scarred by violence. In a study on gender and armed conflict, 81 per cent of people interviewed in Burundi stated that they had witnessed sexual aggression against women. Besides the obvious blow to education of razed school buildings, a less talked-about issue is the safety of girls, who are often targeted during combat.

The eastern and southern Africa region has a steep climb to reach universal education by 2015. But the Millennium Development Goals did not include a stipulation that allowed world leaders to bail out if the work became too difficult. Nothing less than extra resources and bullish investments will do.

INTERVENTIONS

'25 BY 2005' COUNTRIES

Eritrea
Ethiopia
Malawi
Tanzania, United Republic of
Zambia

Smart investments and coordinated interventions have begun to make inroads into the problems that beset education in the region. Gender disparities in some countries are beginning to shrink. And quality is improving in many classrooms.

In Ethiopia, for instance, girls' primary net enrolment/attendance ratio went from 28 per cent in 2001 to a projected 32 per cent net attendance ratio in 2005, and the gender parity index is projected to increase from 0.85 to 0.87 during the same period. In Eritrea, where 28 per cent of teachers are untrained, the Asmara Teacher Training Institute trained 105 teachers. They went on to conduct workshops

on gender-fair teaching to an additional 4,500 teachers in a countrywide initiative.

Before successful interventions can be crafted, the root causes of children's absences must be identified. Uganda has been conducting school mapping, a strategy developed by the Girls' Education Movement (GEM). Children fan out through the countryside to identify the number of girls in each community, those who are not in school and the obstacles that keep them away. The exercise not only identifies the barriers, it also generates solutions, ranging from boys volunteering to walk girls on treacherous roads to building and maintaining clean latrines.

Variations of the mapping exercise have popped up in other countries. A particularly telling investigation was conducted by young people as part of the child-to-child survey. Under the auspices of Global Movement for Children, members of the Ethiopian Teenagers' Forum took to the streets to find out why their peers were not in school. The teens found that the greatest barriers for children in Ethiopia were school fees and HIV/AIDS, because money was scarce and children were forced to help support their families.

Countries that have boosted enrolment and attendance have done so because of bold leadership. Some countries abolished primary school tuition and now classrooms are brimming with children eager to learn. The quality of education is questionable in overcrowded classes and the dropout rates are high. Critics may ask what good is school without adequate teachers, books, supplies and space. But it is an ambitious and necessary first step.

Zambia initiated free primary education in 2002. Girls' primary net enrolment/attendance ratio increased from 66 per cent in 2001 to a projected net attendance ratio of 69 per cent in 2005. Between 2001 and 2004 dropout rates for girls went from 4 per cent to 3 per cent. Progress may seem slow, but small percentage points translate into massive changes in the lives of girls newly enrolled in school. A partnership among the education, water and sanitation and health sectors is furthering efforts to get girls into school, improve their overall health and strengthen AIDS-prevention education. Schools have become more child-friendly, with safe water sources and sanitation facilities constructed in over 80 per cent of schools in the eastern and southern provinces. Potable water is now located less than 500 metres from the schools.

Malawi utilizes vocational training to help girls who have dropped out of school. Often young women sacrifice their education in order to support families that have been ruptured by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Vocational training helps young people acquire the skills that will prepare them for the job market and as Malawi officials also discovered, it is a critical tool in HIV/AIDS prevention. Women without an education or skills are more vulnerable to HIV. UNICEF,

the United Nations Population Fund and the Malawi Government have teamed up to provide a one-stop oasis that provides vocational training, HIV/AIDS awareness, life skills and access to reproductive health information.

The United Republic of Tanzania is also reaching out to children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS. A long-standing programme provides a second chance for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS, especially girls, augmenting the nation's push for universal education. Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania focuses on nutrition, hygiene, HIV/AIDS prevention and basic literacy, mostly for girls who have either dropped out of school or never attended.

Innovative responses and pragmatic choices are shaping interventions within the region. For the sake of children, achieving gender parity must no longer be a cosmetic exercise but rather a meaningful effort.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Turkana, Kenya – *At many schools here, massive murals on hygiene exhort students and teachers to wash their hands. But the schools often lack access to water – making the murals seem like a cruel joke.*

Meticulous records were a point of pride at every school we visited, reminding me of how the dry injunction to 'collect disaggregated data on girls' education' can translate into powerful advocacy tools. Often prominently displayed, school enrolment and attendance records make the extent of the problem painfully clear – in the higher grades, the number of female students usually drops dramatically.

Lodwar, Kenya – *At Loyo Primary School, boys who look around 15 or 16 crowd in with 6- and 7-year-olds. I am impressed by how little notice the younger students seem to take of the older children – their presence doesn't seem to be an oddity – but surprised by the lack of older girls.*

At Lodwar Mixed Primary School, a boarding school, the girls are eager to show us how they sleep, four to a single bed, one girl's face to another's feet.

The first impression I had on my trip, and the one that stays with me the longest: I've never seen such attentive, well-behaved children. They listen to their teachers as if their lives depend on it.

Kakuma, Kenya – *The women at Bahr el Naam primary school in Kakuma Refugee Camp look perfectly focused on their work. It is difficult to imagine the circumstances they have fled. But behind them on the wall, past generations of students have stenciled the names of their native regions onto the bricks, and towards one corner nearly every brick reads 'Darfur.'*

Kibera, Nairobi – *In Kibera, one of the largest slums in sub-Saharan Africa, 'flying toilets' – a diplomatic way of saying that human excrement is thrown in the streets – are common. School disruptions include shaking floors (from the train tracks just outside) and the occasional dissolving wall (mud and sticks can't stand up to a heavy Nairobi rain).*

In the classrooms, children's uniforms are perfectly laundered and pressed.

CHAPTER

5

Drought, food shortages, armed conflict, poverty, lack of birth registration, child labour and HIV/AIDS contribute to low school enrolment and high dropout rates for all children.

WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

BLIGHTED BY EMERGENCIES

"The future of every country lies in the hands of their youth. But the future of the young ones lies in the way the leaders of the country handle their education sector."

Julie, 19, Nigeria

There is no clearer example of the magnitude of the challenge for achieving universal education and gender parity than in West and Central Africa. The net enrolment/attendance ratio was a mere 55 per cent in 2001. More than a third of the 21 countries worldwide with net primary school participation below 60 per cent are in this region. Fewer than two school-aged children in every five are in school in Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Niger.

In addition to having large numbers of children out of school, West and Central Africa has a yawning gender gap. Regionally, the gender parity index is 0.86, the largest gender gap among all regions. Of the 24 countries in the region, only five – Cameroon, Gabon, Ghana, Mauritania and Sao Tome and Principe – are likely to achieve gender parity in primary education by 2005. Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali and Niger have gender parity indices below 0.75.

High repetition and low retention rates are common throughout the region. For every 10 children enrolled in grade one in Chad, for instance, only 1 will make it to grade five without repeating. The failure of girls to complete primary school is evident when analysing gender parity in secondary education. Of the 10 countries in the world with the lowest gender parity index for secondary education, 7 are in West and Central Africa.[21]

BARRIERS

West and Central Africa has been ravaged by natural emergencies. Food insecurity has been exacerbated in the Sahel region because of drought and locust infestation. Severe food shortages have devastated Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Nigeria. The region has been further wracked by human-made disasters. Conflict has flared in different countries throughout the region, with Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia and Sierra Leone embroiled in or newly emerged from violent upheaval.[22]

These four countries already had bleak educational achievements, which were further weakened by armed conflict. In Côte d'Ivoire,

for instance, an estimated 1 million primary schoolchildren have had their education disrupted since the conflict began in 2002. In addition, a quarter of a million adolescents have missed out on finishing their secondary education. In Monrovia, Liberia, approximately 50,000 displaced people used schools as temporary shelters during 2003, destroying children's opportunities for instruction.

Poverty and heavy external debt have also plagued the region. As a result, quality education has taken a major hit. Schools are burdened with teacher shortages, low salaries and few professional development opportunities for educators or administrators. Quality is also sacrificed because school capacity cannot keep pace with the demand brought on by the region's high fertility rate and its rapid population growth.

Other factors that affect overall school enrolment and attendance are lack of birth registration and child labour. Children may be denied schooling because they have not been registered at birth. Where unregistered children are permitted to enrol, they will likely find themselves in overcrowded classrooms because governments could not accurately predict the number of school-age children without a more precise count of their child population. Children who are forced into the labour market usually do not go to school and, if they do go to class, are often exhausted and their academic performance suffers.

The burgeoning HIV/AIDS pandemic has also decimated school access and quality. There were 2 million young people between ages 15 and 24 who were living with HIV/AIDS in this region at the end of 2003.[23] As in all of sub-Saharan Africa, the orphan population is growing, which translates into fewer children enrolled in school.

Drought, food shortages, armed conflict, poverty, lack of birth registration, child labour and HIV/AIDS contribute to low school enrolment and high dropout rates for all children. But they are especially devastating for girls.

With barely 50 per cent of girls in West and Central Africa in school, gender discrimination cannot be denied. Inequality is further exacerbated by cultural beliefs and traditions, such as early marriage (*see Chart at right*) and female genital cutting.

In Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Guinea, Mali and Niger, more than 50 per cent of girls between the ages of 20 and 24 were married by age 18. Many girls are married by age 19. For instance, in Niger 60 per cent of girls between 15 and 19 years old are married. Not surprisingly, levels of education seem to correlate with the likelihood of early marriage. Again, looking at Niger, only 8 per cent of girls who attended secondary school and 40 per cent of girls who attended only primary school were married by age 19.[24] Where girls are married off, parents often see little value in educating their daughters because they will leave their families of origin and will instead help support their husbands' families.

Additionally, many mothers and fathers see education as not being relevant and fear that schooling will lead their children away from traditional rural life. Others are afraid that 'western' education will cause their children to abandon their religious beliefs and practices (*see Angélique Kidjo interview, page 76*). In places where travel to and from school or the school itself is seen as dangerous, parents keep daughters home to ensure their girls are safe.

The failure to educate girls perpetuates a vicious cycle. The solutions to the punishing crises that afflict this region lie within universal education, yet those crises are the reasons cited for keeping girls from school.

PROPORTION OF WOMEN AGED 20-24 MARRIED BY THE AGE OF 18

	Per cent
Benin	36.7
Burkina Faso	62.3
Cameroon	53.4
Central African Republic	57.0
Chad	71.4
Cote d'Ivoire	33.2
Gabon	33.6
Ghana	27.9
Guinea	64.5
Mali	65.4
Niger	76.6
Nigeria	43.3
Senegal	36.1
Togo	30.5

Source: *Early Marriage A Harmful Traditional Practice: A statistical exploration*, UNICEF, New York, April 2005, p. 32.

INTERVENTIONS

Overall, West and Central Africa will not meet the gender parity goal by 2005. Yet, individual countries must be commended for their efforts to move further along the path of dismantling disparities between boys and girls.

Not surprisingly, the brutal civil war in the Central African Republic cut the net enrolment ratio to less than 40 per cent in 2003–2004 from 63 per cent in 1996. If there is any good news, however, it's that the schools closed during 2002–2003 were all reopened in 2004. In many ways, this small victory in education can be built upon, giving hope that more children will soon be reached. However, the ratio of pupils to teachers ranges between 70 to 1 and 175 to 1 in the conflict zones. If teacher qualifications are taken into account, the ratio leaps to 525 students per qualified teacher. A single intervention that provided 5,300 wooden benches in 2004 allowed 21,200 children to sit comfortably in school. Previously, one bench was shared among seven or nine children. Along with such partners as French Cooperation and the World Bank, UNICEF has invested heavily in teacher training. An even greater first step towards getting children in school occurred when the government reduced school fees by two thirds in 2004.

'25 BY 2005' COUNTRIES

Benin
Burkina Faso
Central African Rep.
Chad
Congo, Dem. Rep.
Guinea
Mali
Nigeria

Satellite schools in remote and rural areas have reached out to boys and girls in Burkina Faso, helping to reduce the gender gap by 3.2 points. Of the additional 18,600 children who now have access to education because of the new auxiliary schools, over 8,200 are girls. Some 40,000 students are expected to enrol in satellite schools, half of whom will be girls. Non-formal education centres have been erected to provide

basic literacy and numeracy skills to young people who have aged out of traditional primary schools.

While Benin has seen a negligible increase in gender parity from a gender parity index of 0.77 in 2001 to a projected gender parity index of 0.78 at the end of 2005, it has spawned innovations to keep girls in school. 'Girl-to-Girl', for instance, is a mentor project that pairs older girls with younger female students who are at risk of dropping out. The programme is similar to an initiative in Senegal, where the Forum for African Women Educationalists encouraged youth participation to keep girls in school. The Senegal programme has been successful in protecting girls from early marriage by persuading parents to cancel arranged marriages and allow their daughters to remain in school.

Parent participation has been an effective tool for girls' education. Community ownership of schools is effective in dispelling the sense that education is an export from the West rather than an integral part of the culture. In the Gambia, Mothers' Clubs have been set up in many villages to sensitize parents to the importance of girls' education and to help loosen the grip of harmful traditions that keep daughters out of school. The mothers also participate in income-generating activities, which are used to offset the hidden costs of the country's free primary education – uniforms, supplies and school lunches. In an area that had 54 Mothers' Clubs, the dropout rate has fallen from 29 per cent to 16 per cent since their inception in 2001.

The creation of child-friendly schools has also opened the doors for girls (*see Cream Wright interview, page 72*). A key to the success of child-friendly learning spaces in Nigeria has been active parent teacher associations. Innovative, welcoming primary schools have risen from the ashes of formerly neglected, dilapidated buildings as a result of active parent teacher associations and partnerships between the government, UNICEF and donors. Parents have pushed for beefed-up security, safe water, clean latrines, well-lit, ventilated and stimulating classrooms and well-stocked libraries. As a result, pupils are enrolling, attending and finishing a basic education. Results have been inspiring. Child-friendly schools continue to sprout as the model has become a national standard.

Herculean efforts to get children into school during or immediately after armed conflict are beacons of hope. Massive enrolment drives under gruesome conditions provide a powerful message about what is possible when people are committed to a goal. Back-to-school drives have taken place in the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and Sierra Leone, demonstrating the healing power of education.

Fighting in the Democratic Republic of Congo between 1998 and 2003 left over 3 million people dead, a number of civilian war victims not surpassed since World War II.[25] In addition, one third of all children were involved in some form of soldiering, and there were countless reports of women and girls who were brutally raped. In spite of the atrocities inflicted on young people, more than 1,000 primary schoolchildren took their final exams in Bunia and Beni – a small step towards routine and normalcy.

On a larger scale, a 'back-to-school' campaign allowed 750,000 children in Liberia to resume their education in 2003 after 14 years of violent conflict. While far from ideal learning spaces, the response to the opening of the schools highlights the reality that the inability to provide optimum conditions is not a legitimate obstacle to education. Other back-to-school campaigns have reinforced the idea that a skeleton of a school is better than no school at all.

Water and sanitation are increasingly tools for gender parity. The water and sanitation sector has teamed up with education to get and keep children in school. Providing in-school meals and take-home rations, particularly for girls, also entices parents to send their children to classes. The Sahel Alliance for School Feeding, a partnership among governments, UNICEF and the World Food Programme, is helping to dismantle gender disparity and food insecurity through school canteens and take-home rations in nine countries. The cooperation among Cape Verde, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal, among others, is a noteworthy strength of the Alliance as countries pool resources and share expertise.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Banjul to Sare Samba, Gambia – *It took almost four hours to drive the 100 kilometres, navigating enormous potholes and long stretches of unpaved roads along the south bank of the Gambia River. The roadway weaved through traditional villages punctuated with adobe huts and humongous termite hills. The rugged terrain makes travel arduous and isolates people in the interior of this oddly-shaped country. The length of the country is 300 kilometers and its width averages about 35 kilometres. It winds its way up the river, totally surrounded by Senegal.*

Sare Samba and the Lower River Division, Gambia – *Here we meet with villagers, mostly mothers, to speak about girls' education. Mothers' Clubs work with village elders and teacher parent associations to cajole parents into sending both sons and daughters to school. The Kanyeleng women take centre stage in this process.*

The Kanyeleng women are part of Gambia's traditional communicators, including griots, praise singers and comedians, who entertain villagers and pass on tribal history and genealogies. Everyone meets regularly at the Bantaba*, a space under a big tree, to chat, gossip and debate. Today the whole village has assembled here to greet us. The Kanyeleng women spontaneously perform a skit that teases parents who don't send their daughters to school. It's hard to imagine that anyone would buck these powerful advocates for girls' education.*

Enugu, Nigeria – *I am more than three hours late for the group meeting with children. Scheduled to leave Abuja to arrive here on Friday morning, my flight was cancelled. Hopes of getting the 9:00 a.m. flight were dashed – the plane was two hours late and then made two unannounced stops en route from Abuja to Enugu, normally a one-hour trip.*

I am whisked into a conference room upon my arrival at the office, where seven children, three parents/caregivers and four representatives of government and non-governmental organizations await. I am about to learn the stories of children and some adults who have benefited from a pro bono legal service supported by UNICEF since 2003.

The children begin to relate their horror stories: Amarachukwu, 8, was so badly burned by her father's new girlfriend that the little girl has lost use of her hand. She had to drop out of school because her classmates teased her mercilessly. Samson, a short, spunky 11-year-old boy, complained he didn't even have his tea on the day he was arrested on the way home from school. He was still in his uniform when the police dragged him away, he says. They

had come for his mother, but when they couldn't find her, they arrested him. Traumatized since the incident, Samson is still plagued by his initial fears, even though they turned out not to be true, that his mother had been killed. Finally, 21-year-old Nkeiruka, 15 at the time of arrest, and her mother, Monica, who had just been released from prison after spending more than five years on a trumped-up charge. According to them, an uncle reported that Monica had killed her newborn baby (who actually died in childbirth), but no proof was provided. Monica wept openly, recounting five years of lost opportunity for schooling. They are returning home to an uncertain and still somewhat suspicious and hostile environment.

Lagos, Nigeria *– The city is teeming with energy. A short ride takes us to Ikoyi, a residential, green and seemingly serene part of town. Here, I meet Professor Sarah Oloko, an expert in child labour who has worked with UNICEF for many years. She explains the push factors that lead to children working as domestics – on the one hand, poverty, on the other, traditional practices… Parents may give their children away to people seen as role models – often a determination made merely on the basis of how a person is dressed, or if they live in a town as opposed to a village. Children are trafficked to work on commercial farms and plantations. Many wives of distinguished people are supplied with domestics, she says. Often employers promise that they'll send the children to school, but never do….*

Next, the Lagos State Agency for Mass Education. I sit in on a basic literacy class, which is being held in a small, cramped classroom. Young men and women sit among older adults of both sexes. When it's finished, I meet with 20-year-old Daniel, who had stopped attending school in primary 2. He has worked for the past four years with a Lagos family from 5:00 a.m. until 11:00 p.m., ironing, washing, opening the gate and various other tasks. His employer says that his salary is being paid into an account each month. Daniel seems unbothered that he has no proof that this is the case. He says, "If I went the way my mum was training me, I would not be in this position," referring to her encouragement for him to continue school.

I spend the evening at the office of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking Persons, where I meet 40 girls who have been living at the agency the past two months. Part of a convoy that had been intercepted by the police coming into Lagos from Niger State in the north of Nigeria – a 9 to 10 hour drive – they are believed to be a few of the many who are trafficked as sex workers, domestics or bonded labourers who hawk on the streets. Only one girl has been to school – the seven-year-old daughter of the alleged trafficker…. The trafficker, a 'businesswoman' who lives in Lagos, is alleged to be the ringleader of a syndicate that recruits children – mostly young girls between 8 and 13 years old from villages in Niger State – and bonds them to families in Lagos.

Dakar, Senegal *– In the outskirts of the city, Mme Mbow, the principal of N'Diarème B Primary School, runs her school with undisguised pride. She has made it her personal mission to enrol every girl in the catchment area. The peaceful school seems like an oasis in a neighborhood overflowing with traffic and people hawking merchandise along the main road…. We are frequently interrupted by teachers dropping by to talk over the schedule, students needing a key or wanting to ring the bell after recess, and women from the mothers' collective and associations coming to discuss different projects. While others might be nonplussed with the bustle, she seems perfectly serene. This is the school where UN Secretary General Kofi Annan launched the UN Girls' Education Initiative, and Mme Mbow shows me a picture from the event (see photo below). She grabs a pen and jots the Secretary-General a note on the back of the photo, reminding him of his visit and hinting gently at a pledge he had made to support the school. I promise to hand-carry the letter to him as soon as I get back to New York.*

CHAPTER

6

It's difficult to find a greater incentive to invest in girls' education than watching a child's excitement when she enters school for the first time.

SOUTH ASIA
YAWNING CHASM

"Take our voices to the world. We suffered so many years without education. Tell everyone that Afghanistan is learning again."

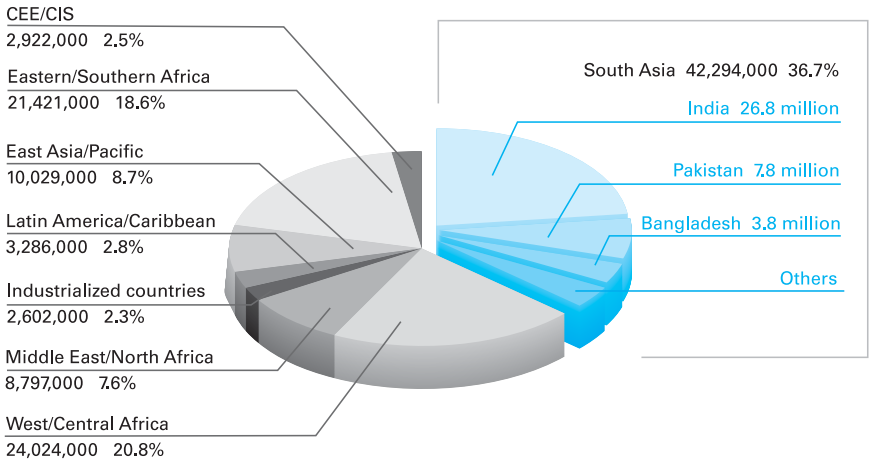
Woman teacher in Kabul

The story of education in South Asia is a multilayered one. The region is becoming the hub of technology with the emergence of India's computer and technological know-how. In 2001, Sri Lanka had already achieved universal education. And until the devastation wrought by the 2004 tsunami, when years of progress were destroyed within minutes, Maldives was fast approaching universal schooling. Yet in 2001, South Asia was the home to more than a third of the world's children who were missing out on basic education. Some 42 million children from this region were not in school (*see Chart, below*).

India alone had 26.8 million primary school-age children not in primary school, accounting for 23 per cent of global absentees. Pakistan was responsible for 7 per cent of the worldwide failure to educate children, contributing 7.8 million to the rolls of missing students, and Bangladesh accounted for 3 per cent of the total number, with 3.8 million not in classes.

Gender parity in education is a far-off destination in more than half of the eight countries in this region. South Asia has about

CHILDREN OUT OF PRIMARY SCHOOL IN 2001



Source: *Progress For Children: A report card on gender parity and primary education,* No. 2, UNICEF, New York, April 2005, pp. 14-15.

23.5 million girls out of school. Not surprisingly, UNICEF has designated six of the eight countries in South Asia as '25 by 2005' countries. Only Bangladesh, Maldives and Sri Lanka had achieved gender parity in primary education in 2001, and for areas destroyed by the tsunami, both gender parity and universal education are no longer certain.

To regional leaders' credit, the average annual rate of increase in primary education has been more than twice as high for girls as for boys during 1980 to 2001. The overall net enrolment/attendance ratio improved an average of 0.9 per cent per year, the second largest regional increase worldwide. Yet there is a yawning gender gap, with 80 per cent of boys in school compared to 75 per cent of girls, according to UNICEF projections for 2005. In 2001, Afghanistan had the widest chasm in the region, with a gender parity index of 0.60.

The projected regional net attendance ratio, the percentage of official primary school-age children attending school, is 77.5 in 2005, requiring a grueling push if universal education is to be achieved. Broken down by gender, with a net attendance ratio of 79.7 for boys and 74.6 for girls, it is clear the road to universal education must be driven through girls' education initiatives.[26]

BARRIERS

The reasons for the gender gap in South Asia reflect common themes from all regions. Poverty is the underlying cause of all obstacles faced by illiterate girls and women. Lack of food, water and sanitation; schools that are long distances from home; and household labour divided by gender all contribute to educational inequality. Poor girls are often thrown into the worst forms of child labour, the sex trade and sweatshops, making child protection a major challenge in the region.

Access to school has also been undermined by armed conflict and political upheaval. In Nepal, for instance, Maoists target teachers in the ongoing violent struggle. It is estimated that 150 teachers have been killed, with 15 district offices damaged and 187 schools closed in 2004. In some areas, schools were open only half of their scheduled days. A local non-governmental organization reported that ongoing violence has touched about 24,500 children, with many students taken away from their homes for weeks on end to be indoctrinated and recruited as child soldiers.

Discrimination abrogates human rights, particularly girls' rights to education and social equality. In Afghanistan, Bhutan and Pakistan, classes for girls are scarce. In Afghanistan, eruptions of violence and armed struggle, as well as pervasive gender inequality, continue to keep girls from school. In the south of Bhutan, education is often denied to ethnic minorities.

The 2004 tsunami has left an indelible image, but it is one of many natural disasters that strike this region. Torrential rains, tornadoes, droughts, earthquakes and famine are no strangers in much of South Asia. These catastrophes destroy homes, schools, roads, and water and sanitation infrastructure. And while all children's education is derailed, girls are ultimately more likely to miss out on school because of calamities.

INTERVENTIONS

'25 BY 2005' COUNTRIES

Afghanistan
Bangladesh
Bhutan
India
Nepal
Pakistan

The solutions to the manifold problems facing education in this region vary from simple to complex, requiring anything from tweaks of budgets to massive infusions of money. To prevent the abandonment of another generation of children, all options must be considered.

Lack of safe water and hygienic sanitation keeps many children away from school here as in other regions. UNICEF estimates that more than half the world's schools do not have potable water, clean toilets or lessons in hygiene. Sometimes, a simple solution like a spigot with safe water near a school can make the difference between pervasive illiteracy and classrooms filled with energetic children. In South Asia, UNICEF installed or upgraded water and sanitation facilities in 1,200 schools in Afghanistan, 4,000 in Bangladesh, more than 10,000 in India and 1,400 in Pakistan between 2003 and 2005.[27] In Alwar, India, 1,667 School Sanitation and Hygiene Education (SSHE) projects saw an increase in girls' school enrolment by 78 per cent and boys' by 38 per cent over a five-year period.[28]

The introduction of water, sanitation and hygiene is one factor in India's overall commitment to school quality and improving girls' enrolment. Sarva Shiksha Abbiyan is a Government flagship designed to get all children into school, especially girls disadvantaged by caste, tribe or disability. It relies on community participation and monitoring with an emphasis on the recruitment of women and members of disadvantaged groups. The initiative evaluates every aspect of the learning spaces against gender-friendly standards, including the provision of safe water and sanitation. To ensure the enrolment and retention of girls, schools serve midday meals and offer girls scholarships for uniforms and supplies. Teacher training and recruitment are part of an overall push for quality. Advocacy is a strong component of 'back-to-school' campaigns for children who have dropped out, messages directed to parents about the importance of education, a zero-rejection policy for disabled children and adolescent tutorial camps for girls.

With so many children lost to labour, initiatives that bring school to working children are rescuing some girls and boys from illiteracy. In Bangladesh, with an estimated 7.9 million working children between 5 and 17 years old, non-formal education is an effective education tool. The Basic Education for Urban Working Children teaches reading, writing, mathematics and life skills to 200,000 school-age children, 60 per cent girls. Begun in 2004 in six cities with support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and several UNICEF National Committees, the intensive programme is conducted over 40 months, giving students the equivalent of grade 5 in Bangla and grade 3 in mathematics. Its aim is to give children skills to escape oppressive labour and to raise general awareness about child labour issues.

Working hand-in-hand with the movement to get working children into school is *Skukno Ful Rangeen Ful*, the highest-rated programme on state-owned television in Bangladesh. The weekly show is a dramatization about a teacher, students at a Hard-to-Reach Learning Centre, a young girl and her family. Each episode ends with a quiz based on the issues faced by the characters in the show.

Systematic and institutionalized gender discrimination continues to plague Afghanistan. Three aspects of the same dynamic are security and safety issues, intimidation and coercion against girls' education, and cyclical burning of girls' schools. Misinterpretation of the Koran has kept girls from school and women trapped in illiteracy in parts of the nation, especially in some southern provinces where fewer than 10 per cent of girls attend school.

Pervasive gender discrimination is countered through accelerated learning classes and non-formal schools for 150,000 girls; teacher training, particularly the training of women; and alliances among clergy and girls' education advocates. In 2004, some 5,500 religious leaders were trained in women's and girls' rights and the importance of education. They are promoting girls' education by informing community leaders, often men, about the merits of sending girls to school. While girls' enrolment and attendance still lag in Afghanistan, promising signs abound. In late September, girls and women were realizing that their places were not only in school, but also in government, where women are now guaranteed 25 per cent of the seats in the lower house of Parliament.

Afghanistan has also helped set the standard for 'back-to-school' initiatives after the United States-led war that ended Taliban rule. When the school year opened after the winter break in March 2005, more than 4 million children were expected to return. After years of oppressive decrees, 1.2 million girls – up from zero – streamed into government schools during 2003. New textbooks relevant to the new Afghanistan have been printed as a result of a partnership among the government, UNICEF and Teachers College, Columbia University in New York.

In spite of concerted efforts and commitments in Nepal, some interventions are no match for pernicious obstacles such as armed conflict and catastrophes. With Maoist rebels targeting schools, teachers and students, heroic efforts to get children into school have fallen short of expected results. The 'Welcome to School' initiative continues to reach out to schoolchildren through advocacy, quality education resource packets, teacher training and 'Education Watch' groups. Despite major setbacks, the gender gap is narrowing. Generally, back-to-school drives have been successful during crises and have brought a semblance of normalcy to children. But Nepal demonstrates that sometimes the only truly effective intervention for school enrolment is peace.

There is little debate about the role of female literacy and universal education in sustainable development. There is no question that economic stagnation and inequality are inexorably linked to illiteracy. But it's difficult to find a greater incentive to invest in girls' education than watching a child's excitement when she enters school for the first time.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Nepal, 2004 – *This may be the first time I started to think about educating girls because of their own personal development rather than looking at the larger issues of development. We were here to film a 90-second video on girls' education as part of the Fox Kids campaign. Everyone is very excited as we arrive with the crew. This video will focus on Kamala and her family. I remember that the girl was very shy. I spent time talking with Kamala's father about why she should be educated. He doesn't talk about better marriage prospects or contributing to the family income or getting skills. He very much talks about the benefits for Kamala. 'You know, she enjoys school,' he says. 'She likes her school and spending time with friends. She's getting brighter. And she is bright.' I don't recall him ever once talking about advancement or development. Instead, he's happy that she is doing well, making friends, learning to read and write. Because he knows that she had been confined to the house, cooking, cleaning and taking care of the younger children.*

India, January 2005 – *I arrive with a film crew to work on a piece about girls' education and sport for ESPN. This time we're at a girls' residential school in Sitamarahi. This school is featured in* The State of the World's Children 2004 *with an article about karate, which is taught here. Most of the girls at the school are here because they don't have family support: They have no family circles, they have fallen out with their families, a couple of girls refused to marry their designated husband. Some are here because their families can't afford to have them at home. For them, school is about being able to stand on their own two feet. They can't depend on anyone else. For these girls, learning to read and write and getting basic numeracy skills is about doing for themselves. And the karate is*

about being able to protect themselves. But it is also about having a hobby. Education is really about them.

Unfortunately, we sometimes only look at the impersonal numbers, how education affects future employment or the economy. But these are kids. Of course, part of the culture, the idea of education depends a lot on the ideal of education as a pathway to becoming an engineer, a doctor or an accountant. I hear kids say that they want an education to get a good job. But these children also have those dreams of becoming professional football players.

General observations – *In 2002, India passed a constitutional amendment on compulsory education requiring all children between 6 and 14 to finish five years of primary school. But many children are far removed from ever going to school. Poverty and inequality are so extreme. People must accept that their children will be sitting in class with a child from a different social class. We have to broach this topic very carefully. This is an extremely sensitive area for people and for the government.*

Efforts to get girls into school are mostly concentrated in the rural areas. The cities are too hard. Take a drive through New Delhi, and you can't imagine how to bring some children into school. They are too far out of the system. They would not know how to find school. In some ways they are invisible to the system and in other ways they are very visible. You can't miss them. They are destitute. They sleep on the sidewalks. They have hardly any clothing. They stop the traffic and ask for money. It's just such a long way for them to travel to get into the system.

CHAPTER 7

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

INCHING TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY

"Men come to the edge of the school and yell at us.... They think we should be married."

Jackline, 18, student
at Yambio Girls' Secondary School, southern Sudan

The Middle East and North Africa region confounds generalities. The region had the highest average annual rate of increase in net enrolment/attendance ratios among all regions between 1980 and 2001, with 1.4 per cent a year. About half of the region's countries are on track to meet the goal of universal education by 2015. Still, some 8.8 million children are out of primary school, and closing the gender gap remains elusive (*see Chart, below*).

UNICEF projections indicate that in 2005, there will be 94 girls in school region-wide for every 100 boys in the region. Tunisia has an impressive record, having achieved gender parity in both primary and secondary education as of 2001. And Bahrain goes against the regional trend with more girls than boys in primary school. On the opposite end, Djibouti, Sudan and Yemen are far from having equal numbers of girls and boys in primary school, with gender parity indices of 0.77, 0.83 and 0.60 in 2001, respectively.

Yemen is illustrative of how poverty, high fertility rates and mounting external debt are detrimental to fulfilling the right to quality education. The Government has allocated more than 20 per cent of its budget to education, and Yemen has received extra financial support from the international community through the Education For All

The spirit of the gender parity Millennium Development Goal – women's equality – will not be realized if girls and women remain fettered by inequality and social injustice.

PRIMARY NET ENROLMENT/ATTENDANCE RATIOS (2001)

Country	Boys	Girls
Djibouti	38.7	29.8
Iraq	83.8	71.5
Morocco	91.7	85.2
Sudan	53.3	44.4
Syrian Arab Republic	100.0	94.7
Yemen	67.8	40.7

Source: *Progress For Children: A report card on gender parity and primary education*, No. 2, UNICEF, New York, April 2005, p. 28.

Fast-Track Initiative. Yet its projected 2005 primary net attendance ratio is 64, up from its net enrolment/attendance ratio of 55 in 2001. The 2005 net attendance rate for girls is expected to be a mere 49 per cent. And two out of three women are illiterate.

Gender parity declines even further for secondary-school-age young people in this region. Of the three countries where secondary enrolment was analysed, Egypt has 90 girls per 100 boys in secondary schools, Iraq has 67 girls for every 100 boys, and Yemen has 41 girls per 100 boys.[29]

Failure to reach gender parity in education is part of the region's overall challenge to dismantle gender discrimination and the economic and political disadvantages endured by girls and women. The spirit of the gender parity Millennium Development Goal – women's equality – will not be realized if girls and women remain fettered by inequality and social injustice.

BARRIERS

In the Middle East and North Africa, gender disparity in education reflects common issues facing most developing countries – poverty, conflict, discrimination and geography where rural populations are more likely to be out of school. These factors sustain female illiteracy, exclusion and disempowerment and perpetuate the cycle of despair.

In parts of the Middle East and North Africa, poverty is pervasive. When compounded by discrimination and strict gender roles, poverty keeps girls unschooled and dependent. They are unable to escape the demands placed upon them by a society that neither values nor respects them. Frequently girls are kept home to do household chores and care for younger siblings, or they are thrust into the labour market to contribute to household income. When girls are permitted to go to school, often they are forced to drop out when they reach puberty. This is especially the case when schools lack separate sanitation facilities for boys and girls, are located far from their villages or are riddled with sexual harassment and violence. Puberty is a marker for girls, a demarcation in societies that prescribe early marriage, and often ends their education.

Early marriage tightens the vise of illiteracy. Too often, daughters are seen as a source of income because families receive a bride price for their girls. A linguistic illustration of the importance of marrying off daughters comes from the Dinka, a herding community in southern Sudan. There, the word for girl is *nyanawong*, which literally means 'daughter for cows'.

As in most parts of the world, children in rural areas are less likely to be in school than their age mates in cities. This is further compounded by the distribution of wealth, where rural families are more likely to be poorer than their urban counterparts. Primary school-age children from the poorest 20 per cent of households in this region are 4.5 times more likely to be kept out of school than those in the richest 20 per cent.[30] This is especially true in rural areas where schools are far from home or do not have female teachers. There, boarding schools often are the only option, an impossible choice for impoverished families. Lack of village schools is a giant barrier for girls because travelling or living far from home is often dangerous.

Ongoing armed conflict continues to undermine the region's efforts to get girls in school. Iraq and Sudan have been wracked with violence, displacement and death, disrupting any semblance of normalcy. Children have been hard hit by these acts of violence. Reading, writing and mathematics are the least of their concerns. Yet, education is precisely what children need during times of upheaval. School not only is a means of restoring routine but also is a salve for the inevitable psychosocial wounds of war. Peace education is one of the few hopes if the world is to end violence. Yet, when schooling has been needed most, it has been ravaged. Nowhere is that clearer than in this region.

INTERVENTIONS

'25 BY 2005' COUNTRIES

Djibouti
Sudan
Yemen

Poverty, gender discrimination, rural versus urban disparities and conflict are the wounds that bind the developing world. Like other regions, the Middle East and North Africa must face these obstacles head on, daring to be bold in the face of overwhelming odds. The leaps in its average annual rate of increase are indicative that the region has accepted the challenge. And while the region is on track to meet the goal of universal education by 2015, several countries require massive efforts to achieve full school enrolment.

Nothing short of system-wide overhauls will jump-start girls' education in Djibouti. The infrastructure is in tatters, much of the population follows the rainfall to eke out subsistence, and poverty is deadly. The country is one of the poorest countries in the world, placing 150th out of 177 countries in the Human Development Index.[31] Unemployment hovers around 60 per cent, which offers little hope for children to get a job when and if they finish school. Joblessness deters parents from sending their children, especially girls, to school because education is deemed worthless for future economic gains.

The World Food Programme has stepped up to support girls' education in Djibouti, providing two meals a day in 55 schools. Girls who come to school for 21 days each month receive a 5-litre can of oil, some of which can be used at home and the rest sold. There are plans to find host families for secondary-school girls in return for food. In another 27 schools, the World Food Programme has helped to create school gardens, which provide children with edible vegetables and money to purchase school items, and teach them income-generating skills.

The Mosaic Foundation, a charitable and educational organization created by the wives of Arab ambassadors in Washington, D.C., launched a pilot programme for girls' education in 2000 called AMAL – Arabic for hope and an English acronym for Approaches and Methods for Advanced Learning. Djibouti, along with Egypt and Yemen, is a recipient of support from the foundation. In one village, Koutabouye, AMAL is installing latrines in the school, helping to eliminate one of the major impediments to girls' enrolment. AMAL is also training teachers, school directors and civil society on public school management.

In Egypt, nearly 2,000 girl-friendly schools are supported by the private sector, the government and the European Union.

In Sudan, much work remains to be done considering that the country is projected to have a primary net attendance ratio of just 56.4 by the end of 2005. But

even these bleak national statistics fail to accurately portray the tragedy facing girls in southern Sudan, an area where only 1 per cent of girls complete primary school and close to 90 per cent of all women are illiterate.[32]

Some 250 Community Girls' Schools have been set up in southern Sudan, a crucial development if the area is to beat the odds against female literacy. Based in part on a successful model from Bangladesh, the learning spaces are shelters from the storm for girls who attend. The schools have flexible schedules and offer protection from outsiders who badger girls to give up their education and instead embrace their roles as young brides. The girls are in class with the same teacher over several years, allowing for the students to bond with the adult. In one town, the gender gap closed by more than 20 per cent between 2003 and 2004. No longer fearful of being abducted by the militia or being forced to take up arms, girls as well as boys are instead filling classrooms.

In Yemen, without systematic intervention, more than half of today's girls are destined for illiteracy. Many families, particularly devout Muslims, will not send their daughters to school unless they are taught by female teachers. UNICEF recruits and trains women teachers so girls can attend classes. Along with the World Bank, it provides students with textbooks and supplies, because too often the high cost of schooling is the greatest obstacle for poor children. With the help of traditional leaders, the Government is getting the word out about the importance of girls' education for the economic development of the family and the nation.

The Middle East and North Africa region has made tremendous strides in educating its citizenry. But to embrace the true spirit and breadth of education's role in development, the next leg of the journey requires leaps.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Pul-Ajil, Southern Sudan – *At the Community Girls' School, one of the students wanders off and lies under a tree – though she appeared to be fine just a few minutes earlier, she is shaking and looks miserable. "Probably malaria," says a teacher. He laughs when I ask if she should go to a doctor. "She'll walk to the clinic, if she really has to," he says. The nearest clinic is 10 kilometres away – a two-hour walk.*

Yambio, Southern Sudan – *The churches are an enormous presence here. As we approach an outdoor service on Maundy Thursday, the dirt road is clogged with people cheering the Easter procession, led by a truck equipped with loudspeakers. Girls' education messages are often preached from the pulpit.*

Rumbek, Southern Sudan – *At the primary school here, there are 320 girls in grade 1 but just seven in grade 8. One girl uses a crutch to walk, and I ask a fieldworker about the challenges facing disabled children. He points out that if the girl hadn't been disabled, most likely from polio, she would probably be married already and would never have had the chance to go to school.*

During school visits, I am often forced to explain that I haven't brought anything with me and don't have any power to provide school supplies. But the idea of writing articles and telling people about conditions seems to be accepted as an equally important task. On my first day in southern Sudan, a local life-skills instructor puts her hands on my shoulders and says, "I understand you're not here to bring us things. But will you promise to be our voice?"

CHAPTER

8

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE/COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES

HIDDEN CRISES

"Poverty is not having enough money to live with and children not being able to go to school....During the civil war it was very difficult. People didn't have food to eat; there was no electricity and no water."

Aslisho Akimbekov, 17, from Tajikistan

The story of education in the Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States region (CEE/CIS) is complex. The overall picture looks promising in that gender parity in education is expected to be achieved in all countries by 2005, except for Tajikistan and Turkey. And while universal primary education by 2015 is not automatic, it is achievable with an additional push.

The region's primary net enrolment/attendance ratio was 88 per cent in 2001, exceeded only by East Asia/Pacific and Latin America/Caribbean in the developing world. It also recorded the lowest average annual rate of increase in the net enrolment/attendance ratio of any developing region – 0.35 per cent, pointing to the difficulty of travelling those last few steps towards education for all. Regionally, there has been an emphasis on overall education for boys and girls, yet a closer look at individual countries highlights major challenges for both universal education and gender parity.

High net enrolment/attendance ratios have put Albania, Tajikistan and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on good footing for universal primary education by 2015 with 97.5 per cent, 97.2 per cent and 96 per cent, respectively in 2001. The ratio was low in Azerbaijan in 2001 at 79.9 per cent. The ratios also were low among countries caught in the war in the Balkans – Serbia and Montenegro at 76.2 per cent, and Bosnia and Herzegovina at 86.2 per cent. Primary school participation dropped precipitously in Serbia and Montenegro during the civil strife and international sanctions of the 1990s.

Noteworthy gains for gender parity have been recorded in this region. Turkey, identified as a country in UNICEF's '25 by 2005' initiative, is projected to increase its gender parity index to 0.96 in 2005 from 0.93 in 2001. The success recorded here is a beacon for other countries that are struggling to get an equal number of boys and girls into school.[33]

Yet hidden behind this relative optimism are crises that can easily topple educational gains. Snapshots from afar look promising. But by zooming in, obstacles that are generally associated with other regions are quickly uncovered.

Hidden behind this relative optimism are crises that can easily topple educational gains.

BARRIERS

In the CEE/CIS region, universal primary education and girls' education face challenges similar to those in the rest of the developing world – poverty, political instability, gender discrimination, geographical disparities, and the lack of potable water and adequate sanitation. HIV/AIDS is also on the rise.[34]

Families struggle to pay school fees and the rising costs of books, supplies and uniforms. Additionally, national poverty has eviscerated social services in some countries, stripping the education sector of invaluable resources (*see Chart, below*). Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, for instance, have decreased public spending on education as a percentage of gross domestic product between 1991 and 2002. Kyrgyzstan has decreased public spending on education from 6 per cent of the gross domestic product in 1991 to 4.5 per cent in 2002.[35]

There is no clearer example of how the problems following the collapse of the Soviet Union come together to sabotage girls' education than Tajikistan. Poor infrastructure, particularly a lack of potable water and sanitation, runs a close second to poverty in derailing progress. In central Tajikistan and near the Afghanistan and Uzbekistan borders, unexploded ordnance peppers the ground as a reminder of past conflicts.

CEE/CIS is no stranger to armed conflict, which scars children's lives. Ethnic tension and violence have barred children from school. Even during times of relative peace, parents can be fearful of sending their children to school, never secure of a lasting calm. Who can forget the searing images of horrified children in Beslan in September 2004 when their first day of school turned into a massacre of innocents?

CHANGE IN TOTAL EDUCATION EXPENDITURE IN REAL TERMS, SELECTED COUNTRIES 1998 TO 2001
(Per cent change in total education expenditure)

Latvia	-19
Estonia	-13
Hungary	3
Poland	4
Czech Republic	7
Bulgaria	9
Turkey	21

Source: *Education For All Global Monitoring Report 2005: The Quality Imperative,* UNESCO, Paris, 2004, p. 118.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic, often associated with sub-Saharan Africa, is now moving through the region. In 2004, there were an estimated 1.4 million people living with HIV/AIDS, with 80 per cent of new infections among young people.[36]

One of the greatest challenges facing this region is the alarming increase in numbers of children being raised in institutions – more than 1.2 million in 2004. The highest ratio of children in public care is in Bulgaria, and the largest increases are reported in the Caucasus and Central Asia. In pure numbers, the Russian Federation has the most institutionalized children. Frequently referred to as 'social orphans', many children reside in orphanages because their parents have been declared unfit due to alcoholism, violence or deprivation. There is evidence that in the Republic of Moldova, children are being placed in residential care so that their parents can migrate for work. This disturbing rise in numbers of children in public care is occurring in countries that are expected to achieve gender parity by 2005, putting their anticipated accomplishments on tenuous ground.

Trafficking is epidemic in CEE/CIS, and further disrupts access to education. Every nation in this region is a country of origin, transit or destination for trafficking. Women are more likely to be trafficked, with an estimated 15 per cent being under age 18. Trafficking is inextricably linked to children in public care. In Moldova, for instance, a child who grows up in a public institution is 10 times more likely to be a victim of trafficking.

Hidden within the statistics on girls' education are the disparities among ethnic minorities. In a region rife with ethnic tensions, not surprisingly, minority children are frequently ostracized and kept from school. In Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro), for instance, there are several minority populations – Ashkali, Bosniacs, Croatians, Egyptians, Gorani, Roma, Serbs and Turks. Within Kosovo's population of about 2 million, 11 per cent are ethnic minorities, of which 43 per cent are under the age of 19.[37] Ethnicity and discrimination are major risks for poverty and deprivation. Girls within minority groups are often more likely to fail to enrol in or attend school. They face triple discrimination, as gender compounds the effects of bigotry and poverty.

INTERVENTIONS

'25 BY 2005' COUNTRIES

Turkey

Public awareness campaigns have been the most effective first steps in mobilizing people and institutions around the idea of girls' education in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Media visibility is changing the educational terrain for families. Powerful messages about the importance of sending girls to school adorn billboards, are bruited about in televised public service announcements, and travel door-to-door through neighborhood advocacy campaigns.

Two prominent campaigns are Kosovo's 'I'm back in school; what about you?' and Turkey's *Haydi Kizlar Okula!* – 'Come On Girls, Let's Go to School!' The slogans pop up in newspapers, radio, television, theatre and posters, keeping each country's major educational challenge in the spotlight – retention for Kosovo and enrolment for Turkey.

Kosovo has seen a rise in the number of dropouts in rural areas, especially among girls, due to security concerns, inadequate transportation and the tradition-ingrained practice of sending boys over girls to school. Only 12.3 per cent of girls from the countryside between the ages of 16 and 19 had completed a full course of primary schooling in 2002.[38] Unemployment in Kosovo teeters around 40 per cent,[39] forcing a population shift towards Priština as people search for work. This further stretches resources within the capital, because schools cannot accommodate the influx of new students, resulting in a high dropout rate.

While advocacy campaigns and catchy slogans raise awareness, they alone cannot rectify the harsh realities facing children and their families. That's where

Parent Teacher Councils (PTC) and municipal-based Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) step up. Community participation and ownership take hold through the PTC and PTA, which identify and rectify the obstacles for children remaining in school. In Lipjan Municipality, for instance, the PTA with donations from the Kosovar diaspora has helped modernize the sewer system, improving school sanitation facilities. The PTA also helped get girls back into the primary school in Lipjan by providing them with books and uniforms.

With the inception of women's literacy programmes in Kosovo, girls and young women are now receiving vocational and basic skills training. For older students who have aged out of the system, these classes are designed to increase women's confidence and independence through basic literacy, numeracy and everyday knowledge. The goal is to ensure that women will be able to successfully negotiate such things as going to the doctor or voting. For younger women, these are catch-up classes that can lead to mainstream education.

A legacy of war in Kosovo is insufficient funds to train all teachers or replace outmoded textbooks. Students are still confronted with schoolbook images of passive girls and women in traditional roles and only boys and men depicted as leaders. The Soros Foundation, UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank have contributed to the development of new books that inspire and better represent women in today's world.

Advocacy campaigns are a mainstay of girls' education in Turkey. About 120,000 more girls have been enrolled since *Haydi Kizlar Okula* was launched in 2003 in Van. As part of the outreach, volunteers, including teachers and community leaders, conduct door-to-door interviews with parents. The prepared talks are scripted to overcome families' stated objections against sending their daughters to school – poverty, long distances to travel, fear for girls' safety, early marriage, lack of school relevance, need for her labour in and out of the home, and religious prohibitions. Each protest is met with an answer that supports enrolling girls in school. The interaction not only advocates girls' education, it also identifies hidden barriers to schooling. Parents reported that they sometimes failed to enrol their children in school because of late or incorrectly filed birth registrations; fines for late birth registrations have since been abolished.

Neighborhood mobilization is reinforced by television spots featuring celebrities urging girls to go to school, public announcements about education in print and electronic media, and the distribution of promotional fliers, posters, brochures, booklets and videos.

Offshoots from the *Haydi Kizlar Okula* campaign include a newspaper's independent push for girls' education, pleading the case with the slogan 'Daddy, send me to school'. Additionally, the Willows Foundation, a non-governmental organization, has visited 120,000 homes and enrolled 9,000 out-of-school girls. The Foundation has developed a registration system with color-coded cards based on the obstacle that has hampered school attendance. There is a follow-up visit by teachers in a parallel system to the national campaign.

Coffee house projects have also sprouted in parts of Turkey, building on the tradition of hospitality and conversation. Volunteers lead discussions about girls' education in local coffee houses, usually with men. In a relaxed, supportive environment, men speak about their concerns with advocates, who then reassure them that sending their daughters to school is a good decision.

Advocacy takes a different route in Tajikistan. Girls' education is linked to concrete actions that address the needs of children and their families. A 2004 UNICEF survey found that parents did not see girls' education as useful.[40] Based in part on this feedback, schools are attempting to include stronger life-skills components. Vocational training and classes using old Soviet Union sewing machines and other refurbished equipment are teaching marketable trades to students.

Responding to the needs of families, the World Food Programme provides hot meals and take-home rations as part of its school feeding initiative. In 2003, it gave provisions to some 400,000 children out of a population of over 6 million people. A World Food Programme survey in late 2004 showed that 10 per cent of the rural population is chronically food insecure.

Water and sanitation projects are proving to be helpful for getting girls into school and are

bringing needed facilities to communities. Today, nearly 300 schools in Tajikistan are part of water and sanitation initiatives. In many areas, children have joined school hygiene clubs, where they are trained to identify safe water, conduct peer and community education about hygiene and test village water supplies. One school near Khatlon failed to graduate a single girl during the past 10 years. Next year, they expect eight girls to graduate, with the administration attributing this in part to the school's water and sanitation programme.

Tajikistan has a long way to go to reach gender parity in education, but its eligibility for the World Bank's Fast-Track Initiative should give it a boost. The Initiative encourages new partnerships between donors and the country and calls for an infusion of money.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Kosovo – *There is little overt sign of the war's legacy here – evidence of new construction is everywhere, people mix freely in cafes, and the topic isn't necessarily welcome in casual conversation. But ethnic tensions still simmer, and UN peacekeepers, NATO troops and other soldiers are everywhere. At a school near the capital city of Pristina, children's outdoor games take place against a backdrop of bombed-out rubble.*

Van Province, Turkey – *Facilities are scarce here. Some school principals are wary of increased advocacy, believing that the schools cannot handle more students. The success of the national campaign, coupled with the lack of learning spaces, has led to concern about the credibility of international agencies' push to increase access to education.*

During mobilization visits, a general format seems to establish itself: a team of three or four starts talking to a family; then the local imam or other authority figure might wander over. A crowd of neighbors and kids gathers round, and by the end practically everyone in sight is drawn into the discussion, which invariably takes place over umpteen cups of tea. I am struck by the hospitality shown to the volunteers: Even if parents seem annoyed at the request that a daughter be sent to school, chairs are always drawn for the visitors and tea offered.

The campaign is a source of widespread pride and involvement. Journalists who cover the door-to-door campaign sometimes join the teams and contribute to the discussions. Mail carriers are also said to have added their efforts.

Dushanbe, Tajikistan *– One of the first questions I ask girls is whether their mothers went to school. In other parts of the world, this question often elicits a torrent of information on what it is like to be one of the first girls in the family or community to get an education. But here, the question is met with puzzlement. "Of course our mothers went to school," say a number of girls who are themselves dropouts, highlighting the changing circumstances in a region that is confronting declining budgets and decaying infrastructure.*

In some areas of the country, the most eligible age for marriage is said to be around 14 because younger girls are malleable and inexperienced, and there is a preference for uneducated women. Many unions are unregistered, leading to a lack of reliable data on the problem of early marriage. After nine years of compulsory education, parents will often arrange marriage for girls at the age of 15 or 16.

Khatlon, Tajikistan *– The scarcity of safe water and sanitation is evident everywhere. The muddy liquid from village wells is often dangerous to drink; even a pit latrine can be a luxury in rural areas with few facilities.*

At Bokhtar School No. 43, students have taken the problem of unsafe drinking water and non-existent sanitation as a challenge, transforming it into a way for girls to become involved in schools and community life. Located in a conservative area where girls are often pressured to get married rather than continue their studies, the school nonetheless emphasizes girls' participation. The majority of the students in the school's water and sanitation club are female, and it has become commonplace to see a student dressed in a traditional long gown and headscarf speaking confidently to her neighbors about the importance of safe drinking water.

Despite their modest garb, the girls in the club are unabashed when it comes to explaining how to dispose of human waste. They conduct scientific analysis in order to tell neighbors whether local water is safe to drink and work with local farmers to keep the environment clean. The water, sanitation and hygiene programme has made them the local experts on a topic not usually openly discussed – but of importance to everyone.

CHAPTER

9

Latin America and the Caribbean must rectify the barriers that have kept boys from remaining in school. But barriers that penalize girls and young women in spite of their academic achievement, such as underemployment, harassment, violence and lack of political and social power, must also be remedied.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

TRIUMPH OVER DENIAL

"I haven't really thought about what I'll be when I grow up. If I finish everything, maybe I can be president one day!"

Liliana, 8,
Primary Intercultural and Bilingual Education, Bolivia

There is much to cheer about in Latin America and the Caribbean. Steady progress over the past 15 years has put the region on track to achieve universal primary education by 2015. And, for the most part, girls' education is not a problem.

Success looks certain for universal primary education strictly by the numbers. The primary net enrolment/attendance ratio grew an average of 0.6 per cent each year between 1980 and 2001. It needs to continue at a pace of 0.4 per cent for the region to reach the finish line. The likelihood that children under five years old today will complete primary school by 2015 is greater than or equal to 95 per cent in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Uruguay. It dips to between 90 per cent and 95 per cent for Brazil, Costa Rica and Venezuela.[41]

While the region on the whole is keeping its promise of education for all by 2015, individual countries are in grave danger of falling short. Haiti, the poorest nation in the western hemisphere, had only 54 per cent of its children in primary school in 2001. Chances are even slimmer for Haiti to enrol all school-age children by the due date since civil upheaval and the brutality of Tropical Storm Jeanne in 2004 have left the country in shambles. Guatemala is also off the mark for meeting the deadline, with a total primary enrolment/attendance ratio of 85 per cent in 2001. If the country is to catch up, it will need to increase its net enrolment/attendance ratio to 1.07 per cent per year.

Gender parity in education by 2005 is on track throughout much of the region. If anything, gender disparity in schools favours girls over boys. Underlying these achievements, however, are problems of pervasive discrimination against girls and women, and educational disenfranchisement among indigenous people, especially girls.

The good news is that in 2001, only two countries – Grenada and Guatemala – had significantly fewer girls than boys in primary school, the usual measurement of the Millennium Development Goal of gender parity in education. The less favourable part of the equation is that the Bahamas, Haiti and Saint Kitts and Nevis have significantly more girls in school than boys. Those countries may miss the 2005 Goal on the other side of the disparity problem.

At the secondary level, girls are far more likely to be enrolled than boys regionally – 47 per cent versus 41 per cent. This disparity is particularly profound in Guyana, Nicaragua, and Trinidad and Tobago. UNICEF projections for secondary education show five countries – Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Suriname and Venezuela – are on course to meet the goal of gender parity in secondary education.[42]

The region has substantial work ahead to make school, especially at the secondary level, attractive and welcoming to boys and young men. The consequences of illiteracy and undereducation for boys and men have dire consequences for society. Courageously breaking the silence, many community leaders are calling attention to the phenomenon of gender disparity among boys and the resulting spike in violence and crime. This has been particularly problematic in Jamaica, where domestic abuse, gang lawlessness and crime are on the rise (*see Barry Chevannes interview, page 64*).

The inequality of girls and women cannot be downplayed, because it turns out that equal work does not equate to equal pay. The income gap between women and men, while narrowing in recent years, remains wide. Among the least educated, women's labour income was 66 per cent of men's in 2002, up from 55 per cent in 1990. The widest gap was among the most highly educated. Lack of education hurts women economically more than men. Regionally, the income of female dropouts would have been 44 per cent higher had they finished the four more years of school necessary to complete primary education, whereas male dropouts' income would have risen 36 per cent with that additional schooling (*see Chart, page 45*).[43]

As in the rest of the world, girls and women are frequently victimized simply because they are female. Gruesome murders have been reported in Guatemala and Mexico, for instance. Since 1993 in Ciudad Juárez and Chihuahua, Mexico, almost 400 women have vanished only to have their battered bodies turn up in open fields or alongside roads. Some 70 women remain missing. And in Guatemala, since 2001, 1,600 women have been murdered. In 2004 alone, there were more than 40 women murdered each month.

In one study in Nicaragua, 21 per cent of women reported that they were victims of sexual assault. The home proves to be especially dangerous for

LABOUR INCOME FORGONE AS A RESULT OF DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL

Source: United Nations, *The Millennium Development Goals: A Latin American and Caribbean perspective*, Santiago, June 2005, p. 116.

women. A study in São Paulo, Brazil found that 13 per cent of deaths among women of reproductive age were homicides, and 60 per cent had been murdered by their intimate partner. Research in Peru found that 90 per cent of 12- to 16-year-old girls who gave birth were impregnated through rape, often incest.[44] Clearly, education does not guarantee women's safety.

The challenge in Latin America and the Caribbean is to translate girls' education into female empowerment – economically, socially and politically. At the same time, an additional charge is to ameliorate gender disparity in education for boys and young men.

BARRIERS

The difficulty of pinpointing obstacles in the region results from a tunnel vision that believes gender parity in education equates to more girls in school. It is further complicated by the denial that gender disparity affects girls and young women. There are parallel truths about education in this region. Unlike most of the world, in most countries gender disparity favours girls rather than boys. But it is also true that there are pockets where girls are being denied their right to an

education, particularly within indigenous populations and in rural areas. There are multiple layers of barriers in this region that correspond to each reality.

Different factors keep boys and girls out of school. In the mainstream population, gender parity is quite good in the early grades. But each year, fewer and fewer boys remain in school. By secondary school, young women's enrolment and attendance far outpace that of young men in most countries in the region.

Economic disparities have decelerated progress towards universal education, because the likelihood of dropping out of school is much greater in the poorest social stratum. But, unlike in other regions, poverty is perhaps a greater obstacle for boys' school participation because young men are more likely to drop out to join the labour pool. A study conducted in Chile found that poor boys are four times more likely to enter the workforce than poor girls. In Brazil, child labour has robbed boys of an education by luring them away from books with promises of money. The regional anomaly of boys' education being more adversely affected by poverty than girls' reverses when poverty nosedives into abject destitution. Data from Argentina indicate that girls are more likely to drop out in times of economic crisis, which may be caused by a greater demand for their household labour as mothers supplement family income by working outside the home.[45]

Gender disparity favouring girls is also a by-product of the school system and socialization. Traditional teaching methods and curricula tend to reinforce gender stereotypes and maintain the status quo. Girls are often socialized to be passive and compliant, and schools reinforce this. In many ways, classroom norms such as rote memorization and obedience match expected female behaviour, both reinforcing stereotypes and rewarding girls' behaviour. Schools, particularly in later grades, may be seen as girls' domain, not boys'.

Latin America and the Caribbean must rectify the barriers that have kept boys from remaining in school. But barriers that penalize girls and young women in spite of their academic achievement, such as underemployment, harassment, violence and lack of political and social power, must also be remedied. In addition, leaders cannot deny that serious problems also exist in girls' education: large numbers of females are kept out of school, especially those from indigenous groups.

Although the failure to have female educational attainment equal female empowerment is universal, ethnicity, race and language as barriers to education are nowhere more apparent than in Latin America and the Caribbean. The focus on educational disparity that favours girls can overshadow the hidden crisis of illiteracy and underschooling among girls from indigenous groups. Bolivia, for instance, reports more girls in school than boys. Yet, more than half of indigenous girls drop out of school before reaching age 14.

The gender divide in education in Latin America and the Caribbean for the most part requires intensive interventions to attract boys and young men. Regional leaders are coming to grips with the problem and what it will mean for future generations if it remains unsolved. In addition to the gender-specific solutions, the region, with support from donors, must rectify the overarching blocks to education for all – poverty, poor quality and irrelevance, weak infrastructure, under-funded public schools, community disenfranchisement, political upheaval and violence in and around schools.

INTERVENTIONS

'25 BY 2005' COUNTRIES

Bolivia

Perhaps the most important first step on the journey to universal education is this region's greatest asset – early childhood care. Latin America and the Caribbean has a relatively long track record in providing formal and informal early childhood programmes, particularly preschools.

Studies have found that pre-primary education is a sturdy foundation for future intellectual, emotional and social development. It reduces the number of years needed to complete primary and secondary education, and helps narrow the gap between children from different social strata. Early childhood projects work with families regarding developmental milestones and appropriate child-rearing practices. Comprehensive early childhood initiatives have been instrumental in challenging gender stereotypes that reinforce machismo and keep women powerless in the family and society. In Peru, for instance, Iniciativa Papa, an early childhood project, strengthens the bond between fathers and tots through intensive male participation in child-rearing.

Challenging traditions is often a key strategy in the quest for universal education. At other times, embracing traditions is needed for children to enrol in and attend school. In Bolivia, for instance, where more than half of the population are indigenous and there are 32 identified native cultures, UNICEF and the Ministry of Education are focusing on bilingual and multicultural education. Girls in particular are disenfranchised from school, as reflected in the national illiteracy rate

of 19 per cent for women and 7 per cent for men. In rural areas, where there is the highest concentration of indigenous people, the illiteracy rate is 38 per cent for women and 14 per cent for men. The multi-pronged strategy to educate all young people begins with integrated child development initiatives and continues with culturally-sensitive basic education. With support from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation and the Swedish Agency for International Development Cooperation, Bolivia has developed the Alternative Education Project, which focuses on people who have aged out of the formal education sector. Bilingual teaching methods and basic literacy are the backbone of this initiative.

Throughout the region, child-friendly schools have been developed to counter the colossal barriers facing universal education. In countries with large indigenous populations, bilingual and multicultural education is part of the process, but there are also other essential components for making schools welcoming and safe. A stellar example is the Child-Friendly and Healthy School Initiative in Nicaragua, a multisectoral approach that reaches out to children who have been excluded with quality education, student and family participation and social mobilization.

Recognizing that girls' education has not yet evolved into equality, Nicaragua is recognizing schools as places to confront social issues such as machismo, domestic violence and single-parent households. Girls and boys participate together in classes and in extracurricular activities to help anchor gender equality. Gobiernos Estudiantiles ('student governments') have evolved, where girls and boys learn about their right to be educated, to be protected from corporal punishment and to be heard. A student-led project is the child-to-child census, which has identified children who are not in school.

Through coordination between the Instituto Para el Desarrollo de Democracia and the Nicaragua Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, schools are being transformed through a bottom-up approach. Initially change is taking place at the school level and is spreading among municipalities across the country. Communities determine how their schools can be more inclusive and accessible. Some schools put a greater emphasis on providing meals and are creating kitchens to enhance World Food Programme initiatives. Other schools are focusing on improving water and sanitation, because safe water and good sanitation are lacking. Still others are concentrating on birth registration drives, outreach to children with disabilities or school transportation. The goal is for all schools to be child-friendly, with individual communities focusing on the missing ingredients.

As a region, Latin America and the Caribbean is close to reaching the education Millennium Development Goals, but countries are not resting on their laurels. In countries where the finish line is just around the corner, governments and donors are making the last gruelling push. In those nations where the end goal is way off in the distance, success will depend on going that extra mile.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Limay, Nicaragua – *In my next life, as a young student, I will be attending an 'escuela amiga y saludable'. My first choice would be Escuela Victoria Rayo in Esteli Province, and I want Alex Bismar to be my teacher.*

The two-room school is inviting, colourful and decorated with artwork, teaching materials and an array of butterflies that flutter by. Alex, the unpretentious head teacher, has worked here for six years and was part of the transition as the school joined the child-friendly initiative two years ago. He remembers how forgotten and isolated he and his two colleagues felt before and how their interest in the children was so different then. "Before, I didn't really focus on the children. I was more interested in following through the curriculum."

The salaries are low and the new approach demanding, with inordinate amounts of time spent on preparing lesson plans and materials. I ask Alex what motivates the teachers and he says that it's more gratifying to see the children participate and excel. He boasts about his former students who have moved on to secondary school, some winning awards.

The school seems egalitarian. Boys and girls clean classrooms and kitchens together and play on the co-ed football teams. They learn that conflicts can be resolved without resorting to violence. They learn about their rights.

In a country where domestic violence is common and corporal punishment of children widespread, it takes guts for a third-grader to stand up to an adult and say, "You don't have the right to beat me." It takes guts for a teacher to give kids the knowledge and spunk to do so.

Pacren, Guatemala – *Less than a month before Hurricane Stan wiped out villages, I met Maria, a 14-year-old girl, living in this now-devastated area. A shy girl, not accustomed to speaking with foreigners, she was optimistic about her future despite her family's poverty. She had high hopes of becoming a teacher or a nurse and moving to the capital. She knew it wouldn't be easy to continue her studies, but her parents' promise to help kept her hope alive.*

Maria had a fair chance to succeed. The Ministry of Education and UNICEF had just launched Becatón, a campaign that appeals to Guatemala's wealthy for solidarity with girls like Maria. 'Beca', a scholarship equivalent to US$50, is enough for one year of schooling. The campaign was off to a good start. Then the hurricane struck. Will there be enough solidarity to go around or will the Becatón become another casualty of Stan?

UNICEF colleagues in Guatemala have assured me that Becatón will remain in the limelight and will be adapted to the catastrophe. As a start, children in the affected areas will be first to receive the scholarships.

I have no news about Maria. The road that led to the bottom of the hill where she lives, and where her school stood, has been washed away. I wonder if the collapsing mountain engulfed some of the buildings in its path. My thoughts are with Maria. I hope she will be one of the first to receive a beca when school starts again.

CHAPTER
10

Despite hidden crises for some groups, the barriers to gender parity and universal education are not insurmountable.

EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC
THE NUMBERS WITHIN THE NUMBERS

"My favourite part in football is scoring goals and everyone cheering for me. I'm very happy when my team wins, but we lost today and I still feel happy because I had fun playing."

Naw Pa Eh, 12, refugee
from Myanmar living in Thailand refugee camp

Statistics from East Asia and the Pacific belie the true challenge of ensuring that all children enrol in and complete primary school. Despite a projected regional net attendance ratio of 96.2 in 2005, there are large disparities among and within countries. For the most part, gender parity in primary education by 2005 appears to be on track by sheer numbers, but the spirit of the goal – empowerment of girls and women – is far from realization.

Universal education was severely undermined by the region's financial crisis of the 1990s. Net primary enrolment rates in Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam were especially devastated by the economic downswing. For example, Viet Nam had an average annual rate of increase in its net enrolment/attendance ratio between 1980 and 2001 of just 0.17 per cent, and the Philippines had an average annual rate of increase of only 0.07 per cent during that same period.

In 2002, the nascent independent country of Timor-Leste had less than two thirds of its primary school-age children attending classes. Overall, the region contributed 9 per cent to the global out-of-school population in 2001.

Despite these setbacks, the region is on track to meet the goal of universal primary education by 2015. Significant improvement in the annual average rate of increase in primary school attendance is required of Cambodia (2.5 per cent), Lao PDR (1.2 per cent), Myanmar (1.3 per cent) and Papua New Guinea (1.9 per cent), but universal education is certainly reachable. However, decreasing government outlay for education in Myanmar jeopardizes the country's chances of success.

The region has accomplished a great deal: in 2001, it recorded equal numbers of boys and girls in primary school, and 17 countries are set to meet the 2005 goal of gender parity. Lao PDR, Niue, Palau and Papua New Guinea are the only countries and territories at risk of having fewer girls than boys in school when the goal comes

due.[46] However, gender parity is not translating into equal treatment within schools or equality within society. Boys often report being bullied and intimidated by teachers. And girls often receive less attention and time from teachers. At the same time, girls report being harassed by male students at school or during the journey to and from school.

The successes in getting children into school have been undermined by failure to have students complete their education. Poor quality factors into high grade repetition and drop-out rates. In Papua New Guinea, for instance, the overall gross enrolment rate for primary school is about 76 per cent, yet the statistic may be misleading because many children are overage.[47] Cambodia had a primary school completion rate in 2001 of just 70 per cent. Lao PDR and the Philippines had completion rates below 70 per cent and Papua New Guinea's rate was slightly above 50 per cent.

The lack of trained teachers, learning spaces and supplies contributes to poor quality education. Unprepared and unqualified teachers are cited as problems in most of the region's countries – less than 80 per cent of teachers in Myanmar and Lao PDR are trained, and fewer than 60 per cent in Timor-Leste. A 2004 Philippine Government report indicated that the country has a shortage of 51,947 classrooms, 34.7 million textbooks and 38,535 teachers. It predicts the situation will get worse in the coming years, as student populations are expected to rise by 2.8 per cent annually.[48]

Despite overall progress towards meeting gender parity in primary school, the numbers within the numbers point to a much-needed push to make the playing field level for all children. Little comfort should be taken from national and regional averages when so many girls have been left out. The disparities that are masked by statistics must be reckoned with if boys and girls, men and women are to reap the rewards of literacy and numeracy. If the full letter of the 2005 Millennium Development Goal of gender parity in both primary and secondary education is to be met, education must move to the top of the region's list of priorities. There are 60 million children in the region who are not enrolled in secondary school (*see Chart at right*). Only Indonesia, Myanmar and Viet Nam are on track to achieve gender parity in secondary education.

SECONDARY SCHOOL NET ENROLMENT RATIOS, 2000–2004

Country	Boys	Girls
Cambodia	30	19
Fiji	73	79
Indonesia	54	54
Lao P.D.R.	38	32
Mongolia	72	83
Myanmar	36	34
Papua New Guinea	27	21
Philippines	54	65
Vanuatu	27	28

Source: *The State of the World's Children 2006,* forthcoming, UNICEF, New York, December 2005, pp. 114-117.

BARRIERS

Poverty and its concomitant byproducts, such as child labour and inadequate infrastructure, are overarching factors that hinder school enrolment and attendance. Within the region, there are countries that have large percentages of their populations living on less than $2 per person, per day. School fees and hidden costs are huge obstacles that prevent poor children from going to school.

Emergencies and armed conflict also take their toll on the region's quest to fulfil the education Millennium Development Goals. Ongoing or episodic violence simmers in eastern Indonesia, southern Philippines, southern Thailand and Myanmar. Tribal fights in parts of Papua New Guinea have shut schools periodically and are often cited by girls as the reason they have dropped out. The December 2004 tsunami was particularly devastating to Indonesia, killing well over 100,000 people. Natural and human-made disasters drain countries of resources that would otherwise go to social services, including education.

Based on the yawning educational disparities among and within nations, it can be surmised that in addition to poverty, armed conflict and emergencies, other factors leave a child vulnerable to non-enrolment – being an ethnic minority, living in a remote area, or being a migrant or

internally displaced person. Within these groups, girls are most at risk of being denied their right to complete basic, quality education. Whatever the basis of discrimination, girls face a double disadvantage.

Schools are not welcoming to ethnic minorities when the language of instruction is not their mother tongue. Many times children first hear their countries' official languages when they enter school. This problem could be alleviated through bilingual education, yet most schools fail to accommodate minority children's vernacular. In addition to hindering learning, failure to use the child's household language alienates parents, who feel no sense of ownership of the village school (*see Rima Salah interview, page 68*).

Distances between villages and schools keep children from school. Parents are especially unwilling to have girls travel far from home because they fear for their daughters' safety. And for children living in remote areas, long journeys are usually the only avenues to obtain an education. In Papua New Guinea, for instance, 87 per cent of the population lives in remote areas with few roads and no railways. In coastal areas, boats are the predominant means of transportation.[49]

The rural/urban divide is especially evident in secondary education enrolment and attendance. There are fewer secondary schools in rural areas, and students must either travel long distances or leave home altogether to attend. Private schools are picking up the slack in some countries, but they are more accessible to the affluent, leaving large chunks of the population wanting. In Papua New Guinea, school enrolment, attendance and quality are low in the most remote areas because teachers are reluctant to move there. Overcrowded classes and double and triple shifts make teaching burdensome. Teacher absenteeism is particularly problematic in these areas.

Migrant children throughout the region are more likely to be in the child labour force than in school. In Thailand, for

instance, of the 93,000 registered migrant children under the age of 15, only 14 per cent were enrolled in school. Some 80,000 boys and girls who had migrated to Thailand were missing their education, despite national laws that specify a right to schooling and prohibit employment for migrant children.[50] In Viet Nam, education is more expensive for migrant children, who are required to apply to semi-private or private schools or pay higher fees to attend government schools.

Internally displaced children face similar obstacles to educational access. With their lives disrupted by violence or catastrophes, children are often deprived of their most-needed resource – the normalcy and routine provided by schooling. The good news is that the internally displaced population has been almost halved between 2003 and 2004 in this region. However, that is little comfort for the 929,000 internally displaced persons in Indonesia, the 529,000 in Myanmar, and the nearly 19,000 in Thailand who struggle to repair their lives and get their children back into school.[51]

Education for the disabled in this region reflects a common theme throughout the developing world – there are insufficient accommodations for children with special needs. The World Bank estimates that fewer than 5 per cent of children with disabilities complete primary education. It concludes that having a disability may be the single most common reason for educational exclusion.[52] Schools in the region have not readily opened their doors to children with disabilities, citing lack of resources and teachers' fears that disabled children will be disruptive and will hinder others' ability to learn.

Despite hidden crises for some groups, the barriers to gender parity and universal education are not insurmountable. East Asia and the Pacific launched the UN Girls' Education Initiative group in 2002. The region's early commitment to gender parity in education stands it in good stead for fulfilling the Education For All promises.

INTERVENTIONS

'25 BY 2005' COUNTRIES

Papua New Guinea

The East Asia and the Pacific region has been fertile ground for educational partnerships. Many UN agencies have joined non-governmental and civil society organizations in making gender parity and universal education the goal.

One innovative approach that breaks down stereotypes is the Kabataan News Network in the Philippines. The weekly television show is planned, directed, recorded and hosted by children – and over 80 per cent of the participants are girls. Focusing on entertainment and news rather than 'educational TV', the show, which is broadcast nationally, challenges traditional gender roles, puts girls in positions of leadership and gives young people a voice and a chance to participate.

Community participation is the glue that keeps children coming to classes in Kalayaan Primary School in the Philippines. The gold standard for 'child-friendly', the school is also a model for strong family involvement. To ensure a dynamic parent teacher association, the faculty works closely within the neighbourhood, ensuring that mothers and fathers have the necessary skills to meaningfully contribute to their children's education. One component enrols illiterate parents into literacy classes. In addition, teachers keep parents abreast of the academic and social progress of the students. The children are also encouraged to be active in the school and community through Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, drama, dance, mathematics and science clubs, and civic activities. Similar schools have sprouted up throughout the country (*see Marivic Javierto interview, page 80*).

In Papua New Guinea, community participation is also the norm. Villagers are making certain that children will not be denied an education for lack of money – at least not at the Gaglmambuno Primary School in Kundiawa. In these remote parts, local communities have initiated the 'school fees ake pile'. *Ake pile* roughly translates to 'holding children in your hands and raising them upward towards their dreams'. On a specified day, church elders, parents, teachers and other leaders gather festively to donate money for tuition. In an area where most families survive through subsistence farming, local residents have determined that no child will be kept from school because of poverty.

While the efforts of the people of Kundiawa are inspiring, greater outside resources are needed to intensify Papua New Guinea's push for gender parity and universal education. UNICEF has partnered with the strong network of churches that plays a critical role in providing education to the country's children. In 2000, there were a total of 3,215 primary schools – 1,551 run by the government and 1,664 operated by various religious denominations,

including Anglican, Catholic, Evangelical Alliance, Lutheran, Seventh-Day Adventists and the United Church of Papua New Guinea. Many denominations now focus on girls' and women's leadership, which will help transform gender parity into equality.

Strong partnerships are part of China's efforts to return to fuller school access and enrolment for children, especially girls. UNICEF and China Women's News, for instance, came together around girls' education. Reporters used a positive news hook through regular columns on rural girls who finished their education and headed to the cities to pursue their careers. Other features spotlighted parents who made sacrifices to keep their daughters in school. Rather than focus on the negative, the articles give hope and inspiration to families.

The East Asia and the Pacific region could be a model. Yet, for the regional statistics to truly reflect the overall landscape of gender parity and universal primary education, pockets of failed school enrolment and attendance cry out for additional efforts and resources.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Port Moresby to the Highlands, Papua New Guinea – *There is no road connecting the two areas, so we take Air Niugini to Mount Hagen in the Western Highlands. Transportation of people and supplies between most regions of the country is done by air or in coastal areas by ship, which makes operation costs for development programmes extremely expensive. Once there, we visit Aviamp Primary School, where older girls tower over young students. Girls in Papua New Guinea often drop out and come back later to catch up.*

Kundiawa, Chimbu Province, Papua New Guinea – *We drive to our next stop across rugged terrain riddled with potholes. Getting around is not*

easy – even where there is a road system, like in the Western Highlands. Unlike the lush Western Highlands, Chimbu is barren and is the least developed province. For the most part, educated people leave, making it difficult to find teachers and doctors. I get a glimpse of the isolation of some areas when we head to Gaglmamabuno Primary School, about 32 kilometres from Kundiawa and 5 kilometres off the main road.

I wondered in the morning why our local colleagues, who are usually telling jokes and stories nonstop, are quiet except for the occasional question about the day's road conditions. When we turn off the main road, begin winding up steep hills and over old wooden bridges with broken beams and missing tie plates, I understand their unease. It has rained the night before, as it does much of the year, and the road has turned into a soup of mud and water. Nobody speaks as the truck struggles through the sludge, fishtailing as it inches its way onward. With a huge drop on one side, not surprisingly it takes over an hour to cover the 5 kilometers. Once we get over the top of the hill, lightheartedness and chattiness return. Their favorite stories are about passengers, mostly staff from abroad, whose contorted faces speak volumes while they hold their breath going up the mountain.

There is no traffic on this road and I later find out that only one person in a village close to Gaglmamabuno has a jeep. I keep thinking about the people who must depend on this road as their only connection to a health clinic or market where they can earn some cash.

CHAPTER

11

Abolish fees, reduce costs and provide incentives. Provide 'essential learning packages' in emergencies. Make schools one-stop centres for 'learning plus'.

NEXT LEG OF THE JOURNEY

Gender parity in education is a critical milestone along the way to universal primary education and gender equality. The previous chapters highlight the reality of accomplishments and challenges as understood by education and development specialists. Like a map, they locate where each region stands today. There is also a need to highlight some concrete measures that are necessary to move beyond present day realities to reach the ultimate destination – a world where all children complete a quality basic education.

ABOLISH FEES, CAP TOTAL COSTS, PROVIDE INCENTIVES

Children's right to education cannot be held ransom to poverty. First and foremost, governments need to put a ceiling on the total household cost of schooling. This means abolishing tuition fees and implies limiting or eliminating the hidden costs related to education.

- **Provide scholarships for all disadvantaged children.** Direct costs and school-related expenses need to be covered.
- **Cap fees and other school charges.** Fees for parent teacher associations could be made illegal, school uniforms could be eliminated and textbooks could be rented rather than the more costly alternative of purchasing books.
- **Provide financial incentives to disadvantaged families in return for their children's school enrolment and regular attendance.** Impoverished families must often choose between sending children to school or engaging them in paid work, domestic labour and subsistence activities. Incentives could be in the form of cash or take-home food rations.
- **Abolish school fees and other charges as national policy.** This intervention has the potential to flood schools with new students, but can be successfully addressed through strategic planning as well as phased-in approaches such as eliminating fees by grade over several years.

PROVIDE 'ESSENTIAL LEARNING PACKAGE'

When emergencies strike, the world somehow rises to the occasion and produces sterling results under dire circumstances. Within a short time frame millions of children are enrolled in school and learning because certain essential supplies and services have been widely distributed. The key is to utilize the lessons learned during these crises and adapt them to countries that face chronic problems that require emergency type solutions. Along with major education advocacy campaigns, certain actions are required:

- **Quick needs assessments as starting points for rapid progress**
- **Identification and costing of key elements of supplies and services that constitute feasible 'essential learning packages'**
- **Negotiating package elements and costs that are affordable in the medium to long term to ensure sustainability**
- **Initial infusion of major funding by donors (front loading) to take up the costs involved in the short to medium term**
- **Technical support for developing, evaluating and distributing the 'essential learning package' in a rapid, efficient and large scale manner**
- **Partnerships between external agencies and governments to make full use of existing national systems, procedures and instruments rather than creating new or parallel systems.**

PROMOTE SCHOOLS AS ONE-STOP CENTRES FOR 'LEARNING PLUS'

School can be the gateway for ameliorating external barriers that threaten the delivery of essential services to children, including education. Schools that promote 'Learning Plus' can be the difference between hunger and nutrition, illness and health, fear and fun, and ignorance and knowledge.

- **Provide school feeding such as mid-day meals or take-home rations**
- **Implement school health programmes that include deworming treatment, micronutrients and immunization**
- **Provide care and support for orphans and other vulnerable children**
- **Establish hygiene and health education that encourages practices for disease prevention**
- **Establish safe and protective environments for children to learn and play.**

DATE WITH DESTINY

Progress towards gender parity in education has been slow but steady. And while some countries have a long road to travel to meet this goal, cautious optimism abounds. Achievement of universal primary education by 2015 is more tenuous, and achievement of gender equality will be more elusive. For world leaders to be able to hold their heads high, and, more importantly, for all children to attain their right to quality education, definitive action must be taken now. The clock is ticking.

SECTION III

EXPERTS SPEAK OUT

Six people – an economist, a sociologist, an anthropologist, an educator, an activist and a mother – talk about the importance of gender parity, education and development. Each chapter is an excerpt from a more extensive interview. The viewpoints expressed do not reflect the position of UNICEF or the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative.

CHAPTER
12

STEPHAN KLASEN
ECONOMICS OF GIRLS' EDUCATION

"We now have a very large body of literature that has documented empirically that female education has a particularly important role to play in promoting economic development in a broad sense. It does so directly by allowing educated females to become part of the work force, to increase their productivity and contribute to economic growth."

Q: The Millennium Development Goal of gender parity in primary and secondary education is about to come due. As an economist, can you explain in lay person's terms how failure to achieve this goal will affect development?

Stephan Klasen: I think there are a few issues one should point out. Even before I directly answer the question, I think one should ask, "How has progress been, and how has the development goal actually helped galvanize action in this direction?" I think it has helped galvanize quite a lot of action. Had one said 10 years ago, "This goal will be reached by the majority of developing countries," one would have said, "That's impossible." And it now looks like the vast majority of the developing countries are going to reach the goal this year of parity in primary and secondary enrolment. So I think quite a lot has been achieved.

But there are those 35 to 45 countries that are unlikely to reach the goal. We are already in 2005. We will only know next year or the year after, when we have all the data in, which countries actually end up failing to meet that goal. And the question is, "What are the costs to them?" And here I want to distinguish between the social and welfare costs and the more narrow economic costs. I think that if we start with the first one [social and welfare costs], those girls that won't be able to go to school are basically denied the fundamental right that has been recognized by the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which has been signed and ratified by nearly every country of the world. They are suffering from a particularly egregious form of discrimination. And therefore there are major costs in terms of equity, major costs in terms of injustice to be borne by those who are suffering under the failure to reach that goal.

On the more economic side, we now have a very large body of literature that has documented empirically that female education has a particularly important role to play in promoting economic development in a broad sense. It does so directly by allowing educated females to become part of the work force, to increase their productivity and contribute to economic growth. There are quite a number of studies that have shown that countries that have a large gender imbalance in their education have ended up growing slower than those countries that have gender balance in education, basically because those countries with a gender imbalance are not drawing on their best talents, but are neglecting one half of their population. Apart from this talent waste, educated women tend to have children who are better educated, children who are healthier, and they tend to have fewer children, all three of which are factors that are important in their own right for reaching other Millennium Development Goals, but also important for economic growth. So in a sense, these are self-reinforcing processes, and countries that are failing to meet those goals are suffering costs in terms of growth, health improvement, nutrition improvement, fertility reduction.

Q: In terms of the lower fertility rates, the lower mortality rates, how does that actually translate into increased economic productivity?

SK: Well, economic productivity depends on the quantity and quality of assets that are used in the production process. We have physical assets, such as machines, we have land as an asset, but it turns out that increasingly more important in today's world are human assets. And human assets are both health and education, and innovation of people. If girls are poorly educated, they do worse in the creation of human assets for the next generation for several reasons. First, they tend to have larger families. As a result, they cannot invest as much in each child, because more children mean fewer resources per individual child. And they also have to be worried that some children will not survive, and therefore they would be much more reluctant to invest. Thirdly, the health knowledge and the knowledge how to invest will be lower. If you have an educated woman, she's likely to have fewer children, thereby she is able to put more resources into each of them. That will lower their mortality rate. That will make it easier for them to be healthy, easier for them to be educated, and therefore these children will have greater human assets, which will lead to higher productivity for the entire economy.

Q: You said, "health knowledge." What do you mean by that?

SK: Economists think of health as being a good that is produced within households. And you need some resources in order to produce health in your household. But you also need some knowledge about immunization practices, about hygiene practices, about feeding practices, about what is adequate nutrition. We find that among educated women, those types of health knowledge are considerably higher. They also have much higher awareness and knowledge of contraception.

Q: In your 2004 paper *The Costs of Missing the Millennium Development Goal on Gender Equity*, you mentioned the diminishing returns for gender parity favouring boys, and I think that what you meant by that is that less qualified boys will be educated over talented girls. Is that accurate? If so, could you say more about that?

SK: Those are actually two slightly separate arguments. But they both suggest that gender gaps in education are bad for society. Let me take the first argument. We basically think – and there's good empirical evidence for that – that there is a diminishing monetary return for education in general. That for the first year of education, let's say you get a 20 per cent increase in your lifetime income. For the second year you get an additional 18 per cent increase in lifetime income. You earn more than with one year, but the additional increase keeps getting smaller. If you go from 15 years to 16 years of education, the marginal year of education further increases your lifetime earnings or your lifetime well-being, but it's much smaller than for the first few years.

That's what economists call a 'stylized fact'. It's broadly true in most developing countries. Now, one would have to nuance the statement in various ways. It is indeed not true that the marginal return for every year's education goes down linearly. Sometimes there are jumps in the marginal returns. For example, if you have completed secondary education, then suddenly your returns jump quite a lot compared to if you drop out a year before. But broadly, that is a trend that is true.

Now, if that's the case and you have two societies, one where boys and girls all get six years of education, and the other one where all boys get nine and all girls get three years of education, the average years of education of the two societies is six years. Where you have the gender gaps, the marginal increase in education that the boys have gotten in their ninth year of education is much smaller than what the girls would get if they would get a fourth year of education. That's the argument. If we then said, "Let's take the boys out of school from grades six to nine and instead put the girls in there from grades four to six," – now I'm not recommending we follow this policy, but as a thought experiment – then the benefit for the society would be positive, because the gains to the girls would be bigger than the losses to the boys. So that's the first argument.

The second argument is slightly different. Basically, we believe that talent is unequally distributed, that we have a distribution of talents that looks like a bell curve. There's no good empirical evidence that the curve differs in systematic ways between males and females. We would usually assume that the distribution is pretty similar for males and females – same mean and same spread. So once again, you have two societies. In one society, let's say the 50 per cent best-talented boys get educated and the 50 per cent best-talented girls get educated. In the other society, we take the 70 per cent best-talented boys and only the 30 per cent best-talented girls. Now, what we're doing in that second society is scraping deeper on the bottom of the barrel of talent of the males than we are with the females. As a result, we have quite a lot of very talented females who are sitting at home and have taken in less-talented males instead. The society that draws

equally from both would make better use of their society's talents than the society that basically says, "We take the most talented boys," rather than the most talented people. In the end, the productivity of your human assets depends on the education that people have, but also on the talents that they have. And if you're not using the talents of girls by keeping them at home and not sending them to school, you are hurting yourself.

Q: In your article *Low Schooling for Girls, Slower Growth for All*, you gave the number that there was a 0.4 to 0.9 point difference in annual per capita growth rates between East Asia and the regions of sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and the Middle East. Based on the differences and gender gaps in education, could you explain, in lay person's terms again, how you came to that conclusion?

SK: The story is quite simple. We run what's called a 'cross country regression' to find factors that are correlated with economic growth. We have on the left-hand side of the equation the average annual per capita growth rate of 110 countries or so over the period 1960 to 1992. Then we have on the right-hand side all possible variables that could affect economic growth: the investment rate, the amount of the overall education, the population growth rate, and a few other variables. Apart from the average level of education, we also measure the gender gap in education as an additional variable that plays a role. We add a variable on the gender gap in education growth – initially in 1960 at the starting period, as well as how rapidly they've closed the gender gap in education. And it turns out, both of these variables have significant effects. Meaning, the higher the female education relative to male, the lower the gender gap in 1960, the higher the economic growth. And the faster the gender gap in education was closed, the higher was economic growth. That's what comes out of this regression.

And what you can do with that is say, "Let's look at how large was the gender gap in education in 1960 in East Asia, and how large is it in sub-Saharan Africa? How fast did East Asia close it, and how fast did sub-Saharan Africa close it? You compare how these countries differ, both in initial conditions and in closing of this gender gap. And then you can multiply that difference with the coefficients from those regressions to say, "How large is the impact of the difference in gender gap between those two regions on economic growth?" And it comes out to be 0.4 to 0.9 percentage points per year.

To put this into perspective, East Asia grew by 3.5 per cent per year faster, every year, than sub-Saharan Africa. It has become a lot richer since, as we all know. The gender gaps in education seem to account for somewhere between 15 and 25 per cent of that difference in the growth performance. The implicit argument we're saying is, "Had sub-Saharan Africa in 1960 adopted East Asia's gender gaps in education, which were much lower, and had it adopted East Asia's policy of closing the gender gap, which was much faster than in sub-Saharan Africa, they would have grown by 0.4 to 0.9 per cent faster than they actually did." In that paper, we find Africa grew an average 0.6 per cent per year per capita, so they would have added 0.4 to 0.9 percentage points on top of that.

Q: You've indicated that the projections for the number of countries that will meet gender parity in education goal are deceiving. Could you explain?

SK: When you project the future, you always have a lot of uncertainty. So, what we did was use the methodology that other institutions use, as follows: "Let's see how these countries expanded education in the '90s. Let's just assume that they will continue to expand education at the same pace into the future." We did that by sex – for male education and for female education. Now you have a few countries – I think Bangladesh is a dramatic example – where they expanded female education at a very, very rapid pace in the 1990s, by 10 percentage points a year. In our assessment we let them continue to expand female education at this rate. Now, it's pretty unlikely that it could continue just going up like this. There are limits. At some point, all girls are in school. Sometimes it's really hard to get the hard-to-reach girls to go to school – those who are really remote or where the parents are not interested in education, or who live on the streets, etc. So the inherent assumption that was used in the projections is questionable.

Today we know a little bit more because we have data up until at least 2002. So we can see how actually the story has changed. And it turns out that – even though the numbers we had were deceiving – actually a lot of countries are going to meet the goal. I just checked recently on the countries that are likely to have made it, and the list is impressively long, including lots of countries which one wouldn't have thought would be included, such as Bangladesh or China or even quite a large number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including Botswana, Lesotho, Tanzania, Uganda, and so on.

Q: When you still have 20 million people out of school in a country, gender parity could be an equal number of children not in school.

SK: That's right. We found a few countries that are going to reach 'the goal' by taking boys out of school more rapidly than girls. There were a few countries, including some in Africa, where education is in a really serious crisis and where enrolment rates are dropping. Also some countries, like Iraq, prewar, where actually male enrolment rates were dropping more rapidly than female enrolment rates, and they were reaching the goal of gender equity. Now,

that is obviously not in the spirit of MDG 3. That obviously goes against the objectives of MDG 2 education for all. Clearly, this is a worry.

Q: When you say that the male enrolment rate is decreasing, is it that fewer males are enrolling initially, or is it that boys are dropping out more, or both?

SK: I think in the countries that are affected, both are happening. The education system is getting worse in terms of quality, in terms of acceptability. Households are getting poorer, so they're more reluctant to send children to school. So things are just going badly all around. There were war-torn African countries, but also countries with severe economic crises.

Q: Do you think that donors understand the importance of the Education Millennium Development Goals?

SK: Yes. I think that they receive a lot of attention and quite a lot has happened to achieve progress here. On the resource side, quite a lot has been accumulated to support expansion of education. I think there are still problems. An inherent weakness of the Millennium Development Goal approach to things is that it is very much about quantitative targets that are not paying nearly enough attention to quality issues. So you can push up enrolment rates quite quickly, through various incentive measures, but that doesn't necessarily improve quality, and sometimes it may contribute to the deterioration of quality.

I think we are still at a loss about what to do in the countries where the economic or political or military circumstances are very difficult to operate in. Because those are the countries that are really failing to meet the MDGs – all of them. Committing enough resources to education has been, in a sense, a relatively easy sell to the international community, particularly girls' education. And I think we've seen tremendous progress. If one had said that countries like Bangladesh would have gender parity in education by 2005, even 10 years ago, one wouldn't have thought that was conceivable. And they've done it.

Q: With the competing crises in the developing world, such as the HIV/AIDS pandemic, hunger, drought, armed conflict – what would you say to a donor who says we cannot afford to invest in girls' education?

SK: Clearly, there are always tough choices to be made. If we can prioritize, girls' education is pretty far up the list, not only because it benefits the girls, but it actually benefits the society at large. Educating girls helps improve nutritional status, agricultural yield, health. So quite a few of the problems that are mentioned here as competing are actually partly solved by improving girls' education (*see Box, below*).

I think that the one thing that may be at least up there or above is peace. In countries where there isn't peace, it's very difficult to invest in education. So I think to make any kind of concerted development effort happen, you need peace and security. That's actually something where the international community could do quite a lot more than they currently do. But barring that, I think as soon as you have peace, girls' education should be right up there with things like HIV/AIDS and hunger.

FACE OF HIV/AIDS: ASIA PACIFIC NETWORK OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS

Excerpt from speech given by Frika Chia Iskandar on 25 October 2005 at the launch of the 'Unite for Children. Unite against AIDS' *campaign.*

No matter what you thought before, today you have heard that AIDS has a child's face. And no matter what you thought before, today you have heard that the AIDS pandemic knows no borders.

I have an Asian face. And I, too, am the face of AIDS.

After Africa, children in south and east Asia are the second largest group of children living with AIDS and dying from the disease. The AIDS epidemic in Asia is growing very quickly. But there is still vast ignorance about AIDS throughout the region, including in Indonesia where I am from….

But to make a difference, we need more than education about AIDS. We need education in general.

If children do not attend school, and do not learn to read and write, they will have little chance of learning how to protect themselves from disease when they grow up. And if young people do not stay in school, they will not only lack important knowledge, but will not have a chance to develop the self-esteem and life skills to remain safe from HIV.

That's why an important part of fighting AIDS is making sure that every child gets a proper education and every young person stays in school….

CHAPTER
13

BARRY CHEVANNES
BOYS LEFT OUT

"There is no doubt in my mind that male alienation from the school system does contribute to all of the social problems that we have come across. To put it another way, if they were educated, I think that the negative trends that we have been emphasizing – violence, irresponsible sexual behaviour and so on – would be much less."

Q: The Millennium Development Goal of gender parity in primary and secondary education is equated with girls' education. Gender disparity in parts of South America and the Caribbean puts boys at a disadvantage. Why should world leaders be concerned about boys' enrolment and attendance?

Barry Chevannes: In the first place, we live in a world – what happens in Jamaica is just a symptom of the growing problems in many parts of the world – where we're seeing an increase in social deviance among young males in particular. We're talking about very high rates of criminal violence and homicide. The homicide rate in several countries of the Caribbean exceeds 20 per 100,000. There are also other kinds of disparities, in education, for one, where there is what I call 'under participation' – some people say it's 'under performance', but I say it's really 'under participation' – of males. This also happens in many of the so-called 'First World' countries, where you find this kind of disparity taking place. So males do not want to be educated; they are turning to other things, other forms of deviance. And that's the point. It is of great concern to the rest of society that there are such social disorders, and the root of it lies in males. So that's one reason why leaders should be concerned about this.

The other side is that at every level of the society males have power. It's almost like the way masculinity is defined, by power. You see it in the churches, where females are the mainstay of the churches, but they themselves will elect the males to be leaders. You see it in communities of the poor, where leadership is reposited in males. It's not that the males simply take over leadership. Sometimes leadership is thrust on them. So, it must be of concern that men in leadership positions do not have the civilizing qualities, if you will, that education – a good education – is supposed to bring. So this is why I think we must be concerned about the attendance and participation of boys in school. Attending is one thing, but also being active and participating in school is another.

Q: How did you get interested in the effects of gender disparity on education?

BC: I was invited to run a survey on male attitudes to contraceptive behavior. This arose from the fact that in Jamaica, the National Family Planning Board found that the reason given by women for why they are not using contraceptives is their husbands and their partners don't want it. So what is men's attitude? I piggy-backed on that and asked some more general questions to try and uncover men's attitudes to sexuality. Then I was invited by UNICEF to look at the problem of our males, because the trend in the rest of the world is that societies are not educating girls. But in our part of the world, it's the boys. I invited a colleague to team with me and we carried out studies. One thing led to another and to another, and that is how I got involved in the gender disparity issue.

Q: Frequently the focus of Jamaica is boys' lower school achievement. You've said that the dropout rate for boys is the problem and that when boys are in school their achievement is no worse than girls and, in fact, may be better.

BC: This is why I say that we must be more precise in defining what we mean. We usually say, 'Girls are outperforming boys'. Well, there is not a great deal of evidence for that. Yes, there are many cases of girls outperforming boys, but generally speaking, if boys are in school, are motivated, work hard and so forth, they do excel and achieve just as well as girls. So the problem for me is their under-participation. I once had cause to look at the Caribbean Examination Council results – these are the end-of-high-school examinations, which students must sit after five years in high school – and there again, you find that the boys do perform creditably.

Now, what is it that governs their under-participation? One is the socialization process which tends to favor girls over boys. How so? Well, girls are generally thought of as being in greater need of protection. Boys, in terms of their 'maleness', are socialized to be tough and to withstand pain and suffering and hardship. So when a family has little substance and must divide the little between a boy and a girl, what they do is take everything and put it on the girl and say, "You go to school." And the boy then stays home and fends for himself. So as a result, you'll find that there's a greater dropout rate for boys than for girls and it begins, interestingly enough, from Grade One – as early as that.

When you look at the data, you will see that there are more boys than girls entering the school system. Why? Because, as you know, in any population you will find more males born than females. That's a fact of nature. With the lowering of the infant mortality rate, more and more boys are able to enter the school system – they are surviving longer. But by Grade Two, you begin to see the numbers shifting, and by Grade Four, you have more girls than boys. And by Grade Six, when they leave primary school, it's definitely more girls that graduate. And the trend continues all the way through high school. So there is an economic factor.

But there's a second factor, and that is that the teaching method is a bit outmoded. The way it works, girls, with the kind of socialization that they've had at home, tend to be more prepared for the school system. It's more congenial to them – the way of learning, how teachers teach by rote, by students sitting quiet, listening to the teacher and repeating after the teacher, and being attentive. Boys do not learn that way. They learn by doing, by experimenting, by being rambunctious, whereas girls are socialized to be still, to be quiet, to listen, to be very obedient, very attentive. So what I'm saying, then, is that as a result of the way boys are socialized, plus the way that the school system still works – working especially against boys, not encouraging them in their participation in school, not making school exciting for them, and so on – they come out feeling that school is girl stuff.

Q: Gender inequality and gender roles are often cited as causes of boys dropping out of school in the Caribbean. Could you explain?

BC: Yes, I would add that the boys suffer far more abuse than we tend to think. When I say, 'child abuse', I think I don't have to explain what that is. They suffer this in the home, and the school, but in the home particularly. Again, out of the belief that the boys must be tough. They literally brutalize boys. So, I am saying that chances are that you leave the boy to fend for himself, then those gender roles are clearly shaping the way that we attend to the needs of our children (*See Box, page 67*).

Q: How would you account for the fact that pervasive gender inequality and expectations are causes for girls to be kept out of school in most parts of the developing world, but instead it actually leads to the marginalization of boys in Jamaica and other parts of the Caribbean?

BC: This is a complex question. The dominant ethnic group in the Caribbean is African, descendants of the African people who were enslaved in a forced migration. One of the major differences is that in the rest of the developing world, the patriarchy is expressed in systems of kinship and lineage that are very strong and pervasive. They govern the shape of the family. You don't just get up and get married; the whole lineage is involved.

In the Caribbean, because of those historical circumstances I refer to, what has emerged is a breaking of the hold that the lineage had on our family formation. You could say that in that respect the African-Caribbean has been post-modern long before it became fashionable in the West – that you marry and consort at will. You don't have to ask anybody's permission to establish a conjugal bond. Well, of course, the other side of that is that you can break it at will as well. In all the rest of the developing world, you have to go through processes, the lineage gets involved, the dowry has to be repaid and all those sorts of things, right?

Now, under our conditions, women did not have the kinds of constraints that they have had in the rest of the world. For one, their numbers were in the beginning smaller than males, so they in fact could dictate. But quite apart from that, they came from Africa, also with traditions of certain kinds of autonomy that they were able to preserve right here. Women were financially autonomous of men, because of the trading they did in the markets, and so forth. They could have their own money. So, the culture of the Caribbean – the African Caribbean – is one in which the patriarchy has never been so strong as to completely stifle the development of women. I'm not saying that it didn't and doesn't exist. But it is not as strong, and as a result, therefore, people expected of their women – of their girl children – achievement, high achievement; and they never discriminated against them in terms of going to school, from the time of the Post-Emancipation Period when the government of the day made provisions for the descendants of the Africans to be educated, at least at the primary level. There was never any discrimination about girls being a part of the system of education. So, it's a very interesting question. Now when you pile on top of that the dropouts that we've been getting among the male population, then you can see why the Caribbean is the kind of society in which the reverse to what is happening in the rest of the world is taking place – where it is boys who are being marginalized and not girls.

Q: Violence, crime, incarceration, dysfunctional family relations and general antisocial behavior among males have been attributed, among other things, to boys being alienated from school. Could you comment?

BC: We should not make the schools responsible for everything. That would be wrong. The fact is that you have educated people who also are criminals. There is such a thing as white collar crime, and they are also prone to wife-beating and other kinds of violence. But having said that, there is no doubt in my mind that male alienation from the school system does contribute to all of the social problems that we have come across. To put it another way, if they were educated, I think that the negative trends that we have been emphasizing – violence and irresponsible sexual behavior and so on – would be much less.

What do I mean by 'education' here? I'm not just dealing with the 'Three Rs' and those technical skills that they say we all need to function in the 21st century. No, I think that the function of education is also to make people human beings. I don't think that one is born a ready-made human being. You get socialized. That's what education is about. So I see the things we call 'extra-curricular activity' as very much a part of the education system. The activities in drama, in sports, in speech, in song and dance, in book clubs are very much a part of what an education is about. It is not simply studying for an exam and getting good marks and all that. It is far more above that. And it's missing from our system – or at least the emphasis on it is missing. And I think that if we put that emphasis back into the educational system, we not only will attract and keep many of the boys in the school, but they will turn out much more refined and less alienated and see the world as a stage where they can achieve and perform.

Q: What changes do you suggest schools make to be more welcoming?

BC: One is the methodology, how to teach. They would have to get rid of the rote learning. There are certain things you have to learn by rote. You have to learn your two one's two, two two's four, two three's six. And you have to learn how many continents there are, and what is the name of the capital of which country – those kinds of things – that is rote. But that is only a minimal, a 10 per cent of what a primary schoolchild should, in fact, learn. You learn better when you experiment and arrive at the knowledge by yourself. That's the kind of thing that I think boys would respond to a great deal more than what is happening now.

I also think – I'm not an educator – but I have always questioned the wisdom of coeducational high schools. I hear the psychologists say that boys develop more slowly than girls. If it is a fact, and if there is a disparity in the level of development of the genders at a given age, then shouldn't they be treated differently? So I would be for segregated agendas, if not schools, at certain ages in their development. Bring them back together when the maturity of the male catches up with the female.

Q: What is the danger of not rectifying male gender disparity in education?

BC: Yesterday, the Sunday paper carried a thing – 'Guns and Books'. A very odd kind of association of words, but what they're pointing to is that many boys are found carrying guns to school. Now, the problem of the violence is not something that is outside the walls of the school. The same children that live outside are attending school. The challenge is, how do you imbue them with the values that will have them play a different role in the society and in the communities which they come from, a role that is more uplifting and away from the social deviance? That is a challenge, you know. And there are efforts within current Jamaica to turn things around, with varied success. There's 'Change from Within', there is 'Pathways to Peace' – many others. There's an attempt to address this problem of the violence and the disorder – now, because not attending to it now means that you still have to attend to it later and the cost is greater. So that's the danger, if we were to be complacent. But thankfully, the society is not complacent about it. It's just that the resources are lacking.

Q: Is there anything else that you'd like to add?

BC: I would just like to say that in all these instances of gender parity, violence and all these things, I think we have to work together – men and women. I think we're long past the day now when the issues of masculinity are a male issue. What I also want to say is this, that there is a crisis I think all over the world – let me qualify that and say all over the Western world, including us who are forced to be a part of the West. There is a crisis centered on males. In the United States, I believe, the incarceration rate for African-American males is very high. I think it's also high among whites as well. There are the problems of education, declining standards of behavior and all these things. The crisis may be more mature in some countries, such as ours, but that there is one is impatient of debate, and it had better be addressed now.

INTEGRATED EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT: REMEDY FOR SOCIAL ILLS

Particular neither to Jamaica nor to the region, child-rearing practices often border on child abuse disguised as discipline. Studies on child-rearing customs in Jamaica found that beatings, harsh reprimands and threats were widely practiced. Parents and guardians report a range of punishments, from thrashings with an object to threatening, humiliating or withholding love, to explaining and counseling. One study found that 47 per cent of parents or guardians admitted disciplining children with physical assaults and 25 per cent through psychological aggression. Only 28 per cent used what would be considered non-violent discipline – discussion, time-out or loss of privileges.

With the establishment of the National Early Childhood Commission, Jamaica coordinates the training and certification of early childhood practitioners and programme accreditation based on sound child-development principles. Child protection was given a boost by the passage of the 2004 Childcare and Protection Act, which for the first time mandates child abuse reporting. With a renewed focus on young children and parentings, Jamaica has taken a leap forward in alleviating child abuse and strengthening families.

CHAPTER

14

RIMA SALAH

RESPECTING THE CULTURE

"A girl will play a very important role in her community, but she will also play a very important role in socializing her children and their upbringing. If she has this sense of justice inculcated in her, she will also inculcate it in her children."

Q: Girls and women endure numerous violations of their human rights, from social and economic discrimination to physical, psychological and sexual violence, to exclusion from positions of power within and outside the family. Among all the issues facing girls and women, why has education taken centre stage?

Rima Salah: Let me start by quoting a girl that I met in Darfur at one of the camps for displaced people. She said, "Education is light. When you don't know how to read and write – ignorance is like darkness." And she told me, "Please continue to give us light, because we don't want to stay in darkness." So that's how it is really, in all the cultures, and particularly in my Middle Eastern culture. When we talk about education, it is like light. Education is the means to empowerment of women, empowerment of girls.

I think families in the Middle East, wherever they are, will do everything, every sacrifice, so that the children will go to school, and also girls. Of course, there are some countries where girls' education is still maybe lower than others, but girls' education has been very important. Why? It starts with the Hadith. The Prophet said that "Education is a duty for all of you; educate everyone, both Muslim and Muslima." Which means women and men, the feminine and the masculine. He also said, "Give education to children, even if for your education you have to go bring it from China." Because China was considered the very far point of the world. He insisted on education. So this is part of the culture.

If you want to be a Muslim, every Muslim, you need to read, because you cannot be a Muslim if you don't read the Koran. The first word of Islam starts ikra – 'Read'. So it is embodied in the culture and the religion.

I lived in a refugee camp for one year [as a cultural anthropologist] and my study was on the changing status of Palestinian women. I looked at education and economic empowerment and I looked at their political participation also. But the most important finding was education. Just to give you an example: When I said to a grandfather who was 90 years old, "Why are all your granddaughters in school?" He said, "Because education is something that you cannot remove from them. We lost our land in 1948, we lost again our land in 1967, and our land was perfection to our daughters and granddaughters. But now we don't have land, we are living in a refugee camp. All what we have is education." So education is also a way of protecting girls in that culture.

When I was in Africa, seeing how much my parents also sacrificed that I go to school and that schooling for them was so, so important, I tried to pass on this message. It was a little bit difficult, the value of education, but of course I tried.

And I tried in Pakistan, for example when I was in Kakar, which was one of the tribal societies, and only 10 per cent of girls went to school, although it is a Muslim society. But

sometimes Islam is misinterpreted. Islam is thought about as a hindrance, blocking women's and girls' lives, which is not the case. My knowledge of the Koran, of the Hadith and my knowledge of the Arabic language had helped me to advocate. This is what Hadith, this is what the Prophet is saying about education.

So my mission was to open more and more schools for girls. And we did this. Because there you have separate boys' schools and girls' schools, so it was more difficult because you have to find teachers, and particularly women teachers. So we trained teachers. And before I left, we had opened maybe 100 schools.

Q: How would you say that a girl's education affects her relationship to her family, to her community and her country?

RS: When a girl is educated, all the status at home changes. Even if her parents are not literate, they listen to her because she says this is what I've learned in school. So her relations with her parents change because they listen to her, and also her relations with her brothers. And this is in my dissertation on Palestinian women, I looked at how those relations change the family as a whole, the extended family and also the community. The educated woman is valued and given a voice in decision-making at home and in the community.

Q: You have spoken about the importance of reaching out to the indigenous population. Could you speak about that?

RS: One important role of the woman is to translate and to pass on traditions. It's so important that she keeps the culture and the traditions. But at the same time, education will help how would she translate, how would she really socialize her children so they adapt to the larger culture? Because it's important. I was in Viet Nam, for example, where children from the indigenous or minority groups want to keep their culture, want to keep their traditions. But at the same time they have to adapt also to the wider culture. So it is so important for the indigenous mother, the indigenous girl, to go to school. But when we design curricula and programmes, we have to take into consideration also the traditions and the values of the society. That is why we have girls apart from school, because they don't feel any ownership. When I was in Burkina Faso in old West Africa, it's French education. We started a programme where we have bilingual education: the first, second and third grade with their language, and then we added French. When we did an assessment, we found those girls did better, all those children, than others. This attracted them more to school and also attracted retention of girls in school.

Q: What do you say to parents who are fearful that if their children get education the traditions of their culture will be lost?

RS: The mobilization of parents is very important. You cannot just send daughters to school and not work on the parents, tell them that education never, never loses traditions. Of course, it loses some traditions that are negative. But in fact, education reinforces values and traditions. The participation of parents is very important, and it has helped us in Burkina Faso and others where you have committees for schools managed by the parents themselves, so that they feel the ownership of it (*see Box, page 71*). They know that it's not some people coming from outside, that they are doing it, that they are part of it. And I think they need to understand the value of education. Because also these parents in Burkina and others mostly are poor. How important that education is going to help them maybe fight this poverty.

Q: Girls' education helps the families?

RS: They lift the family. Sometimes people think that when parents are not educated they cannot understand. But parents, particularly, they know intrinsically. They know; they feel. So we need to talk to them and explain to them. We cannot go and tell them, "Give us your daughter, we have to put her in school." The discussion is also important.

People think that school feeding attracts girls to school. This is one factor. It's not the only factor. Of course, school feeding is an incentive for parents that are poor to send their daughters to school. Donors think that things that are concrete [will bring them to school]. But poor people also have their own pride and have their own values. So explaining to them and discussing with them are also very important.

Q: Angélique Kidjo said that sometimes parents resist what they perceive to be Western education.

RS: Right. That's why I've said categorically that programmes are very important. Who said that education is Western? Education started in other cultures long before. So they have to know that education is not Western. That is why it is easier to explain it in Middle Eastern and Islamic countries, because they know that education started a long time ago. Education is part of their culture and part of their tradition. Some parents don't know how to read or write, but they are involved even in the programme development of the school. Education doesn't have a nationality.

They need to have role models in communities: she went to school, but if she's from Benin, she's still Beninois, she still follows the cultures and the traditions.

That's why, at UNICEF, we do a lot of mobilization before opening a school. It has to come from themselves. Let me tell you, for example, for FGM, female genital mutilation, in villages where in Senegal, this tradition, along with others, are discussed. It was discussed and discussed again. Then it becomes part of their own, what they believe in and then one day they do a declaration and say, "We're not going to do it, that's it." And I saw men, after being convinced, going from one village to the other, trying to preach and advocate against it. So that is why cultural anthropology is very important. You cannot do education just with people that are specialists of education. You need other people who will also try to change society.

Q: How has your training as a cultural anthropologist and your work in development influenced your belief in the importance of girls' education?

RS: Training as a cultural anthropologist makes you more tolerant, more open to understand other cultures. So it has helped me not only to value education, but to value everything I saw when I was in my missions in different countries, from Pakistan, to Africa, to Viet Nam, to West Africa. My training as a cultural anthropologist helped me to have a different view of things, a different perception of development, and valuing more people. It has helped also to feel comfortable with a leader, like a president, or a person, a woman in the village. We need to have more and more people – sociologists, cultural anthropologists and others – in the UN system. The World Bank and other agencies used to employ cultural anthropologists. But I don't know how much really it has affected development because I think we have failed in many ways in development.

Q: Can you say more about that?

RS: Yes. It is because we did not have enough social analysis, understanding people. For example, education – more than 100 million are out of school, which means we have failed. In this time and age, when we have the technology, when you have all the resources, and we didn't do it, I think we have failed. And because we have failed in this, we have failed in other aspects of development. It is because we didn't go deep within society's values, traditions. We tried. We say it, we employed anthropologists here and there, but I don't think we really succeeded at this. We need more of it. Because for me, poverty is not lack of money, it is not economic poverty. Poverty for me is isolation. It is isolation of communities, of families, by the mainstream of development. One of the factors why we have failed: because we didn't involve really the people. In fact, we isolated them, and they are not mainstreamed in development. So we need to have more, maybe, social economists that will understand the economy and also society.

Q: Do you feel like that point of view can be taken on?

RS: I think so. And I've been discussing this with many of my colleagues. But some people, we're afraid to say that we have failed. Why do we have violence? Violence is linked to poverty; violence is linked to lack of, let's say, happiness in what you're doing. So, I think that development is linked to peace. We don't have peace in the world now because we did not really succeed in development.

Q: Does the education system have a part to play in peace?

RS: I think so. And that's what I've been also preaching, that children could be messengers of peace instead of being child soldiers. We have to have it in our curricular presentation. Because if you don't start with a child, it will be, I think, too late. We were talking about minorities and the indigenous people. It has to start in school; it has to start on this bench where two children are sitting together. You have to also inculcate justice in children, the spirit of justice.

Q: Do you think you can connect that to girls' education?

RS: I can, because a girl is very important. She will play a very important role in her community, but she will also play a very important role in socializing her children and their upbringing. If she has this sense of justice inculcated in her, she will also inculcate it in her children. What's happening in the world, the violence, is also because we don't have a sense of justice. Because we keep talking about peace, right? But if you don't have justice with this peace, you cannot have it. All these are, I think, the values that we can get in school. And, of course, boys are important, but more importantly for girls because of the role she plays in socialization.

Q: Is there anything you want to add?

RS: Girls' education is very important. So how can we invigorate it, how can we revive it? I was more and more convinced of it when I saw a child dying, when a child died in front of me two weeks ago in Niger.

Niger is suffering a food shortage. So I went to a hospital, which is run by Médecins Sans Frontières – Doctors Without Borders – with UNICEF's help. This hospital received children that are severely malnourished. And all of a sudden, this bed here, there was a mother sitting here and she started crying. We didn't understand why. And I saw a nurse coming. The child had an IV in his arm, 12 months –1 year old. She was removing the IV. And I said, "What? What are you doing? Why, what's happening?" And she said, "It's too late, it's too late." I said, "What do you mean, it's too late?" The child died that minute when we were there.

So I was thinking the whole problem there is really, of course, food shortage, but also related to the status of women and illiteracy. Because the woman cannot manage. Of course, she saw her child sick; she walked for miles and miles to bring the child, but it was too late. So when she told me "Too late," this word resonated all the time. I was too late, maybe; UNICEF was too late; the international community too late and the mother was too late. Why are we too late? Of course, there are so many causes. I'm not going to blame the mother. She was crying, and now she was going to carry this dead child to her village. But, of course, education is very important. The mother cannot manage if she doesn't know when her child is very sick and that she has to bring the child to the hospital. In Niger, 10 per cent of women are literate; 90 per cent are illiterate. So that reinforced my mission. My mission is really to put girls in schools.

CHILD PARTICIPATION: CHILD-TO-CHILD SURVEYS

Child-to-child surveys, launched in Ethiopia on 16 June 2004 and spreading, first within Africa and now across the world, are part of an overall approach to have children shape the future they will inherit.

Young people take leadership roles by locating out-of-school children and proposing ways to get them into school. Before solutions can be generated, the reasons behind their absences must be understood. With questionnaires in hand, the young sleuths track down their peers to learn firsthand why so many children are not in school. Once they compile the answers, the students return to their classes to brainstorm ways to dismantle the barriers that keep children away. The beauty of this exercise is that the surveyors gain problem-solving skills while drawing attention to the plight of millions who are left out of school.

But the exercise does not end with the children. The surveys are meant to set off chain reactions where governments, donors and non-governmental and civil society organizations take action. It may mean ending educational fees, providing nearby water sources, beefing up security or providing meals at school. Adults may be needed for interventions to take hold, but the energy and vision of young people are crucial.

CHAPTER 15

CREAM WRIGHT
THEORY, PRACTICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

"In a way, that's what development is about. It's about having aspirations. And that's what advocacy does. It gives people aspirations. It gives them things to aspire to. It shows how things can be, not just what they are."

Q: As we approach the Millennium Development Goal deadline of 2005 for gender parity in primary and secondary education, what successes can you point to?

Cream Wright: The first is that gender as an issue in education is now uppermost in many agendas at the country level. It has become a key issue; there is a greater awareness of it, which certainly 10 years ago – but even five years ago – was controversial as an issue.

Secondly, levels of investments by many donors have increased, highlighting the need for gender parity and gender issues to be taken seriously; almost, in some cases, as one of the conditions of supporting countries. That trend is on the rise as well.

In terms of actual achievements on the ground, there has been growth in enrolment, real expansion in enrolment; and all the data show that girls' enrolment has risen faster than boys' enrolment in most countries. It's simply that we started from such a low base that we still have some ways to go, but in general the gap is closing. So countries have made progress, in terms of overall increase in enrolment, as well as in closing the gender gap. There are countries where there is some degree of stagnation, but there are very, very few countries in which you can talk about declining enrolment and reversal of gender parity.

Q: The primary factors behind these victories?

CW: The power of advocacy. I don't think, programmatically, we were able to make such a big difference – either the developing countries themselves or donors or development partners and developing agencies. You really have to factor in advocacy and communications to explain these gains. They're very powerful tools through which all these different groups were able to see that gender disparity is a major flaw in development that needs to be addressed.

And so advocacy went a long way. When decision-makers start hearing the same thing from external partners, from the local population, from civil society and from all corners, they start listening seriously and thinking, 'there must be something to this'. As a result of advocacy there has been a perception and clear understanding that when you focus on girls' education, you're not just dealing with schools and education per se, but you're beginning to address all those other things within communities that impact on girls and their ability to get an education.

Q: Some say that advocacy was too successful, in that there is a demand for education but not necessarily the ability to fill that demand.

CW: There's certainly something to that. Advocacy can get ahead of the game and, if it's not well managed, can be a dangerous thing. It can raise unrealistic expectations. But on the other hand, what is positive is that it's like letting the genie out of the bottle. Once people know their rights, they aspire to these things, and there's no way you can get them to back down from that. And so the governments have to do something. For instance, when people know that you have

overcrowded classrooms they do not withdraw children from school; instead they agitate for more schools. That problem is not going to go away, and you have to deal with it. In a way, that's what development is about. It's about having aspirations and securing the means to fulfill them. And that's what advocacy does. It gives people aspirations. It gives them things to aspire to. It shows how things can be, not just what they are.

Even if at the time it seems the resources are not there, advocacy gives that essential ingredient for development that is hope, the sense that we can do this, especially when advocacy is backed by evidence that this is doable. The only downside is if advocacy creates unrealistic expectations. So that's where programming and advocacy have to work hand in hand to deliver on promises. If there's no reason to go easy, then I would say let advocacy work and let people aspire to that.

Q: Why do you think the development goal of gender parity wasn't met?

CW: Development is about change. Two of the most important dimensions of change are the scale of change and the pace of change. I think in this case it took a while for the full realization to come through that this is important. After that it took a while for people to fully understand what this means in practice. Initially the idea was just to increase the numbers of girls in school – and then people began to realize that there's a lot more to getting girls in school than simply opening the school doors. There are lots of issues to be addressed both in the homes and in the communities. In general, we have not moved fast enough on these issues in order to get more girls into school, but we have learned a lot in the process.

On the issue of scale, it's unfair to ask governments to invest massively in unproven things. And so, many partners have done little projects here and there that have made a difference in girls' education. Cumulatively that has helped us move towards the goal, but in terms of large-scale change, it hasn't happened because, rightly, we have been cautious in scaling up without good evidence.

Importantly also, when we've been forced to move fast – for example, in emergencies – we have learned about what is doable in terms of radically changing the pace at which progress is made. And I think if we bring those two things together – the pace of change and the scale of change – that's where the answer lies.

We should remember that the challenges countries face are extraordinary. In fact, there are always threats that may reverse the progress you're making. When a country experiences massive HIV/AIDS infection rates, or sudden emergencies, or economic decline, or civil unrest, these things complicate matters – so you're not working in a static situation. The obstacles have been more complex and more intense in many cases, than people anticipated. This is not to give an excuse, but to say that in having to work against those obstacles, we have also learned some valuable lessons.

Q: What are some of the lessons that you've learned?

CW: We have learned, for instance, that when it comes to investing in education, you have to take seriously the business of equitable distribution. Supporting vulnerable groups can determine whether an education system survives or collapses in the face of adversity. It's no good looking at what a country spends on education in general. How it spends that money and how much of it benefits different population groups is very important. There are many countries that spend an inordinate amount of their budgets on education. Unfortunately, they do not spend it in an equitable manner.

A second lesson we have learned is that major gains in education can be made by investing in other sectors. So we know issues of nutrition and health of children, the environment in the schools, sanitation, child labor issues, are all important for progress in education. How do you compensate households that are poor? This is also critical. And so, you can't just sit within the Ministry of Education and say you're trying to achieve increased enrolment and gender parity in education. You have to win allies from these other sectors, as it were; you have to invest in other sectors. We don't have to portray education simply as a self-serving process or entity. Education depends on, and contributes to, other sectors, to other goals, and to other challenges.

The whole idea of political will has been emphasized by so many people. Some of the things that countries have achieved, they were told just on basic technical analysis that this is not doable. And because the political leadership in some of these countries was

determined to achieve something, they took the plunge anyway. We've learned that once you take the plunge, there are problems that come up. These problems can be addressed. Is it better to have millions of children in overcrowded classrooms with poor resources that you can fix, that we know how to fix? Or to have millions of children at home, because we're still waiting to have enough classrooms and enough teachers and enough textbooks? In the meantime, these children are growing into adolescents and adults without an education. And I think the lesson we have learned is that we've got to take the challenge – it is about making bold moves that may create chaos in the short term, knowing that we can solve the ensuing problems in the medium to long term. Quality, of course, is extremely important, but it must not be used as a barrier – as an excuse – for denying access to the disadvantaged.

Q: You said that people need to publicly acknowledge the fact that they have failed to meet the 2005 goal. What is the significance of the missed target and why should people be held accountable?

CW: If you look at development over the decades, what is different in this decade – significantly different – is international goal setting… the Education For All goals (EFA); the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It was unprecedented the way the world community came together to look at development and to set goals and targets. It galvanizes efforts. It mobilizes resources. Countries that are weak have been pulled up and told," you have to do better." Countries that have the experiences to share are sharing those experiences. There's a new kind of international solidarity in working towards these goals. Even those rich donor countries that are not doing well with development assistance are being challenged. This is unprecedented.

I think the world community as a whole will not fault countries and development partners for failing to meet the goals if they understand why and what has been done about it. They will fault the deafening silence. They will fault a lack of effort. So we have to examine ourselves and say, "How much effort did we really make? What went right? What could we have done better? What lessons have we learned?" And that is what international solidarity is about. That's the compact.

Q: Describe a child-friendly school and talk about your process of going from skeptic to advocate.

CW: Initial skepticism can come from understanding the reality of education. Learning can be a hard business. There are the frustrations of trying to learn against great odds. There are the difficult conditions that people suffer. There are the shortcomings of not having enough teachers. And yet sometimes we see people get a good education in spite of these conditions rather than because of them. And I think, "Why are we just prescribing this thing called 'child-friendly'? Let's not forget that at the centre of this whole business of education is the difficult and sometimes unfriendly enterprise of learning. Some of our critics have said, "Yeah, the child-friendly classrooms look nice, and the children look happy, but are they learning anything?"

Yet, when you examine it more closely, what is attractive about the child-friendly school is that, as a model, it's almost a one-stop shop for everything that has to do with quality. The most remarkable contribution of UNICEF is the extended definition of 'quality', which is not just about the pedagogy in the classroom process, but about the whole school environment and about the links between schools and communities. It's about the way schools are managed, the way the classroom process takes place, the way children are treated. In other words, I think if we begin to define child-friendly schools in terms of key principles that can be tested, people can make sense of that. The main principle is this: Within the constraints of resources that you have, all decisions must be guided by a single consideration – what is in the best interest of the child?

Q: Would you say that child-friendly and quality are one and the same, or is there a difference?

CW: Quality is intrinsic to the child-friendly concept. Quality has maybe three key elements to it. One is relevance. Since education really is about helping people fulfill their potential, it has to be relevant. But relevance is problematic. Because relevant for whom? In terms of what the child wants to become or what the parents want for the child or what society wants?

This is precisely the mistake I think people make in prescribing for education – "You know, this is a fishing community, we'll give them a school curriculum that deals a lot with fishing." Well, maybe initially they need to understand their own world. But if that's all you're going to do for them, you're condemning them to stay in that world. People should aspire to other worlds. They should be able to dream of things beyond their world. Relevance encapsulates all of that.

The other two concepts of quality – one is effectiveness. That simply means that schools should deliver on what they promise. The children should attain a certain amount of literacy, numeracy and other knowledge, skills and attitudes and values promised in the curriculum; schools must deliver on these things.

And the third dimension of quality is efficiency. If you take one child and one teacher and give them enough time and enough resources, learning will take place. Unfortunately, we don't have those resources. Efficiency is the best way of using the resources we do have to achieve learning and other goals we set. Even where teachers are so key to the process, when you spend 95 per cent of your budget on the teachers' salaries, something is seriously wrong with your efficiency.

There's internal efficiency; do kids progress from one grade to the next, having learned all they should learn in that grade? Are they simply being pushed through? Each child that drops out is a lost resource invested. Each time a child repeats, it's a lost resource. That's why early childhood is so important to prepare children better for school; otherwise, you're forever playing catch-up.

Increasingly, I am persuaded that there is a fourth dimension – I don't know what to call it, but we can call it 'equity'. How do you invest public resources in providing an education for some people and not for others who are also part of your population? How can you justify quality in the face of inequity?

In every country we have claims for quality based on outcomes: "I will show you our best quality schools, our top schools, with the best results!" Typically these, in many communities, are schools that take in the best pupils from the best backgrounds. They are able to recruit the best-trained teachers. They are able to afford the best teaching equipment, resources and learning aids. They have the best buildings. What do you then expect? You don't crow about it and say, "This is a good-quality school."

What about those schools who take in the most difficult kids from troubled backgrounds? What about teachers who are really not well paid, but stick to the job? And they make a difference in the lives of those children. Are these good-quality schools? They may not score the A grades in results, but they can take children who have probably not had anything and get them to Cs or Bs: that has to do with the equality notion and signifies quality based on value added. To me, it is also about the way we spread public resources for education. The way we don't deal with a level playing field; the way you tackle the difficulties that are out there. Equality doesn't mean being the same, it means a fair distribution of the means of achieving these things.

AFRICAN GIRLS' EDUCATION INITIATIVE: PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION

The African Girls' Education Initiative, the precursor to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, was a model partnership among countries, donor governments and UN agencies. Begun in 1994 with initial funding from Canada and later from Norway, it allowed for the expansion of the Global Girls' Education Programme in sub-Saharan Africa. The Initiative's goal was to improve the enrolment, retention, achievement and school completion of girls.

Originally the Initiative focused on 18 countries and expanded to 34 by 2001. It emphasized local participation in project planning and implementation, resulting in country-specific activities rather than a one-size-fits-all model. The African Initiative countries reviewed programme interventions to identify what would work based on their circumstances. Chad, for instance, adapted Colombia's 'Escuela Nueva' approach of multi-grade teaching. The results were impressive.

During the first two years of Chad's involvement, the number of girls enrolled in first grade jumped fourfold, the drop-out rate decreased from 22 per cent to 9 per cent and the number of female teachers increased from 36 to 787. In the 10 participating areas, girls' net enrolment was 18 percentage points higher than the national average.

In its six years, the Initiative reached more than 6,000 schools and literacy centres in West and Central Africa and some 60 districts and regions in 18 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa, demonstrating the power of partnerships.

CHAPTER
16

ANGÉLIQUE KIDJO
STRENGTH OF WOMEN'S VOICES

"When you travel to Africa, the first thing that strikes you is the energy of the women in the market, in the house, doing tons of things. And imagine that with an education."

Q: As a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, you have participated in advocacy campaigns for girls' education. Why have you focused on girls' education?

Angélique Kidjo: First of all, my own example. My parents believed in education for boys and girls. I remember when I was going to school, part of the family of my father would comment, "Why are you sending your girls to school? They should get married, work early and be useful to the society. You are wasting time and money sending them to white people's school when they don't need to go to school."

And my Dad used to say, "Every person should be educated simply because it's good to be informed and it's good to know where you're going, how you can impact your society and how you can improve your lives."

So that was one of the most important things that drove me to stay in school. Because I started being famous when I was six years old. My Dad would say, "I don't want to have any artist in my house that can't speak about the arts and cannot have any general idea of what's going on in the world."

Girls' education is also something that is scaring the little boys. The men in the country say, "You are talking about women empowerment, what about us?"

I said, "Do you realize how important it is to have a wife home that can read the notice in the medicine? It saves your child's life. If she can't read, she has to wait for you to come back from work while her child is having fever. Those couple of hours may be deadly for your child. You men don't even think about it. Someone can come to your home and say anything to your wife and she can give something away because she doesn't know how to read. You come back and you're mad. How do you want her to know? An educated woman is a power for a man. It is powerful for society."

Q: When you met the 350 children from New York City schools at the UN's 'Largest Lesson,' what was particularly noteworthy about your interaction with them? (*See Box, page 79*)

AK: The thing that stood out was the questions of the children of New York about human rights. When a child asks you, "What does 'human rights' mean really?", it means that the kid is asking himself questions about a lot of things. I was not expecting to have those kinds of questions. I was not expecting to have a child asking me, "Why don't the kids in Africa go to school? Why can we go to school and not them?"

You give them the opportunity to tell you what is in their brains, and you learn a lot about a lot. If you want our kids to be better politicians later on, we have to take the time – after school – to speak to them and to lend them books that they can read. So we have to lure our kids to read interesting books, and we have to be adult, parents, ready to answer the questions.

Q: How would your life have been if you weren't educated?

AK: If I weren't educated, I would still be in Benin; I would have been married early and had tons of kids. Education changed that destiny for me by knowing my rights to choose to marry the person I love. To also choose what I want to do. To also see the world as mine, where I can go anywhere and do whatever I want as a human being.

Without education – I wouldn't be a waste – but I would be somebody's wife and I would fight definitely for my kids go to school, as my parents did.

Being to school and working gave my father another opportunity because he studied in Dakar and in France when he was young. So he saw what education can bring to his children. Many other people from the same generation as my father, not all of them chose to send their kids to school.

So it all depends on how we can convince the parent that education is the salvation of the whole family, especially in rural Africa where girls are married so early. If the parent can just imagine the future, how that girl can come back and help the village develop, they would send all of them to school.

Because of poverty, they can't afford to send the kids to school. So we have to somehow make school free. And we can. Instead of spending the money on weapons, we can spend it in education.

For Africa, we need our historians to write our own history, because historical amnesia is terrible. If the kids don't know anything about the genocide in Rwanda, about slavery, about colonization, when they get out of Benin, Togo, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, wherever, they are going to come with preconceived ideas.

Teachers have to be educated in full because the world has changed from the time I was in school.

We have to ensure parents in Africa that when the daughter goes to school, they won't be raped by the teacher. We have to be really frank with this, to have the parents feel absolutely certain that no harm will be done to their kids. And today, we haven't been there yet.

Q: What was school like when you were in Benin?

AK: Great. It was great. For you to love school, it takes one teacher – one, only one person. Until I reach 4th grade, I did not like it at all. Because I was really tiny – I was the littlest, tiniest, skinny girl in school – and I could hardly see anything on the black-board. And they always put me in the back of the class, and I'd be crying because I have to struggle. So when I reached 4th grade, my teacher put me right in the front desk where she could see me, and she said, "If you have any questions, you ask. If you don't understand, ask me. You can stop being scared, OK?"

So I catch up with all the things I didn't have before. This teacher, she spent time with me, explaining things to me. I would rather sit with her than go to the break. I was hungry to learn.

So it takes that teacher for me to suddenly go, "Whhhhwow. There are wonders in books. I can read; I can do my math." It took that teacher for me to just love going to school.

Q: Did you have any friends who dropped out of school?

AK: Oh, I had a lot of friends that have been pulled out of school after a while because their parents needed them. And I remember me going back home and yelling at my parents, "Why can't you help them stay in school?"

My Dad and Mom would say, "We can't help everybody. They must have a reason to take them out of school."

And I would cry days and days. Especially when you were friends and you would do homework together and you could see how their brains, they are sharp. Even when I was in primary school, I sensed the waste when they disappear.

Today it's a lot of problems because the poor people in the rural area will send their kids to cities, hoping that if they send them to a member of their family or people that they

know, they are going to send them to school. But instead they turn them into slaves. It's everywhere in Africa. It is a social problem that none of the politicians are willing to deal with.

So when you're talking about girls' schooling, children being sent to school, that is a topic that we have to tackle, but it's gonna be the hardest thing to change. But it has to change. There's no way that it can stay like that. "Why are you keeping the child home? Why does the child have to start work about 6:00 and work all day long?" And that is a very sensitive topic when I was in Benin. I know because it is my society. It is a really sensitive subject. But we have to find a way to deal with it.

Q: Are you pessimistic or optimistic?

AK: Optimistic. I am really optimistic because, knowing the problem, you can see the solutions for it. Not knowing the problem kept you pessimistic.

I believe in human beings; I believe in the power of working together. Individually we make change. But together, we make revolution. We make things change faster.

You are talking about girls' education. If someone told me when I was going to school in Benin that I would be working with UNICEF talking about girls' education, I would look at the person and say, "Are you making fun of me or what?"

If I am able to work so that tomorrow is going to be better, why can't all people do that? I believe that we can all make a difference together. That's what Carol Bellamy told me when we were in Tanzania together. She said to me, "Every drop from everybody, one day is going to make an ocean." And I believe that.

Q: Your song 'Mutoto Kwanza' was inspired by a UNICEF-sponsored trip to Tanzania. The title means 'children first'. Can you tell us about that trip?

AK: I had been seeing the orphanage. The kids were little and big, what can you tell a child who has HIV/AIDS? That has no treatment? And you know that child that you see at that moment may not be there in two or three months? How can you sing – hopefully? I was devastated, I couldn't sing. And they were the ones who gave me the strength. They made me see that there is always hope as far as you have a breath. You can't give up.

And they are the ones who taught me 'Mutoto Kwanza'. They don't even think about death. So who are we to think about their death for them? So I gathered from that trip more strength and hope than when I was on the trip going there. Those kids gave me that strength of believing that tomorrow is always going to be better. And unfortunately we adults don't listen enough to children. Because the vision is innocent. There's no hypocrisy. There's no politically correct. It's right to the point. And I loved it. They pulled me back, they centred me back. We are you. We are the reason why you are here. We have to be your focus.

Q: In your travels through the developing world, what about girls' education strikes you?

AK: When you travel to Africa, the first thing that strikes you is the energy of the women in the market, in the house, doing tons of things. And imagine that with an education. Wow, the economy of the continent would go [she claps her hands and as her right hand goes toward the sky, she whistles] whhhhhit, flying up.

If you give her education, the society will benefit. Absolutely. Not only the family, but the whole country will benefit from it.

Q: How is it for you to be a role model, especially for young women?

AK: It is a lot of responsibility, but somebody's got to do it. When I'm speaking to girls or mothers, I'm 100 per cent with them, which means I'm willing to learn, I'm willing to listen, and I'm willing to give them my experience.

And that's the only thing I can give, because sometimes a mother goes, "Why do you want me to send my child to school?"

I say, "I've been to school, am I less a woman than you? No. Trust her. Send her to school. Give her the chance to change her life and to change yours."

And then some mother will say, "I'm willing to send my child to school, because I realize now that if I had been to school, I wouldn't be stuck where I am."

We can convince the father to send the girl to school. Those mothers did not agree sending their kids to early marriage. But they didn't have much of a say in it. So speaking to the men, I'm willing to do that too. Show them that a child cannot be married, a child of 12 years old cannot have a baby. "Because down the line, if your child dies, whose fault is that? You parents, because you made the decision for that child. You love your child? Yes. So don't do that."

It's not only appealing to the love for the kids, but also the perspective of the future of the whole family that you have to point out to them. Because you have to understand that in the rural areas as soon as you start talking about girls' education, the parents are thinking normally, "OK, my child will go to Europe and start dressing like all those European women with their breasts naked, blah, blah, blah."

It goes with so many preconceived ideas. You have also to tell them, "A child is not a possession. A child is a human being. So your point of view may not be her point of view. But it's OK. That won't make you love her less. She should decide who to be."

Q: What are the realities today for women and girls in Africa, and what do you envision for the future?

AK: Today the women in Africa have great challenges to face. Not only because of the lack of education. There is something that is really endangering the future of women in Africa, that is HIV/AIDS.

HIV/AIDS has changed completely the face of Africa's future. Because the number of deaths that we're going to have is going to be too high, and we cannot afford that. So that's where education comes to be handy. Because a girl that is sent to school means that, too, boys go to school. The little girl can take her brothers to school.

And a girl that is educated can educate a man – sexually. Knowing her rights to her body. Knowing her rights to tell a man, "If you don't wear a condom, it's without me."

So the future of Africa with HIV/AIDS is really a shaky future. But the future of Africa with education is a bright one, because they are going to be able to save lives of the women, of babies and of men.

GIRLS' EDUCATION: THE BIGGEST LESSON

On 9 April 2003, over 1.3 million people in more than 100 countries were inscribed in the Guinness Book of Records as part of the largest lesson ever to take place. The class, organized by the Global Campaign for Education, occurred during the Global Week of Action for Girls' Education. The simultaneous class was held in countries as far apart as Albania and Zimbabwe.

Some 350 children piled into a room at the United Nations headquarters in New York City, where they were met by Secretary-General Kofi A. Annan, Nane Annan, Carol Bellamy, then UNICEF Executive Director, and their head teacher for the day, Angélique Kidjo, UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador. The Secretary-General underscored the morning's lesson: to ensure health, peace and equality, "classrooms of the world have to be full of girls as well as boys."

Then, Ms. Kidjo asked, "Can you explain to me why so many women grow up unable to read and write?" The room reverberated with the children's answers: "Because of poverty." "Men have more rights than women in other countries." "They're not able to go to school because they didn't have enough money."

The 30-minute class encouraged candid discussion. It ended with students reciting the pledge from 'Go Girls! Education for Every Child'. They called for every child to have the best start, the best schools, the best teachers, and protection, safety and fairness.

CHAPTER
17

MARIVIC JAVIERTO
A MOTHER'S VIEW

"If you educate a son, you educate a person. If you educate a daughter, you educate a family. And that is the only gift that we can offer to them as their parents – education."

Q: Please describe your life today.

Marivic Javierto: Every Sunday, I attend our church activities in community works for children, in a youth centre called 'Templo ng Katotohana' in Filipino. It's called 'the temple of truth' in English. I'm active with them and my family. Having concerts for the youth, exposing their talents in drawing, singing, dancing. When I was in Cavite, the place where we lived before, I put up school buildings because I was elected as an overall PTA. Some projects, by asking donations from provincial governors, put up some sports, for example, basketball games, fiestas, community programmes for the youth and for the housewives (*see Box, page 81*). I do some solicitation for donations for the orphanages.

Q: Do you believe in education for both sons and daughters?

MJ: My answer is yes. Because we love them both. If you educate a son, you educate a person. If you educate a daughter, you educate a family. And that is the only gift that we can offer to them as their parents – education. And the only knowledge that God gives us. Education is learning to develop mentally and morally.

Q: What are the reasons parents don't send their children to school?

MJ: Actually other parents think that their sons should be the ones to do the school. He will be the future breadwinner, because the daughters will just depend on their husbands. But for us, a daughter should be given equal priority. Our country is facing economic crisis. Both husband and wife need to help one another for the needs of the children.

Q: What do you like about your children's primary school?

MJ: One, there are no tuition fees, because my children are studying in public school. Especially because they are in elementary school, teachers always coordinate with the parents. They share if our children have problems regarding their status in class as well as their attitude. They're exposed to school projects and activities, for example, jewelry, singing, drama, tree planting and vegetables, doing some handicrafts, practical arts and community services. Especially knowing God better.

Q: What would you like to see improved about their schools?

MJ: One thing, the school here is too small to accommodate the number of students who want to be enrolled. So they need additional school buildings, school facilities, especially different comfort rooms [toilets] for boys and girls.

Q: How do you participate in your children's education?

MJ: Actually I am attending the parent teacher association meetings. I was elected as the president of school organizations. We always ask the teacher what are the needs of the students. We give donations to buy some of the needs of children, especially electric fans, water jugs, glasses, cleaning materials, curtains.

Q: Is there potable water in the school?

MJ: We need to buy mineral water here, because some of the lines are not good. We need the jugs to make sure the water is clean.

Q: If you had an opportunity to speak to President Gloria Arroyo, what would you say?

MJ: I would like her to increase the Government budget for education. To provide more facilities for the school needs, such as books, additional buildings for the children, to hire competent teachers for public schools, to provide safety for our children by providing police visibility in every school. To look after the criminal element around schools.

The number one problem is the kidnapping of the primary students. Because they need to be in school around 5:30 in the morning because the class starts around 5:40.

Q: I'd like to ask some follow-up questions about parents who keep their children away from school.

MJ: One of the problems here in the Philippines is lack of financial support of the parents, because actually we are facing an economic crisis here in the Philippines right now. Some parents, especially the fathers, are still searching for the job, but there is no job available for them. If you are just a graduate from some college or you have a high degree, you have the chance of being a part of the company. But if you're not educated, you belong to those people who can't even afford to buy food for their families.

Q: Even though primary school is free, when parents don't have money they are unable to send their children to school?

MJ: That's right. Kids need uniforms. Even the classmate of my son was asking for a uniform. The only thing I can do is to give what I can give to him. Sometimes he eats here in my house because they don't have enough food even for his younger brother. I was really touched when I saw those people looking for food.

Q: Do they provide lunch in the school?

MJ: No, the children are the ones who are bringing food for them. My son brings food for [his friend]. There's not enough food for his health. If the Government or someone provided a free lunch at school, I would be so thankful for it – for the help for the children.

Q: Could you say more about the crime around schools?

MJ: Some of the youth are involved because they need money, because their fathers have no job. Some adults, they kidnap children, but they don't know that the children also belong to the depressed area. They think the kid belongs to a rich parent and that the parents will pay money. We worry about the children when they go out. Too much worrying.

SPORTS: PLAYING FAIR AND SQUARE

Sport serves many functions in children's lives. It is a potent tool for promoting friendship, solidarity and fair play. Physical activity strengthens the body and improves learning and academic performance. Recreation, play and sport also can heal wounds of trauma. Participating in a team or club provides a sense of belonging and helps to bridge the divide that separates people. 'Sport-in-a-box', filled with balls, nets, pumps, drums, tambourines and games, goes hand in hand with 'school-in-a-box' when disaster strikes.

Sport is also an effective advocacy tool that speaks a universal language. International and national sports organizations have rallied support for girls' education through global, regional and national campaigns.

The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) has heralded girls' education in over 70 countries. In 2003, the FIFA Women's World Cup in the United States was dedicated to 'Go Girls! Education for Every Child', the global initiative to get over 60 million out-of-school girls into the classroom. Jetix Kids (formerly Fox Kids) dedicated its 2003 and 2004 football finals to the 'Go Girls!' campaign. And the Asian Cricket Council joined UNICEF in Dhaka, Bangladesh to promote 'Fair Play for Girls', raising awareness and generating public support for girls' education throughout the region.

Sports heroes have also stepped up to promote education. Athletes such as Oliver Bierhoff (Germany), Francesco Totti (Italy), Ole Gunnar Solskjaer (Norway), Quinton Fortune (South Africa) and Johann Olav Koss (Norway) have used their celebrity to draw attention to the challenge to get all children into school.

WHO ARE THE EXPERTS?

Stephan Klasen, a University of Göttingen economics professor, has a Ph.D. in economics from Harvard University. He was a staff member at the World Bank, a research fellow at King's College at Cambridge University in the United Kingdom and professor of economics at the University of Munich. His research focus is gender and development with an emphasis on the causes and consequences of gender bias in developing countries. Dr. Klasen has advised numerous national and international donor organizations on economic policy issues, including the German Ministry for Development Cooperation, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the United Kingdom Department for International Development and the World Bank.

Barry Chevannes, professor of social anthropology at The University of the West Indies, received a Ph.D. in anthropology from Columbia University in New York. He has written about gender, fatherhood, socialization, music and the Caribbean. Dr. Chevannes' work includes *Learning to Be a Man: Culture, Socialization and Gender Identity in Five Caribbean Communities*, "Redefining Fatherhood: A Report from the Caribbean" in *Early Childhood Matters*, "What We Sow and What We Reap: Problems in the Culture of Male Identity in Jamaica" from the *Grace Kennedy Foundation Lecture Series*, and "Tie the Heifer, Loose the Bull", a UNICEF-supported study on gender and sexuality.

Rima Salah, the Deputy Executive of UNICEF since December 2004, was UNICEF Regional Director for West and Central Africa, and UNICEF Representative in Viet Nam, Pakistan and Burkina Faso. Dr. Salah, a national of Jordan born in Jerusalem, earned a Ph.D. in cultural anthropology from the State University of New York at Binghamton. She has conducted extensive research on gender and development and child-centred community development.

Cream Wright, Chief of Education at UNICEF, received his Ph.D. in Education Innovations from the University of London Institute of Education. He was employed at the Commonwealth Secretariat, London, as Head of Education and acting Director of the Human Resource Development Division (Education and Health Departments). Dr. Wright was also Director of the Centre for Research in the Education of Secondary Teachers at Milton Margai Teachers College in Sierra Leone, where he managed Teacher Education programmes and supervised Education Research projects.

Angélique Kidjo has been a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador since 25 July 2002. Throughout her illustrious career as a musician, singer and performer, she has championed human rights, environmental protection, reconciliation and development. She is a special friend to girls' education. Born in Ouidah, a coastal town in Benin, Ms. Kidjo is married to Jean Hébraïl. They have a 12-year-old daughter, Naïma-Laura.

Marivic Javierto, a 44-year-old mother, is married to Arthur, 49. She has two years of college and her husband is an engineer. They live in Manila with their four sons, one daughter and Ms. Javierto's uncle. Their children are Kenneth, 25, Rica, 23, Gabrielle, 17, Michael, 12, and Marlo, 10. Despite the parents' education, they struggle to support their family. Unable to find work, her husband worked abroad, leaving Ms. Javierto and the children in the Philippines.

RESOURCES

The '25 by 2005' Initiative
Country Data[53]

PROGRESS, RESULTS AND CHALLENGES IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The '25 by 2005' acceleration campaign, a UNICEF initiative designed to intensify efforts in 25 countries in grave danger of failing to meet the Millennium Development Goal of gender parity in education, was launched in December 2002. The countries were selected because they met one or more of the following criteria: enrolment rates under 70 per cent for girls; gender gaps of more than 10 per cent in primary education; more than 1 million girls not in school; included in the World Bank's Education For All Fast-Track Initiative; or ravaged by crises that affect school opportunities, such as HIV/AIDS and conflict. The lessons learned from these countries will be applied to other countries until all children take their rightful place in the classroom.

The most recent available data in key areas that affect progress towards the Millennium Development Goal of gender parity in education are presented in the following pages. This is the first step in an ongoing process of data analysis that will lead to a comprehensive technical report in the near future.

AFGHANISTAN

OVERVIEW

Against a backdrop of extreme poverty and deprivation, major efforts are underway to bring children back to the classroom. Yet fewer than half of all girls are in school in Afghanistan and meeting the 2015 Goal will require the largest total average annual rate of increase in South Asia. Improved data collection must also be maintained in order to obtain an accurate view of enrolment statistics.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	-	-	-
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	92.3	119.9	62.8
Net Attendance Ratio*	53.1	65.5	39.6
Gross Attendance Ratio*	66.2	82.4	48.4
Transition Primary to Secondary	95.3	95.8	93.8
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	61.2	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	-	-	-
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	3.91	2.88	5.03

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	-
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	257
GNI Per Capita (US $)	250
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	46
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in...*	6

** 2001-2003 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Afghanistan: Columbia University, New York, Danish International Development Agency, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, Japan International Cooperation Agency, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and United Nations Office for Project Services, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

BANGLADESH

OVERVIEW

Enrolment and attendance rates are rising for both girls and boys, with an average annual rate of increase for girls of 1.50 per cent between 1980 and 2001. The good news is that the gender gap has been erased; the bad news is that boys are now at a disadvantage, and over 15 per cent of all children are still out of school.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	84.0	82.4	85.7
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	95.9	94.1	97.7
Net Attendance Ratio*	84.1	82.3	85.9
Gross Attendance Ratio*	119.8	118.5	121.3
Transition Primary to Secondary	89.3	83.0	95.7
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	55.7	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	1.15	0.55	1.50
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	1.48	1.55	1.41

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	41
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	77
GNI Per Capita (US $)	440
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	63
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	59

** 2001–2004 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Bangladesh: Bangladesh Shishu Academy, BRAC, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (United States) and Save the Children Alliance, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

BENIN

OVERVIEW

Fewer than half of all girls in Benin are in school. Over one third of boys do not attend. Of the children who do complete primary school, barely half continue on to the secondary level. It will require an average annual rate of increase of 2.88 per cent overall, and 3.33 per cent for girls, to achieve the MDG by 2015.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	58.3	69.2	47.5
Enrolment Ratio*	109.3	126.9	91.6
Net Attendance Ratio*	53.8	60.4	46.7
Gross Attendance Ratio*	81.0	93.6	67.4
Transition Primary to Secondary	51.1	51.1	51.1
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	61.2	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	0.96	0.95	0.89
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	2.88	2.44	3.33

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	34
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	152
GNI Per Capita (US $)	530
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	54
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	17

** 1999–2002 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Benin: Borne Fonden, CARE, Catholic Relief Services, Coopération Française, Danish International Development Agency, International Foundation for Education and Self-Help, United States Agency for International Development, World Education and World Learning, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

BHUTAN

OVERVIEW

Only half of all children are in primary school in Bhutan, and the enrolment rate for boys is higher than the enrolment rate for girls. In order to meet the MDG by 2015, Bhutan faces the second highest required average annual rate of increase in the region, after Afghanistan. The lack of reliable data from Bhutan makes it difficult to assess progress toward universal primary education.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	50.7	53.3	48.0
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	-	-	-
Net Attendance Ratio*	-	-	-
Gross Attendance Ratio*	-	-	-
Transition Primary to Secondary	82.5	-	-
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	37.9	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	-	-	-
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	3.52	3.34	3.71

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	-
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	80
GNI Per Capita (US $)	760
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	63
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	37

** 2000–2002 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Bhutan: Bhutan Broadcasting Service, Canadian International Development Agency, Danish International Development Agency, Helvetas and Save the Children, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

BOLIVIA

OVERVIEW

With roughly even numbers of girls and boys in school, Bolivia is on track to achieve the Goal in 2015. But close to 5 per cent of all children are still out of school, and renewed efforts are necessary to make education a reality for hard-to-reach populations if Bolivia's progress is to be maintained.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	95.1	94.9	95.3
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	115.3	115.9	114.7
Net Attendance Ratio*	77.9	78.4	77.4
Gross Attendance Ratio*	91.6	93.0	90.2
Transition Primary to Secondary	89.8	88.8	90.8
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	23.7	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	0.55	0.25	0.82
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	0.30	0.32	0.28

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	87
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	69
GNI Per Capita (US $)	960
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	64
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	47

** 2001–2004 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Bolivia: Danish International Development Agency, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, Dutch Cooperation, Plan and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

BURKINA FASO

OVERVIEW

For close to two thirds of all children in Burkina Faso, school is still well out of reach. Girls are especially disadvantaged: Barely 30 per cent are enrolled, and even fewer attend. To achieve the MDG by 2015, Burkina Faso will need to record an average annual rate of increase of over 4 per cent overall, and over 5 per cent for girls.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	36.2	41.7	30.6
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	46.2	53.1	39.2
Net Attendance Ratio*	32.2	35.4	28.8
Gross Attendance Ratio*	42.7	46.4	38.8
Transition Primary to Secondary	39.9	40.7	38.7
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	44.7	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	0.68	0.77	0.59
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	4.61	4.18	5.05

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	13
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	192
GNI Per Capita (US $)	360
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	48
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	12

** 2001–2003 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Burkina Faso: The government development agencies of Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark, France, Japan, the Netherlands and Switzerland, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

OVERVIEW

The situation is dire for education in the Central African Republic. Fewer than half of girls and boys attend school. An average annual rate of increase of over 4 per cent will be required to meet the MDG by 2015.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	-	-	-
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	65.5	77.9	53.3
Net Attendance Ratio*	43.2	46.9	39.3
Gross Attendance Ratio*	72.6	80.6	64.1
Transition Primary to Secondary	-	-	-
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	-	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	0.79	0.41	1.13
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	4.07	3.80	4.34

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	49
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	193
GNI Per Capita (US $)	310
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	39
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	15

** 2000–2002 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Central African Republic: Coopération Française, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and Government of China, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

CHAD

OVERVIEW

Chad has made significant progress, but its gender gap remains wide. Only half of all girls are enrolled, and many fewer attend. Classrooms are packed and the transition rate to secondary school remains low. An average annual rate of increase of almost 3 per cent will be required to meet the MDG by 2015.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	62.8	74.9	50.6
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	78.3	95.3	61.4
Net Attendance Ratio*	39.3	45.7	32.8
Gross Attendance Ratio*	66.1	76.6	55.5
Transition Primary to Secondary	43.8	45.6	39.0
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	68.0	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	0.94	0.91	0.95
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	2.98	2.16	3.80

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	26
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	200
GNI Per Capita (US $)	260
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	44
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	11

** 2000–2002 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Chad: African Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

OVERVIEW

Extreme poverty, conflict and high mortality rates have taken a severe toll on the education system in Democratic Republic of the Congo. Between 1980 and 2001, boys' school attendance dropped – making the country the only one in the region to record a negative rate of progress over this period. An overall average annual rate of increase of 3.84 per cent is required to meet the Goal in 2015.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	-	-	-
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	49.6	52.2	47.1
Net Attendance Ratio*	51.6	54.7	48.5
Gross Attendance Ratio*	94.6	103.6	85.8
Transition Primary to Secondary	-	-	-
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	26.0	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	0.39	-0.03	0.78
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	3.84	3.78	3.90

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	65
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	205
GNI Per Capita (US $)	120
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	44
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	13

** 1998–2001 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Democratic Republic of the Congo: Caritas, Catholic Relief Services, Oxfam and World Vision, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

DJIBOUTI

OVERVIEW

Djibouti faces one of the world's worst crises in education. Fewer girls are enrolled in school here than anywhere else in the Middle East and North Africa; overall, less than 40 per cent of both girls and boys have access to an education. The average annual rate of increase required to meet the Goal is over 4 per cent for all children, and over 5 per cent for girls.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	35.6	39.5	31.7
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	42.5	47.5	37.4
Net Attendance Ratio*	-	-	-
Gross Attendance Ratio*	-	-	-
Transition Primary to Secondary	58.0	58.8	57.0
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	34.4	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	-	-	-
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	4.69	4.38	5.01

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	-
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	126
GNI Per Capita (US $)	1030
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	53
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	19

** 2001–2003 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Djibouti: Radiodiffusion Télévision Djiboutienne, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

ERITREA

OVERVIEW

Extreme poverty is one of many factors placing education at risk in Eritrea. To achieve the Goal in 2015, Eritrea will have to register an average annual rate of increase of 4.08 per cent overall – one of the highest required rates in the region, after Somalia and Ethiopia.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	45.2	48.7	41.7
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	63.4	69.9	56.8
Net Attendance Ratio*	66.8	69.3	64.3
Gross Attendance Ratio*	93.2	101.1	85.3
Transition Primary to Secondary	82.8	86.7	77.6
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	46.7	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	1.41	1.13	1.61
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	4.08	3.85	4.32

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	-
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	82
GNI Per Capita (US $)	180
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	54
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	24

** 2001–2002 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Eritrea: Asmara Teacher Education Institute, National Union of Eritrean Women and National Union of Eritrean Youths, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

ETHIOPIA

OVERVIEW

The education sector in Ethiopia faces severe challenges, including high rates of poverty and mortality and a low adult literacy rate. After Somalia, Ethiopia requires the second highest average annual rate of increase in Eastern and Southern Africa if it is to achieve the Goal by 2015.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	51.1	55.2	46.9
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	70.0	78.9	61.0
Net Attendance Ratio*	30.6	33.1	28.0
Gross Attendance Ratio*	59.6	69.6	49.2
Transition Primary to Secondary	93.7	95.0	91.4
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	66.6	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	1.02	0.98	1.03
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	4.96	4.78	5.14

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	42
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	166
GNI Per Capita (US $)	110
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	48
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	14

** 2000–2003 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Ethiopia: Forum for African Women Educationalists and Save the Children Alliance, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

GUINEA

OVERVIEW

While steady progress has been recorded in Guinea, over 40 per cent of girls are still out of school. The average annual rate of increase will need to reach 2.72 per cent if the MDG is to be met in Guinea by 2015.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	65.5	72.6	58.1
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	81.5	92.1	70.6
Net Attendance Ratio*	57.4	60.2	54.4
Gross Attendance Ratio*	79.3	84.4	74.1
Transition Primary to Secondary	47.7	48.8	45.5
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	45.0	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	0.95	0.95	0.97
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	2.72	2.18	3.28

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	-
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	155
GNI Per Capita (US $)	460
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	54
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	18

** 2001–2003 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Guinea: Ecoliers du Monde, Forum for African Women Educationalists of Guinea, Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, Plan, Save The Children, United States Agency for International Development and World Education, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

INDIA

OVERVIEW

India has made impressive progress, especially in girls' enrolment and attendance rates. But a persistent gender gap continues to contribute to large numbers of children out of school. The average annual rate of increase must rise to 1.65 per cent overall if the country is to meet the MDG by 2015.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	87.5	90.0	84.8
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	107.5	110.6	104.2
Net Attendance Ratio*	75.9	79.2	72.3
Gross Attendance Ratio*	94.7	100.5	88.7
Transition Primary to Secondary	86.5	84.8	88.8
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	41.3	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	0.77	0.38	1.02
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	1.65	1.40	1.91

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	61
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	85
GNI Per Capita (US $)	620
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	64
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	48

** 2000–2002 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in India: Australian Government Overseas Aid Program, CARE, European Union, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and UK Department for International Development, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

MALAWI

OVERVIEW

Over three quarters of children in Malawi attend school and gender parity has been reached. To achieve the MDG by 2015, the country must record a total average annual rate of increase of 1.32 per cent.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	-	-	-
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	140.1	142.7	137.3
Net Attendance Ratio*	78.3	77.2	79.4
Gross Attendance Ratio*	109.7	114.2	105.4
Transition Primary to Secondary	76.0	78.5	73.2
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	-	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	0.89	0.44	1.25
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	1.32	1.32	1.32

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	64
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	175
GNI Per Capita (US $)	170
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	40
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	7

** 2000–2002 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Malawi: Forum for African Women Educationalists of Malawi, Malawi Institute of Education on Life Skills and Malawi National Youth Council on HIV/AIDS, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

MALI

OVERVIEW

Less than half of children are enrolled in school in Mali; for girls, the number drops below 40 per cent. Attendance rates are even lower, while classrooms are crowded with approximately 57 pupils per teacher. To achieve the MDG by 2015, the average annual rate of increase in Mali must accelerate to 3.61 per cent.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	44.5	50.2	38.7
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	58.4	66.1	50.5
Net Attendance Ratio*	39.0	45.0	33.2
Gross Attendance Ratio*	52.5	61.9	43.5
Transition Primary to Secondary	54.2	56.5	50.6
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	57.3	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	0.65	0.70	0.62
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	3.61	3.25	3.99

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	19
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	219
GNI Per Capita (US $)	360
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	48
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	10

** 2001–2002 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Mali: Academy for Educational Development and French Agency for Development, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

NEPAL

OVERVIEW

Significant gender disparities in Nepal impede the country's efforts to achieve education for all. Over 70 per cent of boys are enrolled in school, but only two thirds of girls. To meet the MDG by 2015, the country must register an average annual rate of increase of 2.25 per cent.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	70.5	74.6	66.0
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	119.3	126.1	112.0
Net Attendance Ratio*	73.5	79.9	66.8
Gross Attendance Ratio*	116.9	127.5	105.9
Transition Primary to Secondary	78.2	80.1	75.9
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	35.7	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	1.48	1.33	1.65
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	2.25	1.93	2.60

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	49
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	76
GNI Per Capita (US $)	260
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	62
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	24

** 2000–2002 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Nepal: Danish International Development Agency, Finland Department for International Development Cooperation, Norad and UK Department for International Development, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

NIGERIA

OVERVIEW

While Nigeria has made steady progress, around 40 per cent of girls remain out of school. Over one quarter of boys are not enrolled and over 30 per cent do not attend school. The country will have to reach an average annual rate of increase of 2.72 overall if the MDG is to be achieved by 2015.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	67.2	73.9	60.2
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	119.4	131.6	106.8
Net Attendance Ratio*	61.9	65.7	58.0
Gross Attendance Ratio*	91.2	98.0	84.1
Transition Primary to Secondary	80.5	80.8	80.2
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	41.6	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	1.07	0.78	1.27
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	2.72	2.46	2.99

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	67
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	197
GNI Per Capita (US $)	390
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	43
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	18

** 2002–2003 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Nigeria: Strategy for Acceleration of Girls' Education in Nigeria, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

PAKISTAN

OVERVIEW

Around half of all girls in Pakistan are out of school. Boys are faring significantly better, but still face net enrolment and attendance ratios below 70 per cent. To meet the MDG in 2015, the country will have to achieve an average annual rate of increase of 2.62 per cent overall – and 3.11 per cent for girls.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	59.1	67.5	50.0
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	68.5	79.6	56.6
Net Attendance Ratio*	56.4	61.9	50.9
Gross Attendance Ratio*	102.0	115.7	88.1
Transition Primary to Secondary	-	-	-
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	40.4	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	1.04	0.80	1.23
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	2.62	2.16	3.11

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	49
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	101
GNI Per Capita (US $)	600
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	63
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	31

** 2000–2002 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Pakistan: Australian Government Overseas Aid Program, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, National Commission for Human Development, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation and UK Department for International Development, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

OVERVIEW

The nearly ten-point gender gap in Papua New Guinea threatens to undermine progress towards universal primary education. Close to 80 per cent of boys are enrolled in school, but about 30 per cent of girls are still missing out on an education. The country will have to make an average annual rate of increase of 1.93 overall, and 2.22 for girls, if the MDG is to be met. Improved data collection also must be maintained in order to assess progress.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	74.3	78.9	69.2
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	74.7	79.3	69.6
Net Attendance Ratio*	-	-	-
Gross Attendance Ratio*	-	-	-
Transition Primary to Secondary	77.9	79.3	76.3
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	35.4	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	-	-	-
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	1.93	1.66	2.22

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	57
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	93
GNI Per Capita (US $)	580
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	56
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	62

** 2001–2002 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Papua New Guinea: Australian Government Overseas Aid Program, the European Union and Japan International Cooperation Agency, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

SUDAN

OVERVIEW

Over 40 per cent of all children in Sudan are out of school. A low pupil/teacher ratio and high rate of transition to secondary school may help Sudan accelerate progress towards the Goal in 2015.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	45.8	50.0	41.5
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	60.2	64.3	55.8
Net Attendance Ratio*	58.1	59.5	56.7
Gross Attendance Ratio*	72.4	73.8	71.1
Transition Primary to Secondary	90.4	90.5	90.2
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	28.8	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	1.25	0.98	1.53
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	3.19	2.92	3.47

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	59
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	91
GNI Per Capita (US $)	530
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	57
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	30

** 1999–2002 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Sudan: CARE/Sudan Basic Education Programme, Sudan Women's Association and United States Agency for International Development, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

TANZANIA, UNITED REPUBLIC OF

OVERVIEW

The United Republic of Tanzania has roughly even numbers of girls and boys enrolled in and attending school. Progress for girls has been especially strong, at 1.41 per cent between 1980 and 2001, compared to 0.91 per cent overall. But high numbers of both girls and boys remain out of school, and the country will need to achieve an average annual rate of increase of 3.26 per cent in order to meet the MDG by 2015.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	82.2	83.1	81.4
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	96.5	98.5	94.5
Net Attendance Ratio*	-	-	-
Gross Attendance Ratio*	-	-	-
Transition Primary to Secondary	28.0	28.3	27.7
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	58.3	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	0.91	0.34	1.41
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	3.26	3.26	3.25

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	69
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	126
GNI Per Capita (US $)	330
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	46
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	10

** 1999–2004 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Tanzania: United States Agency for International Development, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

TURKEY

OVERVIEW

Turkey has made significant progress towards universal primary education, with an average annual rate of increase for girls of 1.09 per cent between 1980 and 2001. Yet a significant gender gap persists in both attendance and enrolment. The country will need to step up its overall average annual rate of increase and maintain current momentum for girls if the Goal is to be met by 2015.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	86.4	89.1	83.5
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	91.4	94.5	88.2
Net Attendance Ratio*	72.6	74.9	70.1
Gross Attendance Ratio*	93.6	98.2	88.8
Transition Primary to Secondary	-	-	-
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	-	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	0.72	0.35	1.09
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	0.86	0.64	1.09

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	88
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	32
GNI Per Capita (US $)	3750
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	69
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	480

** 1998–2002 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Turkey: European Union, Mother and Child Education Foundation and Turkish Radio and Television Institution, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

YEMEN

OVERVIEW

With a gender gap exceeding 20 points, Yemen faces some of the largest gender disparities in the Middle East and North Africa region. In order to achieve the MDG by 2015, it will need to accelerate progress to an average annual rate of 3.03 per cent each year. For girls, that number must reach nearly 4 per cent.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	71.8	83.6	59.4
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	83.5	98.3	68.0
Net Attendance Ratio*	54.6	67.8	40.7
Gross Attendance Ratio*	82.0	105.5	57.3
Transition Primary to Secondary	-	-	-
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	29.8	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	1.96	2.36	1.54
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	3.03	2.14	3.95

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	49
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	111
GNI Per Capita (US $)	570
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	61
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	19

** 1997–2002 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Yemen: Government of Netherlands and UK Department for International Development, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

ZAMBIA

OVERVIEW

Zambia has roughly equal numbers of girls and boys enrolled in and attending school. But this accomplishment is overshadowed by the total numbers of children who are out of school. Over 30 per cent are missing out on an education, and the average annual rate of increase must rise to 2.39 per cent each year if the MDG is to be met by 2015.

EDUCATION

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Net Enrolment Ratio*	68.4	69.1	67.7
Gross Enrolment Ratio*	82.2	85.1	79.3
Net Attendance Ratio*	67.8	67.9	67.7
Gross Attendance Ratio*	91.2	97.4	84.9
Transition Primary to Secondary	54.0	51.5	57.2
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	42.8	-	-

PROGRESS

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio 1980-2001	0.39	0.04	0.70
Average Annual Rate of Increase in Net Enrolment/Attendance Ratio Required to meet MDG by 2015	2.39	2.36	2.41

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Total Adult Literacy Rate	68
Under-5 Mortality Rate *per 1,000 live births*	182
GNI Per Capita (US $)	450
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	38
Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death – *1 in…*	19

** 2001–2002 Most recent year available*

KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

The following organizations are among those working together to advance girls' education in Zambia: Forum for African Women Educationalists and UK Department for International Development, in addition to the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative partners.

THE POWER OF ADVOCACY

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