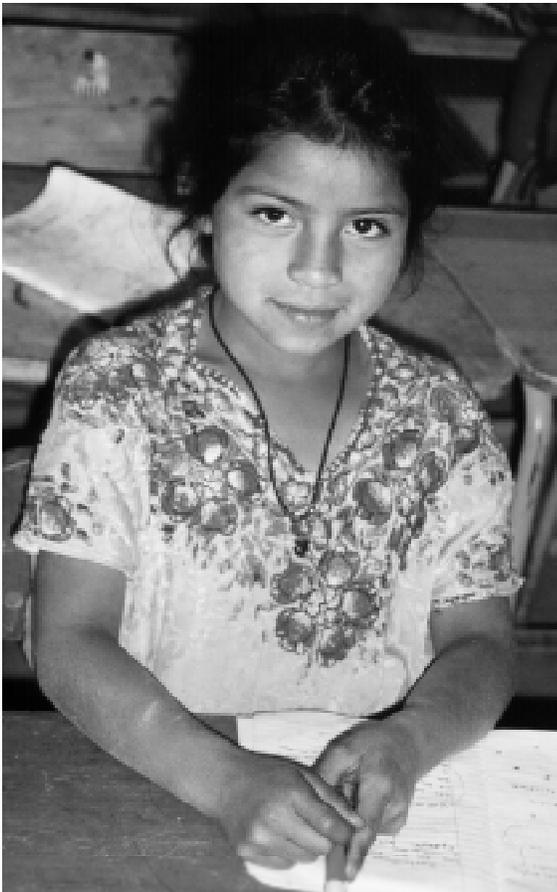


Girls' Education

Your Business Can Help: Take on the Challenge

What kind of nation can we build with over 80 percent of the population living in poverty and an illiteracy rate of 50 percent? Women are the majority of these illiterates... These women hold in their hands the future citizens of our nation. We want our country to join the rank of developed nations. If we want progress, if we want peace, we must educate girls.

- A Business Leader



Abigail Harris

The Girls' and Women's Education Activity is implemented by the Institute for International Research Consortium under contract to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Why Is Girls' Education Important?

Educating girls has profound socioeconomic consequences. USAID, the World Bank, and UNICEF report that educating girls results in increased domestic, industrial, and agricultural productivity; improved family health and nutrition; increased participation in civil society; decreased maternal mortality; decreased birth rates; and increased education of succeeding generations. These improvements translate into significant cost savings for the national governments and for the people.

Successful and progressive business leaders share a vision of social and economic development. Education of all citizens is the lynchpin for development. *You as a business leader, however large or small your business, have an opportunity and obligation to turn that vision into a reality.*

What Have Business Leaders Achieved to Date?

Business leaders throughout the world have successfully supported and promoted girls' education.

- In Guatemala, the association of coffee growers established a social development fund for improving rural schools and educating children, especially girls. Political leaders took notice—the Ministry of Education now channels funds for girls' education through the association.
- In the Central African Republic, the Tupperware Corporation, as part of the *Give a Child a Chance Program*, helps girls' families pay for their education.
- In Morocco, the Wafa Bank promotes the One Agency/One Schools Project, whereby an agency (branch) of the bank is enlisted to gather financial, organizational, and managerial support for a local school.

What Can You Do?

As a business leader, you do much for your local people. You create jobs and wealth and you provide goods and services. You can also make a difference to your community by promoting girls' education. You can work with one school and community or with several. Your business can develop a girls'

education project. You can contribute time, ideas, personal contacts, goods, and funds. By helping girls' education, you will also help your business. There are many ways you can help, requiring varying levels of commitment.

You can support girls' education through advocacy and non-financial methods:

- Demonstrate pride in your daughters' accomplishments in school.
- Encourage your employees to send their daughters to school and recognize them for doing so.
- Encourage employees to volunteer their time to tutoring or after-school girls' clubs and reward them for doing so.
- Hire women to show parents that there are good job opportunities for girls and good reasons to send them to school.
- Speak about the importance of girls' education at business meetings.
- Work with other business leaders in supporting girls' education.
- Establish a partnership with a nongovernmental organization committed to girls' education and provide it with assistance, such as technological and communications support, and teams of employee volunteers.
- Inform influential policy makers that you support girls' education and advocate for increased allocations to primary education and girls' education.

You can support girls' education through donations or financial contributions:

- Donate land to build a school, library, or other educational amenities and encourage girls to attend.
- Provide school equipment or help provide materials to build school infrastructure.
- Support teachers with much-needed items, such as blackboards, paper, and writing materials.
- Purchase educational supplies, toys, and games to support classroom materials.
- Provide schools with books that present positive role models for girls.
- Establish or contribute to a scholarship program for girls.
- Establish or contribute to an award program for outstanding

teachers who encourage girls' success in school.

- Provide incentives for students' attendance and scholarship, particularly for girls.
- Donate goods or services needed by the school or community from your company.
- Donate food for family nights and academic celebrations in support of girls.

You can support girls' education by providing materials for the community to:

- Repair or build classrooms to alleviate crowded conditions.
- Repair or build boundary walls and fences to make school safer.
- Repair or build housing for teachers— especially female teachers.
- Repair or build clean, safe, and accessible latrines.
- Repair or build storage rooms where schools can safely store books and materials.
- Repair or build a road or bridge to allow girls to reach schools safely.
- Repair or construct an area that has access to clean, running water.
- Repair or build benches and tables.

In short, you can leave your mark on the minds of future generations in your country and support the development of your nation. Support education in general; support girls' education in particular. Make it your business!

**IMAGINE A WORLD WHERE EVERY GIRL
GOES TO SCHOOL!**

**THEN ACT...
FOR THE GIRLS OF TODAY,
FOR THE WOMEN OF TOMORROW.**

Produced by the Institute for International Research, a fully owned subsidiary of the American Institutes for Research, as part of the U.S. Agency for International Development's Girls' and Women's Education Activity. The Activity is funded by the Agency's Office of Women in Development, Bureau for Global Programs, Field Support and Research, Contract #HNE-5848-C-00-6046-00.

The Institute for International Research implements the Activity in collaboration with Abt Associates, CARE, Management Systems International, Plan International, and World Learning.

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