



“Educating girls is the single most effective step a country can take to combat poverty, yet barriers to female education (internationally) are numerous.”

(Net Aid, 2006)

Multiple studies show that educating girls improves the overall economic health of a country, promotes healthier families, decreases the spread of HIV and fosters democracy:

- Providing girls with one additional year of education beyond the average boosts wages 10-20% and can reduce infant mortality by 5-10%.
- A study found that the lack of girls’ education depresses farm productivity and showed that if women farmers had the same education and input levels as men farmers, food yields could rise by almost 25%.
- A study in Zambia found that AIDS spreads twice as fast among uneducated girls.
- Educated mothers are about 50% more likely to immunize their children than uneducated mothers.
- In Africa, children of mothers who receive five years of primary education are 40% more likely to live beyond age 5.
- Educated Bangladeshi women are three times more likely than illiterate women to participate in political meetings.

International aid for basic education is estimated to be \$4.7 billion per year, far short of the estimated \$7 billion per year required to meet the goals.

Achieving education for all is possible, but it will require fully funding policies and programs, such as food stipend programs and the elimination of school fees. When possible, support these initiatives.

“Every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency (shelter, food, education). Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities—to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.”

Catholic Social Teaching
“Rights & Responsibilities”