



State of the
WORLD'S MOTHERS 2005

The Power and Promise
of Girls' Education

Save the Children is the leading independent organization creating real and lasting change for children in need in the United States and in more than 40 countries around the world.

Save the Children is a member of the International Save the Children Alliance, comprising 27 independent, national Save the Children organizations working in more than 100 countries to ensure the protection and well-being of children.

Contents

Preface	2
Foreword by Cokie Roberts	3
Key Findings and Recommendations	4
Girls' Education: Changing the Course of Nations and Generations	8
Missing the Mark: 58 Million Girls Not in School	9
The Power of Girls' Education to Change the Future for All Children	11
Girls' Education Progress Report & Country Rankings	18
Forecasts for Children: 11 Countries Most Likely to Succeed Due to Investments in Girls' Education	23
Take Action for Girls! Make a World of Difference for All Children	31
Appendix A: Complete Girls' Education Progress Report	32
Appendix B: Sixth Annual Mothers' Index & Country Rankings	36
Endnotes	44

On the cover:

Eight-year-old Mamou, from Côte d'Ivoire, attends a school run by Save the Children in a refugee camp in Mali.

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The Power and Promise of Girls' Education

In commemoration of Mother's Day, Save the Children is publishing its sixth annual *State of the World's Mothers* report. By focusing on girls' education as a way to ensure a more healthy and prosperous future for all children, this report highlights the urgent need to reach the 58 million girls who are not attending school. It shines a spotlight on countries that are succeeding in getting and keeping girls in school and shows that effective solutions to this challenge are affordable – even in the world's poorest countries.



Preface

Previous *State of the World's Mothers* reports have documented the inextricable link between the well-being of mothers and the well-being of their children. More than 70 years of on-the-ground Save the Children experience has demonstrated that when mothers have health care, education and economic opportunity, both they and their children have the best chance to survive and thrive.

But given the overwhelming poverty, widespread disease and rapid population growth facing many developing countries, how can a nation with limited resources begin to move in a positive direction, when so many problems are threatening mothers and children all at once? This year's report looks at countries and communities that are making what is often considered the best investment possible for the future of their children – ensuring that girls go to school.

Research consistently shows that when educated girls become mothers, they tend to have fewer children, provide better health care and nutrition for their children, and are more likely to send their children to school. Educating girls also contributes to lowering rates of child mortality, preventing the spread of HIV, combating poverty and promoting political stability.

Yet, while total enrollments of children have risen in every region of the developing world in recent decades, the difference in boys' and girls' enrollment rates – the gender gap – continues to be significant. Of 650 million children of primary school age in the world, 103 million do not attend school, and the majority of them are girls. In all, approximately 58 million girls of primary school age are not in school, and many girls who enroll in primary school leave after just a year or two of education.

To address the global challenge of enrolling and keeping more girls in school, Save the Children is working on five fronts:

- First, Save the Children is increasing awareness of the challenges and solutions to girls' education. This report highlights countries that are succeeding – and failing – in educating their girls. It calls attention to areas where greater investments are needed and shows that effective strategies are working, even in some of the poorest places on Earth.
- Second, Save the Children is encouraging action by mobilizing citizens and organizations in the United States and around the world to support girls' education and to advocate for better policies and increased funding for proven programs.

- Third, we are getting the job done. Save the Children is working in partnership with government agencies and local organizations to deliver innovative girls' education programs throughout the developing world. We help parents prepare girls and boys for school success early in life. We show schools how to create welcoming learning environments for girls. Where fees are an obstacle to girls' participation, we launch scholarship programs or assist communities in developing endowments to encourage girls to stay in school. And where classrooms are not available nearby, we create community schools that offer flexible schedules, relevant content and essential skills to girls. All of Save the Children's education programs emphasize active participatory learning that strengthens students' capacities to think, solve problems, negotiate and resolve conflicts – critical skills for girls who want to succeed in school, and in life.
- Fourth, we are providing quality education for children in emergencies such as war, conflict and natural disasters. We have launched a new global initiative to provide educational opportunities for millions of girls and boys whose schooling has been interrupted by crises. Initially, we are focusing on eight countries that have experienced recent disasters or conflicts and seek to ensure education for 3 million children currently out of school in affected areas. The countries are Afghanistan, Angola, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Uganda.
- Finally, we are helping American children by putting the power of education to work in impoverished rural areas. Through our in-school and after-school model literacy programs in Appalachia, the Mississippi River Delta, California's Central Valley and in Native American and Hispanic communities in the Southwest, children – both girls and boys – are learning to read and to succeed.

Every one of us has a role to play in helping children in need. Please read the Take Action section of this report, and visit www.savethechildren.org on a regular basis to find out what you can do to make a difference.

Charles F. MacCormack
President and CEO, Save the Children

Foreword



It's the greatest lesson learned of the past generation. If you keep a girl in school, you help her change the course of her life, that of her future family, and an entire nation.

Take a look at parts of Asia. South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Indonesia not too long

ago (back around 1950) looked a good deal like sub-Saharan Africa does today, statistically speaking. They were in the same state in terms of economics, literacy, health care and fertility rates. How did these so-called Asian tigers do it? Through education – particularly the education of girls.

It's a simple and well-documented fact. A girl who goes to school and stays there is much more likely to postpone marriage and childbirth.

Those decisions have a dramatic ripple effect. Later childbirth results in lowering the overall fertility rate, which means higher per capita income and the increased ability of a woman to earn a living for herself and her family. And educated women provide better health care for themselves and their children, meaning lower maternal and infant mortality rates. In fact, a country's investment in education leads to a whole host of results that promote economic and social development.

Given these great success stories, you'd think that countries would be pouring resources into educating girls. But as this report shows, some countries are making greater progress than others. Among the more surprising findings – countries making the most progress are not always countries with the most resources.

There's much more work to do. The majority of the world's more than 100 million children who are out of school are girls, 22 million in sub-Saharan Africa alone.

It's not only a preference for boys that keeps girls out of the classroom: girls are needed at home to tend the farm or care for younger children, and some as young as 9 and 10 are forced to marry and drop out of school. As more populations are affected by HIV/AIDS, girls often take over for their dying or deceased mothers. Fear of violence also means that girls stay close to home in dangerous parts of the globe. And in places where culture or religion separates girls from boys and men, there are often not enough female teachers or single-sex schools for girls.

As a Trustee, I've seen first-hand the remarkable work of Save the Children. They have found that they can persuade parents to send their girls to a small school in the local community. These village schools, starting with preschool, have been successful in enrolling girls and keeping them in the classroom. As the girls grow more accustomed to leaving home, they move on to secondary schools farther away. And the cycle of later marriage, lower fertility rate and greater economic independence kicks in.

This report takes note of the many successful strategies and long-term benefits of getting girls in school and keeping them there. It's the reason that Congress should ensure the foreign assistance budget contributes significantly to basic education programs in the developing world. It's the reason that we should support organizations like Save the Children that emphasize education, particularly for girls.

Not just because educating girls is the right thing to do, but because it works.

Cokie Roberts

Author, News Commentator and Save the Children Trustee

Key Findings and Recommendations

Some 58 million girls in the developing world are not in school. Whether or not a girl goes to school can be a life or death matter. In comparison to her educated counterparts, an unschooled girl is more likely to be poor, marry early, die in childbirth, lose a child to sickness or disease, have many births closely spaced, and have children who are chronically ill or malnourished.

In contrast, a girl who goes to school and stays there is much more likely to delay marriage and childbirth, and to have fewer, healthier and better educated children. These benefits have a ripple effect throughout society as a whole. In fact, if you keep girls in school you can change the course of a nation.

This year's *State of the World's Mothers* report shows which countries are succeeding – and which are failing – to make progress in girls' education. It examines the ways investments in schooling for girls can benefit society as a whole and points to programs and policies that are working, even in very poor countries. It looks at countries that have done a good job of educating girls over the past decade, and it forecasts into the future for children, identifying a group of 11 countries poised for progress in the next 10 years, thanks to investments in girls' education.

Key Findings

1. Girls' education is a proven and powerful investment in the well-being of present and future generations of children. Education empowers girls today and saves children's lives tomorrow. The more time girls spend in school, the more likely they are to grow up to be mothers who are healthy, well-nourished, economically empowered and resourceful when it comes to the health and education of their children. These women have fewer children, healthier pregnancies and safer deliveries. Their babies are more likely to survive childbirth, the vulnerable first month of life and the critical first five years – laying the foundation for healthy and more productive lives. Schooling for girls helps reduce the incidence of AIDS and lessens the likelihood that mothers will infect their babies with HIV at birth by giving girls and women the knowledge and self-confidence to protect themselves and their children.

Girls' Education: A Snapshot

Worldwide, 103 million children of primary school age are not in school – 58 million are girls.

Two thirds of illiterate adults are women.

The children of uneducated mothers are more than twice as likely to die or be malnourished than children of mothers who have secondary or higher education.

In a typical developing country with a population of 20 million and an under 5 mortality rate of 150 deaths per 1,000 children, giving girls one additional year of schooling would save as many as 60,000 children's lives.

Girls' education leads to increases in income, both for individuals and for nations as a whole. It also helps promote democracy and civic participation by women, which often results in policy changes that contribute to better health, education and the protection of children. And in emergency situations – such as earthquakes, floods and armed conflict – education for girls plays a useful role in protecting against some of the worst forms of suffering and abuse. *(To read more, turn to page 11.)*

2. Looking back 10 years, developing countries have a mixed record when it comes to progress in girls' education. The first-ever *Girls' Education Progress Report* compares 71 developing countries and finds some nations making noteworthy gains and some lagging behind. The successful countries have recognized the great benefits that accrue to society when girls are educated and have made breakthroughs in improving girls' educational access and their performance in school. The Top 3 countries, in terms of progress in girls' education between 1990

and 2000, are Bolivia, Kenya and Cameroon. The Bottom 3 – Rwanda, Iraq and Malawi – have shown little or no progress, primarily because of conflict, AIDS and rapid population growth. *(To read more, turn to page 18.)*

3. Looking 10 years forward for children, 11 “most likely to succeed” developing countries are tackling the challenge of getting more girls into school, and can expect to reap benefits such as higher child survival rates and improved standards of living.

Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Egypt, Gambia, Mexico, Morocco and Vietnam represent a cross-section of cultures, religions and regions, demonstrating that when the political will exists, lasting positive change for children can be accomplished anywhere. The countries were chosen based on an analysis using indicators on girls’ education, combined with other key “performance” factors, in three areas critical to children’s well-being: achieving smaller, healthier families; educating all children; and achieving the eight Millennium Development Goals aimed at fighting poverty, hunger and disease. *(To read more, turn to page 23.)*

4. No matter what the economic or cultural challenges are, there’s a strategy that can work to get girls into school and help them stay there.

The top-ranked countries in this report have used a variety of strategies to get girls into school and keep them there. Several have embarked on sweeping reforms to their education systems at the national level. Others have worked with international organizations to launch innovative scholarship programs, food-for-education incentives, child care for younger siblings and awareness-raising campaigns to encourage parents and communities to recognize the value of educating girls. In rural areas especially, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have been successful in creating community schools that bring classrooms close to home, provide flexible schedules and curricula tailored to community priorities. NGOs have also introduced “second chance” programs for teenage girls who missed out on schooling in the primary grades. *(To read more, turn to pages 18-30.)*



5. Political will matters more than national wealth.

A number of relatively poor countries are doing an admirable job of getting girls into school, while other countries with greater resources are not doing nearly as well. Mongolia, Kenya and Madagascar are the Top 3 countries “exceeding expectations based on GDP.” Equatorial Guinea, Saudi Arabia and Oman are the Bottom 3 countries “falling below expectations based on GDP.” *(To read more, turn to page 10.)*

Recommendations

1. Eliminate school fees and other costs that prevent girls from enrolling in school.

Even very low fees are insurmountable obstacles for poor girls, and when school fees are eliminated, girls flood into schools. Wealthy nations must make good on their commitments to support education for all by helping developing countries to eliminate fees and offer quality education by recruiting and training more teachers, improving infrastructure, and ensuring all students access to textbooks.

2. Improve the quality of education to keep girls in school at the primary level.

The quality of education has suffered in countries where rapidly rising numbers of children have overwhelmed teachers, infrastructure and critical supplies like textbooks. Dropout rates are highest in the early grades, pointing to a crisis of quality in early primary education. Girls are more likely than boys to be withdrawn from school if the quality is poor or parents think their children are not learning, because



parents want girls to help out at home. Improving school quality for girls will strengthen the benefits of school for society as a whole. Positive gender dynamics in classrooms give girls and boys stronger self-esteem, problem-solving skills, and courage to explore and create. Girls develop self-confidence, skills and a vision of earning an income, later marriage and a smaller family.

3. Promote alternative schooling for girls affected by AIDS, conflict and natural disasters.

School protects girls against AIDS and against some of the worst forms of harm and abuse during conflicts and natural disasters. But in communities destabilized by these crises, girls are more likely than boys to be withdrawn from school out of fear for their safety, or because they are needed at home as families struggle for survival. In crisis settings, NGOs, religious groups and the private sector are providing diverse and innovative educational options for hard-to-reach girls from early childhood to adulthood. Based on mounting evidence that alternative models of education can help children learn and can reach girls effectively, more governments are partnering with private organizations to achieve education for all. Opening national education systems to diversity and innovation is a positive trend for girls' education.

4. Expand girls' secondary school opportunities.

Primary education is essential for girls, but should not be the ultimate goal. Every additional year of girls' education strengthens their ability to delay marriage,

to earn more, to improve their health and self-esteem. Looking ahead to secondary school is an incentive for girls to attend and perform well in primary school, and reassures families that their investments will pay off. Secondary school opportunities must expand for countries to reap the full benefits of female education for national development and individual well-being.

5. Engage men and civic groups with shared interests as advocates for girls' education.

Women and men have worked together to bring girls into school. Women do not hold the majority of national legislative seats in any government, so partnerships with men of vision have been key to the successes achieved to date. Similarly, in homes around the world, while women's commitment to support their daughters' education is critical, fathers also play significant and decisive roles in their daughters' education. Fathers often have the final word on sending their daughters to school or delaying their daughters' marriages. And since violence and the threat of violence is one of the most significant obstacles to girls' safe arrival at school and to their safety while learning, it is essential that the men in every community agree on and enforce social norms that condemn violence and sexual exploitation of girls. The effects of girls' education on reduced population growth, economic productivity and the health of a nation mean that there are many potential partners for advocacy, from national AIDS committees to commercial enterprises looking for a competent workforce. Locally, nationally and internationally these groups with shared interests should be enlisted to promote girls' education.

6. Increase government support for girls' education in the developing world.

The United States should demonstrate leadership toward the goal of "Education for All" by the year 2015 by doubling U.S. government funding for basic education in the foreign assistance budget to \$800 million for fiscal year 2006. These should be new funds – not taken from other accounts critical to the survival and well-being of children, such as family planning, maternal and child health and AIDS prevention.

The quality of children's lives depends on the health, security and well-being of their mothers. Research shows that two factors make a vital difference in the well-being of mothers and children: female education and access to, and use of, voluntary family planning services.

The 2005 Mothers' Index:

Sweden Tops List, Burkina Faso and Mali Tie for Last, United States Ranks 11th

Save the Children's sixth annual *Mothers' Index* compares the well-being of mothers and children in 110 countries. The *Index* uses six indicators measuring the status of women: lifetime risk of maternal mortality, use of modern contraception, births attended by trained personnel, prevalence of anemia among pregnant women, female literacy, and participation of women in national government. It also uses four indicators covering the well-being of children: infant mortality, nutritional status, primary school enrollment and access to safe water.

The *Mothers' Index* also provides information on an additional 68 countries for which sufficient data existed to present findings on women's indicators or children's indicators, but not both. When these are included, the total comes to 178 countries.

Sweden, Denmark and Finland top the rankings this year. The top 10 countries, in general, attain very high scores for mothers' and children's health and educational status. Burkina Faso and Mali tied for last among the 110 countries surveyed. The 11 bottom-ranked countries – eight from sub-Saharan Africa – are a reverse image of the top 10, performing poorly on all indicators. The United States places 11th this year.

Conditions for mothers and their children in these bottom countries are grim. On average, 1 in 19 mothers will die in her lifetime from pregnancy-related causes. One in 10 children dies before his or her first birthday, and 1 in 8 children suffers from malnutrition.

The gap in availability of maternal and child health services is especially dramatic when comparing Sweden and Ethiopia. Trained health personnel are present at virtually every birth in Sweden, while only 6 percent of births are attended in Ethiopia. Nearly all Swedish women are literate, 72 percent are using some modern method of contraception, and only one in 333 will see her child die before his or her first birthday. At the opposite end of the spectrum, only 1 in 3 women is literate in Ethiopia, 6 percent are using modern contraception, and 1 child in 9 dies before his or her first birthday.

Zeroing in on the children's well-being portion of the *Mothers' Index*, Afghanistan finishes in last place, behind 169 other countries. There, 165 infants of every 1,000 die before their first birthday, 77 percent of children are not enrolled in school, 87 percent of the population is without safe water, and 25 percent of children are suffering from moderate or severe malnutrition (underweight for height). The situation for Afghan mothers is equally dismal: 96 percent of women are not using modern contraception, 86 percent of all babies are delivered without trained health personnel, and 1 in 6 mothers dies in childbirth.

These statistics go far beyond mere numbers. The human despair and lost opportunities represented in these numbers demand mothers everywhere be given the basic tools they need to break the cycle of poverty and improve the quality of life for themselves, their children, and for generations to come.

See Appendix B for the Complete Mothers' Index and Country Rankings.



Girls' Education

CHANGING THE COURSE OF NATIONS AND GENERATIONS



Missing the Mark: 58 Million Girls Not in School

World leaders, meeting in 2000 under the auspices of the United Nations, committed to getting equal numbers of girls and boys into school by 2005 as one of eight Millennium Development Goals to tackle poverty, hunger and disease. This initial target has now been missed by 76 out of 128 countries.¹ Approximately 58 million girls around the world are missing out on education.²

- Together, sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia account for almost three quarters of the unenrolled children in the world.³
- South and West Asia have the greatest number of girls out of school – more than 22 million.⁴
- Sub-Saharan Africa has just under 22 million girls out of school. In seven sub-Saharan African countries, girls have 20 percent less chance of starting school than boys.⁵
- In the Arab States, 4.5 million girls do not attend school.⁶
- In the developing world as a whole, 85 percent of boys and just 76 percent of girls complete primary school. There are bright spots in East Asia and the Pacific, where equal numbers of girls and boys attend school, and in Latin America, where primary school completion rates are actually higher for girls. But in sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, and particularly South Asia, completion rates of girls lag behind those of boys.⁷

Why girls don't go to school

Poverty and discrimination remain huge barriers to girls' education in many parts of the world. When families struggle to find the money for school fees, uniforms and books, girls are the ones most likely to miss out since they are often required to stay at home to help earn money or look after younger siblings.

Girls are also deprived of education when the school environment is hostile to them (when they fear violence and intimidation in the classroom by male teachers and pupils, for example); when schools are located at a distance parents believe is too far for girls to travel safely; or when school facilities are designed in ways that girls find unacceptable (for instance, when they lack separate toilets for boys and girls).

Cultural norms also inhibit girls' access to education in many parts of the developing world. Social traditions and

Millennium Development Goals

Five years ago, all 189 United Nations member states committed to eight Millennium Development Goals. Achieving the goals will make a lasting contribution to world peace, security, human rights and sustainable development.

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger – Target: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day and those who suffer from hunger.

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education – Target: Ensure that all boys and girls complete primary school by 2015.

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women – Target: Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and at all levels by 2015.

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality – Target: Reduce by two thirds between 1990 and 2015 the under-5 mortality rate.

Goal 5: Improve maternal health – Target: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio.

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases – Target: Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other major diseases by 2015.

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability – Target: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources; by 2015, reduce by half the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation; by 2020, achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development – Target: Rich countries are responsible for establishing equitable access to their markets and technology, and for creating a favorable financial environment. Good governance and a focus on social needs and human capital are essential for developing countries to achieve the goals within their own territories.

Source: United Nations, Why Do the Millennium Development Goals Matter? New York: 2003

deep-rooted religious and cultural beliefs may make it unacceptable for a girl to express her opinions, make



decisions for herself, go out in public unaccompanied, or participate in activities with boys her own age. In some cultures, violence or “honor killings” occur when girls are believed to have shamed their families by socializing with males outside of the family.

Poverty does not have to be a barrier to educating girls

All of these factors may be exacerbated by poverty, but poverty alone is not an excuse for a nation failing to educate its girls. A number of relatively poor countries are doing an admirable job of getting girls into school, while other countries with greater resources are not doing nearly as well.

Political will has a lot to do with success – and failure – in girls’ education. This is demonstrated by the Top 10 developing countries that are doing the most to get girls into school with the fewest resources. Despite a relatively low gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, these Top 10 countries are more likely to get girls to enroll in school and to attend school in equal numbers as boys. In the Top 10 countries, women are also more likely to be literate.

In Kenya, for example – which has a per capita GDP of only \$1,020 – there are 99 girls in school for every 100 boys. Moreover, 71 percent of girls of primary school age are enrolled in school, and 76 percent of adult females are literate. Contrast this to Saudi Arabia, with a GDP per capita that is more than 12 times higher than Kenya’s. In that country, only 57 percent of girls of primary school age are enrolled in school; for every 100 boys in school there are 96 girls; and only 67 percent of adult females are literate.

Saudi Arabia is one of 10 countries below that are underperforming in girls’ education relative to their GDP.

“A” for Effort – Top 10 Exceeding expectations based on GDP			“F” for Effort – Bottom 10 Falling below expectations based on GDP		
Rank* (out of 101 countries)	Developing Country	GDP per capita	Rank* (out of 101 countries)	Developing Country	GDP per capita
1	Mongolia	\$1,710	92	Bahamas	\$16,690
2	Kenya	\$1,020	93	Dominican Republic	\$ 6,640
3	Madagascar	\$ 740	93	Iran	\$ 6,690
4	Jamaica	\$3,980	93	Tunisia	\$ 6,760
5	Tanzania	\$ 580	96	Gabon	\$ 6,590
6	Philippines	\$4,170	97	Kuwait	\$16,240
7	Lesotho	\$2,420	98	Brazil	\$ 7,700
8	Honduras	\$2,600	99	Oman	\$13,340
9	Jordan	\$4,220	100	Saudi Arabia	\$12,650
10	Zambia	\$ 840	101	Equatorial Guinea	\$29,780

*Methodology – A girls’ and women’s education index was created using the average standardized scores for each country on the indicators of girls’ net primary enrollment ratio, gender parity and adult female literacy. Each country was then ranked according to this index score. GDP per capita for each country was also ranked. The difference between the education index rank and the GDP per capita rank was then calculated. Those countries with the highest education index rank and the lowest GDP rank were placed in the “exceeding expectations” Top 10 list, while those with the highest GDP rank and the lowest education rank were placed on the “falling below expectations” Bottom 10 list.

The Power of Girls' Education to Change the Future for All Children

Research consistently shows that education for girls is one of the most effective – if not the most effective – investments a nation can make to improve the health and prosperity of present and future generations. Concrete results have been seen in the areas of child survival, HIV/AIDS, economic growth, democracy and civic participation, and protection of children during wars and natural disasters.

Helping more children survive and thrive

Educating girls saves children's lives. The more time girls spend in school, the more likely they are to grow up to be mothers who are healthy, well-nourished, economically empowered and resourceful when it comes to the health and education of their children. These women have fewer children, healthier pregnancies and safer deliveries. Their babies are more likely to survive childbirth, the vulnerable first month of life and the critical first five years – laying the foundation for healthy and productive lives.⁸

Educated girls marry later and have fewer children than uneducated girls. Studies in Africa, Asia and Latin America found that women with seven or more years of schooling married five years later than women with less or no education and had two to four fewer children.⁹

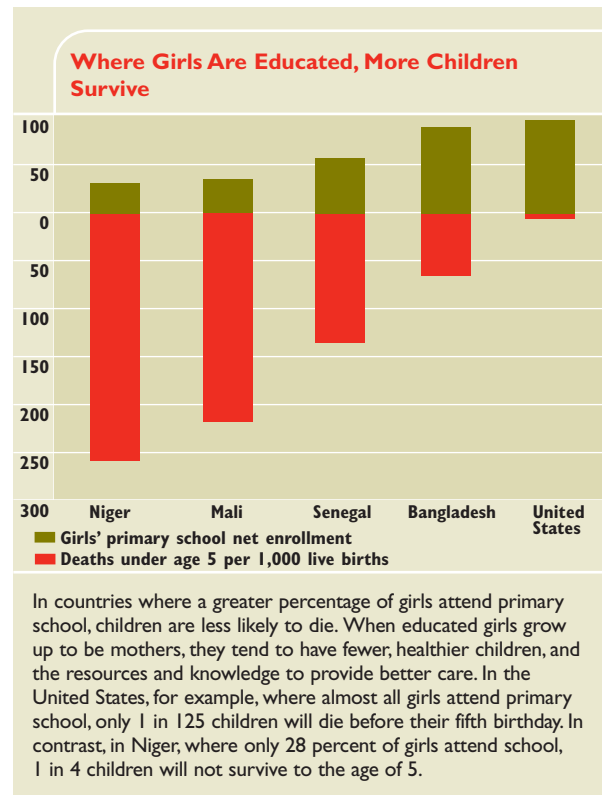
Educated women are also more likely to use contraception to delay or space their pregnancies at healthier intervals,¹⁰ which reduces the incidence of low-birthweight babies, infant death and infant malnutrition.¹¹ Two World Bank studies in Africa found that women with education – whether they were rich or poor, living in urban or rural areas – were more likely to use contraceptives. A study in Zimbabwe found that “better educated women are much more likely to have ever used a modern contraceptive method than women without any schooling.”¹² And women who have completed primary education are 20 percent more likely to use modern family planning than women who have no education, while women who have completed 12 or more years of schooling are nearly 50 percent more likely.¹³ Findings from a study in Nigeria strongly suggest that policies to raise female schooling will result in greater contraceptive use and lower fertility.¹⁴

Even small amounts of education for girls can make a significant difference in saving the lives of children under 5. It is estimated that one additional year of female schooling reduces fertility by 0.3 to 0.5 children per

woman and reduces the probability of child death by 2 percentage points.¹⁵ This means that, in a typical developing country with a population of 20 million and an under-5 mortality rate of 150 deaths per 1,000 children, giving girls one additional year of schooling would save as many as 60,000 children's lives.

In a dramatic illustration of the links between Millennium Development Goals 3 (promote gender equality) and 4 (reduce child mortality), the UN recently projected that closing the gender gap in education by 2015 would avert 31,000 child deaths in Afghanistan, 5,000 in Mali and 240,000 in India.¹⁶

Educated women tend to control a greater share of the household income, and this contributes to the well-being of all children. Mothers are more likely than fathers to



Educate a Girl and Change Her Future and That of Her Children

Critical milestones in the life of an educated woman	Compared to her unschooled peers, she is more likely to...
Before her pregnancy	• Have better personal health • Have higher economic productivity and income • Marry later • Practice family planning
During her pregnancy	• Be older and thus more physically mature during her first pregnancy • Use prenatal health care • Have better overall health and nutrition
When she gives birth	• Give birth at full-term • Have a healthier pregnancy and better care during delivery • Be less likely to die during or immediately after pregnancy • Have a child with fewer learning disabilities • Accomplish better spacing between her newborn and her next child (by breastfeeding and using modern contraception)
During her child's critical early years before beginning school	• Provide better health care for her child • Ensure better physical, social, intellectual and linguistic development for her child • Provide greater school-readiness for her child • Enroll her child in an early childhood care and development program if such an option is available in her community
When her child is school-aged	• Have her child in primary school • Enroll her child in school at the proper time • Keep her child in school • Prevent her child from being absent from school because of illness • Experience the satisfaction of having her child do well in school because of the key inputs she provides: good nutrition, proper health care, homework help and financial investment in her child's education (which she can make because she controls a greater proportion of household income than her unschooled women friends) • Be involved in a parents' association that works to improve the quality of her child's education • Have a smaller family, which enables her to invest more time and resources in the children she does have



invest their earnings in health care and in better quality food and education for both their girls and boys. One study found that the impact of income on child survival is 20 percent higher if the money is brought in by the mother than by the father.¹⁷

Educating girls also helps prevent children from dying as a result of malnutrition or disease. One study examined the factors contributing to child malnutrition in 63 developing countries and found that female education was by far the most important reason why child malnutrition decreased by 15.5 percent between 1970 and 1995.¹⁸ Another study found that children born to mothers who have been educated are half as likely to suffer from malnutrition or to die before the age of 5 as children born to mothers who did not complete primary school.¹⁹ Additional studies show educated mothers are much more likely to immunize their children.²⁰

A critical first-line of defense against AIDS

Because AIDS is a preventable disease with no known cure, basic education remains the strongest weapon against it. Girls who are educated have the knowledge and self-confidence to protect themselves against HIV and to prevent its transmission to the next generation.

More girls than boys are HIV-positive in developing countries. In Africa, for every boy newly infected with HIV, there are between three and six girls newly infected.²¹

Where girls are not educated, HIV tends to spread more rapidly. A 72-country analysis found that where the literacy gap between boys and girls is greater than 25 percent, new HIV infections are markedly higher. Where the literacy gap between boys and girls is less than 5 percent, the HIV infection outbreak level falls by 40 percent.²²

And where girls go to school, even when overall rates of HIV are high, education makes a huge difference. In high-prevalence countries such as Swaziland, for example, two thirds of teenage girls in school are free from HIV, while two thirds of out-of-school girls are HIV-positive.²³ Students tend to be less sexually active and to practice safe sex more often than their non-student contemporaries.²⁴



Simply keeping girls in school longer is an effective defense against HIV. Studies in Uganda and Zimbabwe found that girls who received primary and some secondary education had lower HIV infections rates than those who did not attend school, a trend that extended into early adulthood.²⁵

For girls and women who are reluctant to talk openly about AIDS due to its social stigma, reading becomes a life-saving skill, offering a private way to learn about risk, protection and treatment. According to a 32-country review of demographic and health surveys, women with post-primary education are five times more likely than illiterate women to know the basic facts about how HIV is spread and how to protect against it.²⁶

And when girls and women avoid becoming infected with HIV, they also avoid becoming mothers who can pass the virus on to their babies at birth. Educated mothers, even if they are infected, are more likely to seek medical care during pregnancy and to use simple, inexpensive measures during labor and immediately after childbirth that can reduce the transmission of HIV from mother to child by more than 50 percent.²⁷

Some 39 million people worldwide are living with HIV or AIDS, 25 million of whom are in sub-Saharan Africa.²⁸ The epidemic has left 15 million children orphaned.

By 2010, experts project that, without dramatic intervention, an additional 10 million children will have lost one or both parents to AIDS. The future of this epidemic may be determined by how well the world equips its children – especially girls – with the skills, knowledge and attitudes to prevent infection.

Fuel for economic growth and greater investments in children

Research consistently shows that economic growth is fueled when all children, but especially girls, attend school. During the 1990s, the nations of the world formally recognized that no country had emerged from third world status without educating its citizens, and that girls' education is strongly associated with increased economic productivity.²⁹

Access to education helps girls to gain the knowledge and skills needed to earn a livelihood, and to have fewer children, giving families greater capacity to care for the children they do have, and to save money. This savings provides new capital needed for economic growth.³⁰ It is estimated that a 1 percent increase in female education would increase the average level of GDP by 0.37 percent (by increasing the number of women working and saving money).³¹

Two separate education-related factors can be harmful to economic growth: low levels of female enrollment in school and differences between boys and girls in school enrollment (gender imbalance). Societies that have a preference for not investing in girls can pay a price for it in terms of slower growth and reduced income.³²

A boost for democracy and civic participation

Where children, both girls and boys, have access to basic education, countries are more likely to embrace democratic practices. Civil society groups – such as farmers' cooperatives, parent associations and women's self-help groups – are also more likely to flourish and act as partners with government for social improvement and economic development. When girls' education rates rise, and women participate more in civic groups and political decision-making, they tend to support changes that

The Asian Miracle

Investing in the education of young girls is considered by many international economists to be the single best investment a developing country can make to improve its social well-being and its economic prospects. Advancements in girls' education played a key role in helping transform some Asian nations during the past half-century.

In 1950, Asia's education levels and literacy rates – as well as its economic status – were roughly the same as many countries today in sub-Saharan Africa, the world's poorest region. Today, 94 percent of Asia's adult population can read and write. Four of these countries – Indonesia, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand – import American goods and services worth more than all the U.S. economic assistance dollars they received since 1961.

The striking comparison between South Korea and Pakistan illustrates the power of investing in primary education for girls and boys alike. In 1960, South Korea and Pakistan had the same per capita GDP, but South Korea had a primary school enrollment ratio of 94 percent, compared to Pakistan's 30 percent. A 94 percent overall enrollment ratio meant most girls in South Korea were going to school, while Pakistan's 30 percent enrollment ratio indicated few children were being educated, and the majority of those who did go to school were boys. By 1996, South Korea's GDP per capita was three times that of Pakistan's.³³

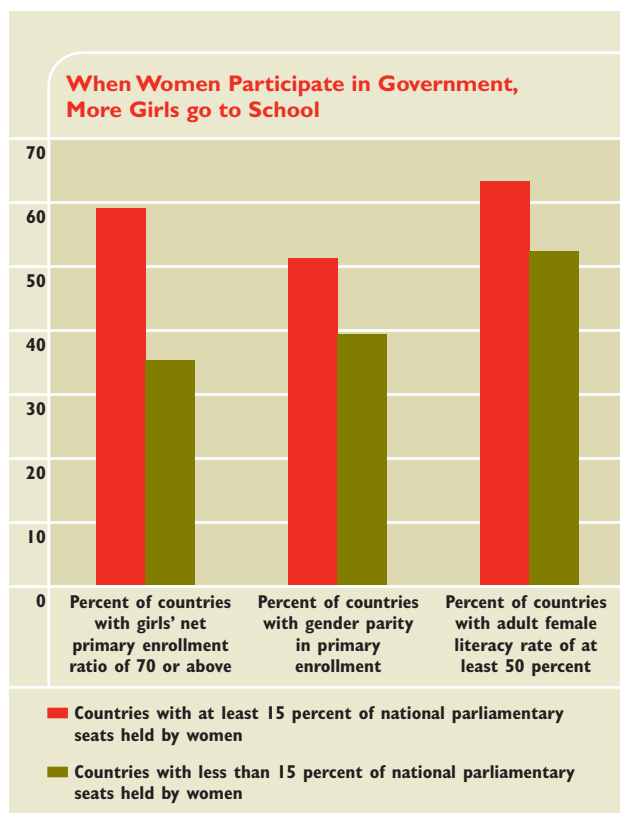
The "Asian miracle" is the world's most dramatic example of how quality education for girls, combined with increased use of family planning and improved health and nutrition can transform nations within a single generation.

Sources: Asian Development Bank (1997), East West Center Program on Population (1996), World Bank (1993) and Population Action International (www.populationaction.org)

contribute to better health, education and protections for children.

In 1999, a 100-country study found that educating girls and reducing the gender gap tend to promote democracy. It concluded that "expanded educational opportunities for females goes along with a social structure that is generally more participatory and, hence, more receptive to democracy."³⁴

Educated girls grow up to be literate women who are better prepared to make informed political choices. Education also gives them the self-confidence they need to engage in political discussion and to influence decisions. A study in Bangladesh found that educated women are three times as likely as illiterate women to participate in political meetings.³⁵ And in Nepal, almost half of rural women who completed a nine-month literacy course said that they would be confident about expressing their views to the community, compared with only 4 percent of non-literate women.³⁶



This chart depicts the percentage of developing countries that achieve three standards: 1) girls' net primary enrollment ratio of at least 70 (where at least 70 percent of primary school-aged girls go to school), 2) gender parity (where the number of girls enrolled in school is equal to or greater than the number of boys) and 3) at least 50 percent adult female literacy. Aggregate data for all developing countries for which data are available are shown.

Filling as few as 15 percent of a country's parliamentary seats with women appears to give countries a significant boost in efforts to educate girls. In a country where this level of participation is met or exceeded, girls are significantly more likely to be enrolled in school and to attend school in equal numbers as boys. Adult women in these countries are much more likely to be literate. The correlation between girls' education and women's participation in government office is particularly strong for girls' net primary enrollment, where countries reaching or exceeding the 15 percent government participation mark are 51 percent more likely to achieve a net enrollment ratio of at least 70 than those that do not.

These data suggest a virtuous cycle, where achieving high levels of education for girls and women leads to an increase in their participation in government, which in turn leads to greater efforts to enroll more girls in school.

When more girls go to school and more women participate in government, countries tend to embrace policies and programs that benefit all children and contribute to improvements for society as a whole.

When Uganda established mandatory quotas for representation of women on local councils, the allocation of funding for health facilities improved.³⁷ When Liberian women organized themselves to press for a "women's initiative," they successfully advocated for a new unit for women and children in the Ministry of Planning and convinced the Ministry of Education to start a mass literacy drive aimed at girls.³⁸ And when women in Guatemala joined forces, they successfully pushed for better policies guaranteeing health care, education and economic opportunities to women and children.³⁹

Recently, 45 women in Afghanistan – representing a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and all sectors of society – put forward an "Afghan Women's Bill of Rights" with an ambitious agenda for their country's future. Their long list of recommendations emphasized the need to guarantee education for girls, provide better health care and family planning services, protect women and girls

from gender-based violence and abuse, and improve economic opportunities for women. The bill was later presented to President Hamid Karzai, but despite assurance from leaders that it would be included in the constitution, it was not. In January 2004, however, the *loya jirga* ratified a constitution that included a clause proclaiming all Afghan citizens, men and women, "have equal rights and duties before the law."⁴⁰

Protection for vulnerable children in times of crisis and disaster

In emergency situations – such as earthquakes, floods and armed conflict – education for girls plays an especially important role in protecting against some of the worst forms of harm and abuse. Conflicts and natural disasters destabilize social infrastructure, leaving all children, and especially girls, vulnerable to threats such as sexual violence, exploitative labor and trafficking.

The lack of access to education and basic services, as well as the emotional trauma of disasters, takes an enormous toll on all children.

Experts have noted that girls dropping out of school is often one of the first indicators of stress or instability in a community. As families struggle to survive, girls are pulled from school to support the family. Insecurity can also reduce access to education, as schools may become targets for recruitment and abduction, or girls may be attacked along the path to school. Due to worries of security, the proportion of girls not attending school during a period of conflict tends to be much higher than the proportion of boys out of school. Moreover, rape is an increasingly common weapon of war in many parts of



the world. A high proportion of girls become mothers at a dangerously early age, and these girls often cannot attend school because of lack of child care, community stigma and the belief that once a girl has children she is an adult and therefore beyond the age of needing education.

New Global Challenge: Educating Children in Crisis

Save the Children has launched a new global challenge initiative to provide educational opportunities for millions of girls and boys whose schooling has been interrupted by crises, including war, conflict and natural disasters.

As a starting point, Save the Children is focusing on eight countries that have experienced recent disasters or conflicts and aims to ensure education for 3 million children currently out of school in affected areas. The first priority countries are Afghanistan, Angola, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Uganda.

Through this effort, Save the Children hopes to mobilize the international community to provide a range of education activities for millions more girls and boys. It seeks to establish education as a recognized means for protecting children against potential abuse and harm, while also offering children the opportunity to create a better future for themselves.

In Indonesia and Sri Lanka, where thousands of children, including many girls, still have not returned to school following the devastating tsunami of December 26, 2004, Save the Children is working closely with government officials to increase school enrollment at the start of the next semester later in 2005, and to provide informal education opportunities for children who cannot attend school.

Formal and informal educational opportunities for girls caught in crisis situations help both to prevent some of these tragic consequences and to heal those who have suffered. Preschools and schools can be safe places where girls and boys are out of harm's way and accounted for. Classes provide a sense of normalcy, routine and hope for the future that is critical to emotional well-being. Well-designed educational programs also introduce new survival skills – for example, children may be taught how to avoid land mines, protect themselves against sexual abuse, deal with anger or resolve interpersonal conflicts.

Keeping girls in school helps set the stage for quicker recovery once a crisis has passed. And by equipping the next generation of mothers with the knowledge and skills to raise healthy, well-educated children, it can help prevent the recurrence of violence and chaos.

There is also evidence that educated women play a vital role in helping to save lives and rebuild communities after natural disaster has struck. Where girls are educated, mothers are more likely to take the complex health measures required to protect their families' well-being. Monetary savings levels are likely to be higher, which gives families more resources to recover. And communities where women are educated are also more likely to have civil society groups to help the most vulnerable reclaim their lives.⁴¹

Educate Girls Today and Create Lasting Change for the Next Generation



Girls' Education Progress Report

Save the Children introduces a first-ever *Girls' Education Progress Report*^{*} comparing 71 developing countries on gains in girls' education. None of these countries are wealthy, but the successful ones have recognized the benefits that accrue to society when girls are educated. They have also found ways to ensure that both girls and boys have an equal chance to attend school and succeed in school. (For the complete *Girls' Education Progress Report*, with data for 71 developing countries, see Appendix A.)

The good news: Many developing countries are moving in the right direction in terms of girls' education. There is no "one-size-fits-all" solution for narrowing the gender gap and promoting equality in education, but a number of countries have made breakthroughs that have improved girls' educational access and their performance in school.

- **Bolivia**, the top-ranked country in terms of progress, succeeded in getting 30 percent more children to advance to the fifth grade between 1990 and 2000. There is almost an equal number of girls and boys in primary school compared to 1990, when girls were 10 percent less likely than boys to attend school. Bolivia enacted an Education Reform Law in 1995 that has led to significant advances. There has also been improvement in the quality of education for girls due to the introduction of new curricula, improved teacher training and better learning materials in the classrooms.⁴² (See pages 29-30 for more about what's working in Bolivia.)
- **Kenya**, the second-ranked country, has almost as many girls as boys enrolled in primary school, and has gone from a girls' gross primary enrollment ratio^{**} of 85 percent in 1990 to 95 percent in 2000. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Kenya have helped reduce many of the barriers that once kept girls out of school, including lack of money, parental attitudes, harassment by male teachers and fellow students, pregnancy and early marriage. In an effort to build on recent gains, Kenya's government introduced free primary education in 2003 and is working on additional reforms to improve access, retention and completion rates for girls.⁴³

Girls' Education Progress Report – 1990 to 2000

"A" for Progress Making greatest gains

Rank	Developing Country
1	Bolivia
2	Kenya
3	Cameroon
4	Bangladesh
4	Morocco
6	Namibia
7	Nepal
8	Togo
9	Benin
9	Madagascar

"F" for Progress Declining due to conflict, AIDS and rapid population growth

Rank	Developing Country
60	Djibouti
60	Lesotho
60	Sudan
63	Papua New Guinea
64	Ghana
65	Tanzania
66	Burundi
67	Congo
68	Eritrea
69	Malawi
70	Iraq
71	Rwanda

Countries in the Top 10 of the *Girls' Education Progress Report* have used a variety of strategies to improve female primary school enrollment rates, equalize the ratio of girls to boys in school, and increase the number of children who advance to grade five. Countries in the Bottom 12 performed poorly on those three indicators, mostly due to armed conflict, refugee influxes, rapid population growth and/or the ravages of HIV/AIDS. For the complete *Girls' Education Progress Report*, with data for 71 developing countries and the research methodology, see Appendix A.

^{*} Countries were compared against each other in terms of their performance on a set of key indicators related to girls' education over a 10-year period (1990 to 2000). Those countries that rose most in the rankings are described as "making greatest gains." Those countries that fell most sharply in the rankings are described as "declining due to conflict, AIDS and rapid population growth."

^{**} The female **gross** primary enrollment ratio measures the number of girls of any age who are enrolled in primary school. It includes girls who did not enter school at the appropriate age and girls who are not progressing through grades at the expected rate. This differs from the female **net** primary enrollment ratio, which measures the number of girls of primary school age who are enrolled in primary school. The **net** enrollment ratio is more accurate in depicting the efficiency of the school system, however it is not as widely reported by countries.



- **Cameroon**, the third-ranked country, saw an increase in children reaching grade five of over 35 percent between 1990 and 2000, and has gone from a girls' gross enrollment ratio of 84 percent to 99 percent. Cameroon's nationwide "child-friendly/girl-friendly school" initiative improved learning environments, increased enrollments and lowered drop-out rates.

- **Bangladesh**, the fourth-ranked country, boosted its girls' gross primary enrollment ratio from 64 to 98 percent between 1990 and 2000. And while only 65 percent of children who enroll in primary school make it to fifth grade, the proportion has improved significantly since 1990 when it was only 47 percent. The rise in primary school enrollment over the 1990s and the "reversal" of the gender gap in Bangladesh had much to do with girls' scholarship programs and with the expansion of NGO-managed rural schools that place an emphasis on getting girls, and children from poor families, into school. Classrooms are close to home, schedules are flexible, curricula are tailored to community priorities, and parents are actively involved in managing schools.⁴⁴ (See pages 25-26 for more about what's working in Bangladesh.)

The bad news: Developing countries severely affected by armed conflict or AIDS showed significant declines in their rankings on progress in girls' education. In the 12 countries listed below, girls were less likely to be educated in 2000 than in 1990. Nine of these countries experienced conflicts themselves and the remaining

three received large numbers of refugees from bordering conflicts. AIDS also had a devastating impact on educational opportunities for girls and boys in Burundi, Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Rwanda and Tanzania, killing teachers, leaving orphaned children without the guidance and resources needed to attend school, and imposing home and child care responsibilities on girls that prevent them from attending school. High fertility and rapidly growing populations further exacerbate the challenges to girls' education posed by conflict and AIDS.

- **Malawi's** government promised free primary school education for all children in 1994, but the country has struggled to keep that promise amid massive influxes of refugees, a crushing AIDS epidemic and rapid population growth. In order to meet the demand for basic education, Malawi needed 22,000 new teachers and 38,000 new classrooms. Despite the best efforts of the government and NGOs, this goal has not been achieved.⁴⁵ Malawi's rate of primary school entrants reaching grade five dropped over 40 percent between 1990 and 2000. The female gross primary enrollment ratio increased to 143 percent from 128 percent, indicating that girls are not beginning their schooling on time or progressing at the normal rate.

- **Tanzania** – with a GDP of only \$580 per capita – is doing an admirable job of educating girls given its very limited resources, and earned an "A" for effort in the analysis on page 10. However, progress in girls' education was hindered by one of the highest percentages of children orphaned by AIDS in the world, along with the influx of over 600,000 refugees from Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

- In **Lesotho**, there were violent protests and a military mutiny in 1998, but the AIDS epidemic has been much more devastating. Approximately 30 percent of the adult population was living with HIV at the end of 2003.⁴⁶ The infection rate had been climbing toward this level since the early 1990s, and continues to rise. High HIV prevalence is having





a severe effect on Lesotho's educational system. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of primary school children entering fifth grade has dropped by 15 percent, and girls' gross primary enrollment ratio has increased to 125, indicating that girls are not entering school on time or progressing at a normal rate. Teachers are being lost to sickness and death, and children are being orphaned at an alarming rate – with 12 percent of the country's children having lost one or both parents to AIDS.⁴⁷ Children orphaned by AIDS in Lesotho are 15 percent less likely to attend school than their counterparts who have not lost parents to the disease.⁴⁸

- **Djibouti** experienced an uprising by the Afars minority in the 1990s. The 10-year uprising ended with the signing of a peace accord in 2001. However, educational services continue to be strained by rapid population growth and the presence of more than 25,000 refugees from neighboring Somalia.
- In **Sudan**, internal conflict since the 1980s has resulted in 4 million internally displaced persons. Rapid population growth combined with numerous refugees from Chad, Eritrea and Uganda has led to declining progress in education.
- **Papua New Guinea** experienced a nine-year secessionist revolt which claimed over 20,000 lives before ending in 1997. Rapid population growth has also contributed to the country's inability to make progress in education.

- **Ghana** was doing well with regard to girls' education in 1990, and did not have far to progress compared to other developing countries. However, it has seen a drop in primary school entrants reaching grade five. A possible contributing factor is the large number of refugees in Ghana from Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.
- **Burundi** has a large number of internally displaced persons in the western part of the country. It has also experienced brutal conflict among Tutsis, Hutus and other groups. Burundi has a large number of children orphaned by AIDS and rapid population growth.
- In **Congo**, the combination of a high death toll due to AIDS, ethnic unrest in the late 1990s and rapid population growth have resulted in a dramatic drop in school enrollment.
- **Eritrea** was engaged in a border war with Ethiopia and has the fifth highest population growth rate in the world.
- In **Iraq**, years of conflict and international sanctions have resulted in fewer children reaching fifth grade and a drop in the ratio of girls to boys attending primary school.
- Civil war in **Rwanda** began in 1990. In 1994, more than 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed. Following the genocide, 2 million refugees fled the country, though most have now returned. Rwanda also has one of the world's highest percentages of children orphaned by AIDS.



Girls' Education Progress Report Rankings

Developing Country	Progress Ranking*
	1990 to 2000
Bolivia	1
Kenya	2
Cameroon	3
Bangladesh	4
Morocco	4
Namibia	6
Nepal	7
Togo	8
Benin	9
Madagascar	9
Lao People's Democratic Republic	11
Mauritania	11
Comoros	13
El Salvador	13
Guinea	13
Philippines	13
Venezuela	13
Belize	18
Mozambique	18
Tunisia	18
Chad	21
Chile	21
Mali	21
Mexico	21
Algeria	25
Botswana	25
Egypt	25
Ethiopia	25
Gambia	25
Jordan	25
Malaysia	25
Panama	25
Thailand	25
Costa Rica	34
Iran, Islamic Republic of	34
Jamaica	34
Mauritius	34
Senegal	34
South Africa	34
Syrian Arab Republic	34
Trinidad and Tobago	34
Central African Republic	42
Honduras	42
Indonesia	42
Nicaragua	42
Suriname	42
Swaziland	42
Uruguay	42
Zimbabwe	42
Paraguay	50
Turkey	50
Uganda	50
United Arab Emirates	50
Côte d'Ivoire	54
Guyana	54
Niger	54
Burkina Faso	57
Colombia	57
India	59
Djibouti	60
Lesotho	60
Sudan	60
Papua New Guinea	63
Ghana	64
Tanzania, United Republic of	65
Burundi	66
Congo	67
Eritrea	68
Malawi	69
Iraq	70
Rwanda	71

* Countries were compared against each other on three indicators: female gross primary enrollment ratio, ratio of girls to boys enrolled in school and percentage of primary school entrants reaching grade five. Scores were given to each country based on performance on the indicators. Progress Rankings are based on the percentage change in the scores between 1990 and 2000. See Appendix A for complete data and the methodology.

Bridging the Technology Gap in the United States

While girls in the United States typically perform better academically – and graduate in higher numbers – than boys, a significant gender gap has developed between boys and girls in the critical areas of science, math and technology.

Starting in middle school and throughout high school, girls generally have less access to technology and less interest in math, science and computer courses. Boys consistently outperform girls in these courses, even though it is estimated that by 2010, 65 percent of all jobs will require these skills.⁴⁹

How do we close the gap? Experts say we must do more to train teachers at all levels to encourage girls to change their attitudes toward science, math and technology.

Many girls in middle school and high school have a stereotypical view of technology as a male occupation, which reinforces their reluctance to consider careers in these areas.⁵⁰ Additionally, the myth that “math, science or technology are not for girls” remains prevalent among both male and female students throughout the country.⁵¹ By eighth grade, across all racial and ethnic groups, twice as many boys as girls are interested in careers involving math and science.⁵²

With proper training, teachers can play a key role in breaking down cultural stereotypes and building self-confidence among girls to encourage more of them to pursue careers in science and technology.

Save the Children recognizes the problem. In many of its after-school literacy programs in rural communities throughout the United States, Save the Children works to provide both girls and boys access to computers – and basic skills on how to use them – as part of its successful efforts to improve reading skills among rural children and youth.

Roadmap to a Brighter Future:

What you might see if you visited a school in the United States that had achieved gender equity.

- Displays on bulletin boards, posters and other school decorations that feature an appropriate balance between girls and boys
- Greetings and messages posted on walls that are equally inviting to girls and boys
- An appropriate balance between girls and boys who receive public praise and rewards for academic excellence or extracurricular achievement
- Classes, courses or programs that have achieved gender balance (meaning that no one sex represents more than 70 percent of enrollment)
- Standards regarding appropriate or inappropriate student behavior do not place a disproportionate share of responsibility on either boys or girls
- School discipline practices and enforcement policies are administered fairly and even-handedly without unduly burdening either boys or girls
- An appropriate balance between men and women who act as teachers, mentors and role models
- Classroom practices with supporting messages to make it clear to students and parents that teachers hold equally high academic achievement expectations of both girls and boys

Adapted from the WEEA Equity Resource Center's Resources to Infuse Equity, <http://www2.edc.org/WomensEquity/resource/title9/t9faq.htm> (2002)



Forecasts for Children

**11 COUNTRIES MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED
DUE TO INVESTMENTS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION**



Forecasts for Children

Save the Children commissioned independent research to identify those developing countries most likely to improve children's quality of life over the next decade.

The analysis uses indicators on girls' education, combined with other key "performance" factors, as a predictor for three areas critical to children's well-being: achieving smaller, healthier families; educating all children; and achieving the eight Millennium Development Goals aimed at fighting poverty, hunger and disease.

The indicators selected are closely associated with the focus of each Forecast. Countries' scores on the performance indicators were ranked, and top-scoring countries were then reviewed to determine the degree to which they had well-documented successes in expanding educational opportunities for girls. (See *notes on methodology and rationale included with each Forecast.*)

Eleven countries were identified as "most likely to succeed." Each is tackling the challenge of getting more girls into school and can expect to reap benefits such as higher child survival rates, improved health for mothers, and better standards of living. Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Egypt, Gambia, Mexico, Morocco and Vietnam represent a cross section of cultures, religions and regions, demonstrating that when the political will exists and investments are strategic, lasting positive change for children can be accomplished anywhere. Bolivia is the only country that is selected in all three Forecasts.

Forecast I – Countries that will make especially noteworthy progress in achieving smaller, healthier families

Most Likely to Succeed

Bangladesh – Pioneering efforts have boosted girls' school enrollments at all levels and improved the quality of education for girls. One result has been a drop in the number of teenage marriages.

Bolivia – Nationwide reforms raised girls' net enrollment to 97 percent. Improvements in family health and use of contraception are already being documented.

Egypt – President Mubarak has been vocal about the need to address rapid population growth, and the First Lady has helped bring issues such as reproductive health and female genital mutilation out of the realm of taboo and into the public agenda. The government is working to narrow the gender gap in education as a way to tackle the country's challenges.

Gambia – The government has made girls' education a priority and raised girls' net enrollment rates from 41 to 66 percent between 1990 and 2000. There has also been good progress toward getting equal numbers of girls and boys into school.

Morocco – Increased education levels for girls, especially in rural areas, have improved the likelihood that they will delay marriage and use family planning to have fewer, healthier children.

By investing in girls' education, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Egypt, Gambia and Morocco are increasing the percentage of women who will likely use modern contraception to space births at healthy intervals, which has been shown to result in fewer deaths among newborns, infants and young children. Investments in girls' education are also helping these countries guarantee the health of future generations by equipping mothers with the knowledge and skills to fight disease, seek medical care when

Methodology: The following indicators were used to construct an unweighted index: 10-year gains in female net enrollment ratios; 10-year gains in gender parity ratios; percentage of women using modern contraception. Countries were then ranked on their index scores. Any country with a low index score on any other Forecast-related index was discarded. Among remaining countries, those that had well-documented programs related to the expansion of educational opportunities for girls along with well-documented results for these programs were highlighted in the Forecast.

Rationale: Modern contraceptive use is directly related to family spacing. Gender parity contributes to enhanced status for women and girls. Greater status helps women gain a greater voice in household decision-making, including decisions about family size and the allocation of household resources for investments in children's health and well-being. Female enrollment ratios are a proxy measure for educational attainment. Mothers with higher levels of educational attainment provide better health care for their children.



needed, use family planning and raise well-nourished children.

The five countries identified in this Forecast have invested in successful educational reforms to get more girls into school and to keep them there once they've started. These countries can expect improvements in girls' enrollments, along with increased use of contraceptives to achieve smaller, healthier families.

Women with secondary education tend to have significantly fewer children than women with no schooling. Girls who receive a secondary education marry later and space their pregnancies better, reducing health risks to both mother and child, and allowing families to invest more in the well-being of each child.

Case in point – Bangladesh

As a result of government and nongovernmental (NGO) action over the past two decades, primary school enrollment rates in Bangladesh have improved

dramatically for both girls and boys, and gender parity in primary education has been reached. Government efforts have included a World Bank-funded secondary school stipend for girls, the 1990 elimination of school fees for girls in grades six through eight, deliberate efforts to increase the number of female teachers, and the Food for Education Program. In the NGO arena, the much-acclaimed community schools program organized by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) has been successful in delivering education to girls and poor children and has been replicated in other parts of the world.

The barriers to girls' education in Bangladesh include early marriage and household and agricultural responsibilities.⁵³ Dowry and marriage costs can equal a year or more of a family's annual income, and can compete with educational spending for girls. Traditionally, educating girls was often seen as contrary to cultural values. Moreover, the absence of girl-friendly school facilities also serves as a barrier.⁵⁴

The Food for Education program was begun by the government of Bangladesh in 1993 and was the first of its kind globally. The program addressed a dilemma commonly faced by rural families: having to forego

"My Life is Totally Different"

Shamina, like most women in the remote village of Nasirnagar in Bangladesh, grew up in a large, very poor family. She had eight brothers and sisters, and her family could only afford to educate her through grade 10. But that was enough schooling to change her outlook and her prospects.

Shamina is a teacher in a community-based pre-school supported by Save the Children. She believes every girl has the right to go outside of the home for an education, and that girls can do the same work that boys do. "I have a cousin who never went to school and stays at home," says Shamina. "She is living a miserable life."

In an area where the average woman has four or five children, Shamina and her husband Kanchan have decided to use contraceptives in order to have only one child. "My mother had many children and very little money," she says. "My life is totally different – I have only one child and I can manage well. I buy him toys, play with him, read storybooks to him and take him for walks outside." Shamina's plan is to prepare her son for school at home first, then enroll him in primary school and closely monitor his progress, maintaining regular contact with his teachers.

She also wants to establish herself as a respected teacher in the community and dreams of the day when she will be able to go to the university.



Shamina and her husband Kanchan think one child is enough. Four-year-old Tonmoy gets lots of intellectual stimulation at home to prepare him for school.

Fulfilling Her Dream of an Education

Om Kalsoum was an illiterate 14-year-old girl from the rural village of Daqouf in Upper Egypt when she joined Save the Children's Ishraq program in 2001. Her parents didn't believe in girls' education and refused to enroll Om Kalsoum and her sisters at the local school. "I used to cry when I saw the girls walking to school in their uniforms. I wished I could be like them," she says. "My biggest dream in life was to become educated."

Ishraq, meaning "sunrise" in Arabic, gives rural adolescent girls a safe place to socialize with their peers as they learn about life skills and gain self-confidence. The program combines literacy, sports and health education to prepare disadvantaged rural girls to make informed, positive decisions about issues such as schooling, marriage, family size and careers.

Om Kalsoum was elated when she heard that the new girls' education program was being started in her village. An uncle, who was a member of the project committee, convinced her parents of the importance of education for girls and enrolled her in the program. So Om Kalsoum, who normally only left the house to visit relatives, began going to the youth center, where she and her peers learned to read and write, and were presented with topics relevant to their own lives and health.

Om Kalsoum flourished in the program and went on to pass the adult educational examination. Today, she is continuing her studies and talks enthusiastically about her dreams of becoming an Arabic teacher and expanding a bakery she opened using business skills she learned through Ishraq. Om Kalsoum has convinced her family to postpone her marriage until she completes high school and she talks confidently of her ability to be a good mother. "I want only two children so that I can be sure to provide them with everything they need, especially a good education."



Om Kalsoum attended a "second chance" program for teenage girls who missed out on schooling. She now knows how to read and write and is running a successful bakery.

primary education for children because of the crucial contributions that children – especially girls – make to household income and livelihood. Families participating in the program received varying quantities of wheat and rice, depending on the number of children enrolled in school. Children were required to attend school at least 85 percent of the time in order for families to receive the food. As of 2001, the program covered about 27 percent of all primary schools and provided benefits to about 13 percent of all students enrolled. The program serves both government and non-governmental primary schools.

A study conducted by the International Food Policy Research Institute found that over a two-year period, children who participated in the Food for Education program increased overall enrollment rates by 35 percent and increased female enrollments by 44 percent. In addition, the study noted the critical links between nutritional status and learning potential and documented improved nutrition and health among all children of participating families, including pre-schoolers.⁵⁵

Bangladesh also launched a stipend program in 1994 that has produced dramatic increases in the number of girls in secondary school. The project reaches out to the poorest families and gives them an incentive to keep girls in school. Stipends, available to girls as they progress from grades 6 to 10, cover tuition, examination costs, and a portion of school fees, textbooks, school supplies,

uniforms, shoes, transport and kerosene (for lamps). The program is increasing the number of secondary education teachers, particularly females; providing occupational skills training to girls who are about to graduate; making schools more attractive to girls by providing healthier and safer settings; and strengthening government institutions for secondary education. One important outcome of the stipend program is a drop in the number of teenage marriages.⁵⁶

As a result of all these efforts combined, the net primary enrollment rate in Bangladesh rose from 64 percent in 1990 to 87 percent in 2001. In the years 2000 and 2001, the gender gap was tipped slightly in favor of girls at 102 percent. For the same year, the net enrollment rate for girls in primary school reached 88 percent.⁵⁷ Bangladesh is also doing well when it comes to family planning. With 43 percent of women using modern contraception, Bangladesh ranks in the top third among developing countries on this indicator. (See *the Complete Mothers' Index*, Appendix B.)

Case in point – Egypt

The education system in Egypt is the largest in the Middle East and North Africa and among the largest in the world. With the help of international donors, the government of Egypt made significant investments in education in the 1980s and 1990s through initiatives geared mainly at improving coverage in rural areas.⁵⁸



However, despite good progress, a considerable gender gap between female and male enrollment persisted in poor and rural areas.

In culturally conservative rural areas of Egypt, barriers to girls' education are similar to those in many developing countries: long distances to schools, lack of sanitary facilities, presence of male teachers, teachers' use of corporal punishment, girls being needed at home for domestic responsibilities, early marriage of daughters, and families prioritizing boys' education when resources are scarce.⁵⁹

With the support of the World Bank and the European Union, the Egyptian government launched the Education Enhancement Program to increase girls' enrollment in poor areas. They built more schools to reduce the distance girls would have to travel. They encouraged parental support for girls' education through community mobilization and awareness campaigns and a stipend program to cover the cost of school supplies for girls from especially disadvantaged families. They also created a "second chance schooling" program to reach girls who

had dropped out of the school system or were too old for primary school.

As a result, the gross enrollment rates for girls increased by 10 percent from the 1996/1997 to the 2002/2003 school years. The primary level net enrollment rate⁶⁰ for girls increased from 83 percent in the 1996/1997 school year to approximately 89 percent for the 1999/2000 school year. At the preparatory level (ages 11 to 13), the national girls' enrollment rate increased from 60 percent in 1996/1997 to 68 percent in 1999/2000. The overall drop-out rate for both girls and boys decreased over the course of the awareness campaigns (1999 to 2003) from 9 percent before the campaigns began to 4 percent in 2003. Student to teacher ratios also improved, a factor which Egyptian studies had shown was particularly important for improving girls' enrollment.⁶¹

Egypt is also doing well when it comes to family planning. With 54 percent of women using modern contraception, Egypt ranks in the top third among developing countries on this indicator. (See the *Complete Mothers' Index*, Appendix B.)

Forecast 2 – Countries that will make especially noteworthy progress in educating all children

Most Likely to Succeed

Belize – Spends 20 percent of its national budget on education and has seen a recent increase in the number of girls reaching grade five.

Benin – Spends 31 percent of its budget on education and has launched sweeping educational reforms that emphasize education for girls.

Bolivia – Spends 24 percent of its budget on education and has a strong record of success in getting girls into school and keeping them there.

Morocco – Spends 18 percent of its budget on education and has launched initiatives to modernize the education system. Scholarships increase opportunities for girls to attend middle school and the government is expanding on this success by guaranteeing the girls a place in high school dormitories when they graduate from middle school.

The governments of Belize, Benin, Bolivia and Morocco recognize that educating girls promotes education for all. Many studies have shown that when an educated girl grows up to be an educated mother, she is more likely to send her girls, as well as boys, to school. She is also better prepared to provide intellectual stimulation to her children outside of the classroom, to help with homework and to be involved in parents' groups that work to improve the quality of education for all.

Women's education generally has more impact than men's education on their children's schooling.⁶² One study recently found that children with educated mothers tend to study two more hours per day than children of uneducated mothers.⁶³

The four countries identified in this Forecast have made effective reforms and committed significant resources to improving educational opportunities for all girls and boys. They know that when parents, in particular

mothers, are educated, their children – both boys and girls – have a greater chance of going to school and doing well there. By investing in girls' education now, these countries are helping to ensure that future generations will receive the schooling they deserve.

Case in point – Benin

The small West African nation of Benin is among the world's poorest countries, yet it allocates almost one third of its central government budget to education – a higher percentage than any other African country.⁶⁴

In recent years, Benin, with the help of the international donor community, has been engaged in a sweeping educational reform with a strong emphasis on education for girls. Projects were launched to improve the quality of basic education through better teacher training, curriculum reform, textbook distribution and heightened community involvement in education. Mothers' associations were introduced to encourage a special focus on girls' education and equity. School canteens – supported in part by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and World Food Programme contributions – were developed to reduce the opportunity costs of school attendance and to ensure that learning would not be impeded by hunger or

Methodology: The following indicators were used to construct an unweighted index: 10-year gains in percentage of budget spent on education; 10-year gains in female net enrollment ratios; 10-year gains in overall primary school completion rates. Countries were then ranked on their index scores. Any country with a low index score on any other Forecast-related index was discarded. Among remaining countries, those that had well-documented programs related to the expansion of educational opportunities for all children (and for girls in particular) along with well-documented results for these programs were highlighted in the Forecast.

Rationale: Government spending on education (as a proportion of total budget) is a strong and direct measure of a government's commitment to achieving education for all. Female net enrollment ratios are a strong indicator of whether children are starting school on time and making satisfactory academic progress over time. Increases in overall completion rates are a good indicator of future educational demand. There is a strong relationship between a mother's educational attainment and the decision to send a child to school.



malnutrition. And the Community Action for Girls' Education (CAGE) project – funded by USAID and implemented by World Learning – works with communities in Benin to remove obstacles in households and communities that prevent girls from attending primary school.

As part of Benin's intensive effort to extend educational opportunities to all its young citizens, many pilot projects have been initiated. For example, Education and Community (EDUCOM) covers approximately 25,000 pupils in 140 schools in 100 villages. This project allows the community, through direct involvement in school life, to take responsibility for school oversight and to maintain girls in the system. Partnership contracts and micro-plans emphasizing girls' education are made between schools and communities. Teachers, parents and village council members are engaged in the planning process. Older girls mentor younger girls who are at risk of dropping out. Support is given to training for teachers on gender sensitivity, to parents' associations on school management, and to village councils on increasing female participation.⁶⁵

In the rural regions of Benin, adults earn an average of \$164 a year. To send one child to primary school for a year – including fees and supplies – costs \$24. To lessen this burden, the Beninese government waived primary school fees for girls. This "scholarship" had a positive impact on getting girls to school who otherwise would not have attended.⁶⁶

Meanwhile, the CAGE initiative is focusing on obstacles at the household and community level, such as parents' expectations for girls (girls are often expected to marry at a younger age than boys and to carry more household responsibilities) as well as other physical deterrents from regular attendance (distance of travel to

school, unsafe roads on the way to school, poor sanitary conditions at school, no food available at school). Solutions to these obstacles include building study spaces, campaigns to educate the community about family planning, forming study groups with tutors and building community schools. The design of the CAGE project is flexible. When project staff approach a community, they do not have preconceived solutions in mind. Rather, they insist that the communities arrive at their own project designs through a process of collective analysis of goals and discussion of means available.⁶⁷

The result of these investments has been substantial progress in meeting the nation's educational targets.

The enrollment rate increased from 88 percent of school-aged children in 2001 to 93 percent in 2002. Girls' enrollment improved from 72 percent to 77 percent for the same period. Targets for promotion rates have also been met.⁶⁸ Some 1,200 parents' associations participate actively in the management of school operations.⁶⁹

Historically, Benin has had one of the largest gender gaps in the world. While this gap has not yet been closed, overall school enrollment has steadily improved. In 1990, there were two boys for every girl in school. Today, there are nearly four girls for every five boys in most primary schools.⁷⁰

Forecast 3 – Countries most likely to meet Millennium Development Goal targets

Most Likely to Succeed

Bolivia – Greater female literacy is leading to a host of development outcomes intimately linked to meeting the MDGs: progress in children's education, family health, reproductive health and women's participation in the economy and in community decision-making.

Costa Rica – Has for many decades put a high priority on health care and education, with an emphasis on areas where girls lagged behind boys. Practically the entire population is literate and women hold 35 percent of parliamentary seats.

Cuba – With an adult female literacy rate of 97 percent, 36 percent of parliamentary seats held by women, and relatively strong investments in health care, Cuba stands to outperform most other developing countries on the MDG targets.

Mexico – Devotes 25 percent of its government spending to education, has an adult female literacy rate of 89 percent, and 21 percent of parliamentary seats are held by women.

Vietnam – Is highly committed to educating all children, and has doubled the proportion of GDP spent on education. The adult female literacy rate is 87 percent, and 27 percent of parliamentary seats are held by women.

In 2000, all 189 United Nations member states committed to eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to tackle poverty, hunger and disease by 2015. Many experts agree that education is a prerequisite for progress on each of the MDGs, and that girls' education is an especially powerful lever to move the world towards a better future. (*For descriptions of the Millennium Development Goals, see page 9.*)

Bolivia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico and Vietnam are all on track to meet many of the MDG targets in the coming

10 years, thanks in large part to their commitment to girls' education. By ensuring their girls go to school, these countries have vastly improved their ability to fight poverty, prevent illiteracy, reduce hunger, ensure education for all, achieve gender equality, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health and combat disease.

Case in point – Bolivia

Bolivia enacted an Education Reform Law in 1995 that is making needed changes in the country's basic education system. Significant advances include the increase in coverage and retention rates for primary school, improvement in the quality of education due to the implementation of new intercultural curricula; improved teacher training; construction and rehabilitation of school facilities, and the provision of better materials for schools. The law also explicitly addresses the need for gender equality in its goals and objectives.

Immediately prior to the reform's adoption, the educational picture in Bolivia was bleak. The net enrollment ratio for both boys and girls was only 65 percent. In total, only 10 percent of the primary school age group was completing the cycle. About 20 percent of the adult population was illiterate (having never attended school) while another 35 percent was estimated to be functionally illiterate. On average, the adult population had less than five years of schooling.⁷¹ Nearly 70 percent of indigenous girls never finished primary school. And among those who were enrolled, dropout rates for girls were considerably higher than for boys in both rural and urban areas.⁷²

To tackle these challenges, Bolivia focused special attention on rural indigenous girls. Outreach to parents and community leaders built awareness of the importance of educating girls. Monetary incentives were

Studying for a Better Future

The children of Oruro – a town high in Bolivia's Altiplano – are some of the poorest in all of South America. For decades, educational achievement, nutritional status and life expectancy have been below the standards for the rest of South America, and for Bolivia as a whole.

Things are changing in Bolivia now, and 10-year-old Daniela is just one example of how girls' education is contributing to a brighter future. A generation ago, chances are that Daniela would have been among the 70 percent of indigenous girls who never completed primary school. Today, she is an enthusiastic fifth grader in the Carmen Guzmán de Mier School, which is supported by Save the Children, and Daniela has her sights set on a professional career.

"My favorite subjects are mathematics and technology," says Daniela. "And I enjoy the multiple-purpose classroom, which we call the library. It has games and books that we can use. If I weren't studying, I would have to go to the field to take care of sheep just like my friend Marlene. She does not go to school and she does not speak Spanish."

"When I grow up, I want to be a lawyer or an engineer. If I don't study I will have to work as a household servant in other people's homes. I want my life to be different than my mother's life." Daniela expects that when she becomes a professional, she will have enough money to help her family and pay for health care if she gets sick. She would like to get married when she is 25 and have two children, a boy and a girl. "When I have children, they will have better opportunities than I did, because I will educate them."



"It's important that girls and boys receive the same education, because it helps us to learn to work together," says Daniela, a fifth-grader in Oruro, Bolivia.

provided to supplement family income and offset the direct and indirect costs of schooling. Bilingual teaching materials were distributed and bilingual teachers were trained so that monolingual indigenous children would have a smoother transition from home to the school environment. And school schedules were revamped so that school days would not coincide with the busy harvest season when children are frequently

Methodology: The following indicators were used to construct an unweighted index: current percentage of women parliamentarians; current female literacy levels; current proportion of national budget allocated to education. Countries were then ranked on their index scores. Any country with a low index score on any other Forecast-related index was discarded. Among remaining countries, those that had well-documented programs related to the expansion of educational opportunities for all children (and for girls in particular) along with well-documented results for these programs were highlighted in the Forecast.

Rationale: The percentage of women parliamentarians appears to both influence and benefit from girls' enrollment rates and gender parity. Developing countries with women in government do better on basic indicators related to girls' access to and participation in education. There is also a positive correlation between female literacy and female parliamentarians (see chart on page 15). Government spending on education (as a proportion of total budget) is a strong and direct measure of a government's commitment to achieving education for all. Educational attainment is a prerequisite for most of the Millennium Development Goals. To achieve the goals, low-income countries must ensure that each person has the essential means for leading a productive life. This, in turn, is dependent upon skills and knowledge as well as the ability to exercise one's political, social and economic rights. Schooling has been shown to make a substantial contribution in each of these areas.

withdrawn from school to help in the fields or with chores in the home.

The Education Reform Law, together with the special efforts made to reach girls most likely to never attend school, have produced dramatic changes that favor Bolivia's future development. Net enrollment rates rose from 65 to 94 percent. Girls and boys achieved the same net enrollment levels, thus closing a significant gender gap. Completion rates (the percentage of students completing the primary school cycle) rose from 10 to 78 percent, due in large measure to the increased participation in schooling by girls.⁷³

A long-term study, completed in 2002, examined the impact of improved women's literacy and access to basic education in Bolivia. Particular attention was given to how improved educational opportunities for women influenced their children's education, family health and reproductive health, participation in economic activities, household decision-making, community participation, and awareness of legal rights.⁷⁴ The research affirms that, within the Bolivian context, greater female literacy leads to a host of development outcomes intimately linked to meeting the Millennium Development Goals.



Take Action for Girls! Make a World of Difference for All Children

Worldwide, an estimated 103 million primary school-aged children are not attending school, and 58 million of them are girls, despite United Nations targets set five years ago to get all primary-aged children into school.

Research has shown that education is a prerequisite for progress on each of the Millennium Development Goals, and that girls' education is an especially powerful lever to move the world towards a better future. By ensuring that girls everywhere go to school, communities vastly improve their ability to fight poverty, prevent illiteracy, reduce hunger, ensure education for all, achieve gender equality, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health and combat disease.

Help us build a better future for all children:

- **Contact President Bush and your congressional representatives.** Urge them to support a commitment to double U.S. government funding for basic education in developing countries to \$800 million for fiscal year 2006. Visit www.savethechildren.org to learn more about this legislative initiative and how to write or e-mail an effective letter to policymakers.
- **Influence world leaders to achieve a breakthrough in the Millennium Development Goals for education.** Ask your member of Congress to sign a letter to the President urging him to commit major resources for education at the G8 World Leaders Summit in July 2005. It is easy! Go to www.savethechildren.org/action to send your letter.
- **Speak out in your local media.** Spread the word in your community about the need to address the global problem of girls missing out on school. Write a letter

Education for All

Save the Children is working through the Basic Education Coalition to build global support to guarantee education for all the world's children. The countries of the world have recognized the vital role that education plays in growing economies, fighting poverty, promoting health and security for future generations. World leaders have agreed to the broad goal of "Education for All" by the year 2015. The Basic Education Coalition is urging the United States to demonstrate leadership towards this goal by doubling U.S. government funding for basic education to \$800 million for fiscal year 2006. For more information, visit www.basiced.org



to your local newspaper about the importance of programs in developing countries to enroll and keep girls in school.

- **Join the Save the Children Action Network** to receive monthly e-mail updates on legislative issues regarding education as well as other critical policy issues affecting children. Learn about ways that you can get involved and make your voice heard. To sign up visit: www.savethechildren.org/action
- **Support on-the-ground programs that work.** Visit www.savethechildren.org to learn more and do more!

www.savethechildren.org

Appendix A

GIRLS' EDUCATION PROGRESS REPORT



The first-ever Girls' Education Progress Report looks at 71 developing countries and documents which countries are making gains in girls' education and which are losing ground.

This analysis uses three indicators, each of which shows a different dimension of girls' education:

- **Female gross primary school enrollment ratio** – measures the number of girls in school compared to the number of girls who should be in school. When the gross enrollment ratio is examined in light of information about the size of the school-aged population, we can detect whether girls are starting school and moving through grades at the expected ages. Enrolling at an older-than-appropriate age and repeating grades are two strong measures of failure to make appropriate academic progress.
- **Ratio of girls to boys enrolled in school** – measures whether girls are more or less likely than boys to be attending school. A score of 1 means equal

numbers of girls and boys are enrolled; a score of less than 1 means girls are lagging behind boys; and a score of more than 1 means girls are outperforming boys.

- **Percentage of primary school entrants reaching grade five** – measures how well all children do once they're in school, by looking at the percentage who advance to grade five.

Data from 1990 and 2000 were compared to see whether each country went forward, backward or stayed roughly in the same place with regard to girls' education. The countries were then ranked from 1 to 71, with the lower rankings given to countries making the most progress in educating girls and the higher rankings given to countries showing the greatest declines.

Developing Country	Complete Girls' Education Progress Report						Rankings		
	Female gross primary school enrollment ratio (expressed as a percent)		Ratio of girls to boys enrolled in school		% of primary school entrants reaching grade five		Girls' Education Ranking		Progress Ranking (based on % change in analysis scores)**
	1990*	2000**	1990	2000	1990*	2000**	1990	2000	1990 to 2000
Algeria	100	104	0.85	0.92	95	96	19	16	25
Bangladesh	64	98	0.86	1.01	47	65	61	28	4
Belize	118	116	0.98	0.97	70	81	32	31	18
Benin	52	86	0.50	0.68	61	84	65	57	9
Bolivia	90	113	0.91	0.99	60	78	40	26	1
Botswana	117	103	1.07	1.00	89	89	9	8	25
Burkina Faso	30	36	0.62	0.71	79	64	64	68	57
Burundi	63	62	0.84	0.80	74	64	48	63	66
Cameroon	84	99	0.86	0.87	60	81	44	38	3
Central African Republic	46	53	0.63	0.69	24	24	70	71	42
Chad	36	57	0.45	0.63	28	45	71	70	21
Chile	98	101	0.98	0.98	92	100	8	3	21
Colombia	114	109	1.15	1.00	58	61	25	35	57
Comoros	71	81	0.73	0.87	78	77	49	45	13
Congo	109	83	0.88	0.92	54	55	42	51	67
Costa Rica	106	108	0.99	0.97	89	94	9	11	34
Côte d'Ivoire	58	68	0.71	0.76	73	69	58	62	54
Djibouti	33	35	0.71	0.76	94	86	59	66	60
Egypt	93	94	0.85	0.93	98	99	22	19	25
El Salvador	89	109	1.01	0.96	58	67	37	38	13
Eritrea	51	54	0.94	0.82	79	69	46	64	68
Ethiopia	24	53	0.66	0.69	51	61	69	67	25
Gambia	67	75	0.68	0.91	87	70	52	49	25
Ghana	70	78	0.83	0.91	80	66	43	50	64
Guinea	34	66	0.47	0.72	80	84	67	60	13
Guyana	93	118	0.99	0.97	93	95	12	23	54
Honduras	112	107	1.05	1.02	60	58	31	33	42

Continued on next page

Developing Country	Complete Girls' Education Progress Report						Rankings		
	Female gross primary school enrollment ratio (expressed as a percent)		Ratio of girls to boys enrolled in school		% of primary school entrants reaching grade five		Girls' Education Ranking		Progress Ranking (based on % change in analysis scores)***
	1990*	2000**	1990	2000	1990*	2000**	1990	2000	1990 to 2000
India	90	90	0.76	0.83	62	59	47	54	59
Indonesia	112	110	0.98	0.98	90	89	13	18	42
Iran, Islamic Republic of	96	90	0.89	0.96	90	94	22	22	34
Iraq	83	89	0.85	0.82	72	66	41	52	70
Jamaica	109	100	0.99	0.99	96	90	6	9	34
Jordan	95	99	1.01	1.00	98	98	4	2	25
Kenya	85	95	0.95	0.99	68	71	38	29	2
Lao People's Democratic Republic	91	106	0.79	0.86	53	62	49	44	11
Lesotho	105	125	1.22	1.05	79	67	1	40	60
Madagascar	70	102	0.98	0.96	28	34	59	46	9
Malawi	128	143	0.84	0.98	94	54	34	56	69
Malaysia	92	95	1.00	1.00	94	97	9	7	25
Mali	27	49	0.59	0.72	72	84	66	65	21
Mauritania	72	85	0.74	0.93	63	55	56	48	11
Mauritius	106	106	1.00	1.00	99	99	2	1	34
Mexico	113	110	0.98	0.99	84	90	20	13	21
Morocco	71	101	0.69	0.87	78	84	54	34	4
Mozambique	50	87	0.75	0.76	47	52	63	60	18
Namibia	134	106	1.09	1.01	82	94	26	4	6
Nepal	89	113	0.61	0.85	52	78	62	42	7
Nicaragua	112	105	1.06	1.01	54	54	33	35	42
Niger	22	32	0.58	0.68	77	71	67	69	54
Panama	104	108	0.96	0.97	82	89	18	17	25
Papua New Guinea	74	78	0.94	0.91	59	60	44	53	63
Paraguay	107	110	0.97	0.96	71	77	28	29	50
Philippines	112	111	0.99	1.00	70	79	30	25	13
Rwanda	81	116	0.98	0.99	60	40	39	47	71
Senegal	62	72	0.73	0.89	81	68	54	55	34
South Africa	116	103	0.98	0.95	65	65	35	37	34
Sudan	48	54	0.77	0.85	94	84	49	58	60
Suriname	125	125	1.00	1.00	99	99	13	20	42
Swaziland	119	98	0.98	0.95	78	74	29	31	42
Syrian Arab Republic	95	108	0.90	0.93	91	92	20	21	34
Tanzania, United Republic of	66	69	0.98	1.00	83	78	36	41	65
Thailand	96	96	0.95	0.96	88	94	16	15	25
Togo	118	112	0.66	0.80	71	84	53	43	8
Trinidad and Tobago	102	104	0.99	0.98	95	98	5	5	34
Tunisia	112	109	0.89	0.96	92	95	24	13	18
Turkey	102	91	0.94	0.92	89	99	13	24	50
Uganda	67	134	0.80	0.90	55	45	57	59	50
United Arab Emirates	93	90	1.03	1.00	98	97	3	10	50
Uruguay	110	107	0.99	0.98	94	89	7	12	42
Venezuela	96	105	1.03	0.98	78	96	17	6	13
Zimbabwe	114	98	0.99	0.97	76	73	27	27	42

* Data from 1990 to 1996

** Data from 1998 to 2002

*** Progress Rankings are based on percentage change in the analysis scores for 1990 and 2000, not the number of places the country moved in the rankings between those years.

1. Data for developing countries were gathered for three indicators of girls' education. These indicators include:

Female gross primary enrollment ratio

The gross primary enrollment ratio is the total number of girls enrolled in primary school, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the total number of girls of primary school age. The ratio includes girls who are repeating grades and have enrolled late. This is why it is possible to have a ratio above 100. Data are from 1990-1996 and 1998-2002.

1990 Source: UNICEF 1999. *The State of the World's Children 1999* (Table 4). Available online at: http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/pub_sowc99_en.pdf
2000 Source: UNICEF 2004. *The State of the World's Children 2005* (Table 5). Available online at: http://www.unicef.org/sowc05/english/sowc05_Tables.pdf

Ratio of girls to boys enrolled in school

This gross enrollment ratio in primary education – or gender parity index – is the ratio of girls to boys enrolled in primary school. A ratio of 1.02 indicates more girls than boys are enrolled, while a ratio of .98 indicates the opposite. Data are from 1990 and 2000.

1990 & 2000 Source: UNESCO 2003. *EFA Global Monitoring Report* (Table 5). Available online at: http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=24188&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

Percent of primary school entrants reaching grade five

Data for the 1990 index are from 1990 to 1995. Data for the 2000 index are from 1998 to 2001.

1990 Source: UNICEF 1999. *The State of the World's Children 1999* (Table 4). Available online at: http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/pub_sowc99_en.pdf
2000 Source: UNICEF 2004. *The State of the World's Children 2005* (Table 5). Available online at: http://www.unicef.org/sowc05/english/sowc05_Tables.pdf

2. Standard scores, or Z-scores, were created for each of the indicators using the following formula:

$$Z = \frac{X - \bar{X}}{S}$$

where Z = The standard, or Z-score
X = The score to be converted
 $\bar{X}$ = The mean of the distribution
S = The standard deviation of the distribution



3. To avoid rewarding school systems where pupils do not start on time or progress through the system, gross enrollment ratios between 100 and 105 percent were discounted to 100 percent. Gross enrollment ratios over 105 percent were discounted to 100 and any amount over 105 percent was subtracted from 100 (for example, a country with a gross enrollment rate of 107 percent would be discounted to 100-(107-105), or 98.)

4. Z-scores were divided by the range of Z-scores for each variable in order to control for differences in the range of possible scores. These percentage scores (that is, the actual score as percent of range of scores) were then averaged to create index scores.

5. Developing countries missing any one of the indicators were eliminated. Developing countries with a per capita gross domestic product (purchasing power parity) of greater than \$12,500 were eliminated, as were those with a total population under 250,000.

6. The *Girls' Education Progress Report* was calculated as a weighted average of primary school entrants reaching grade five (33 percent), female gross primary enrollment (34 percent) and gross primary enrollment gender parity (33 percent).

7. The percent change between 1990 and 2000 for each country was calculated by dividing the country's difference in scores between the two years by the absolute value of the 1990 score. The percent changes were ranked.

8. Data analysis was conducted using Microsoft Excel software.

Appendix B

THE MOTHERS' INDEX & COUNTRY RANKINGS



The sixth annual *Mothers' Index* helps document conditions for mothers and children in 110 countries – 19 developed nations and 91 in the developing world – and shows where mothers fare best and where they face the greatest hardships. All countries for which sufficient data were available are included in the *Index*.

Why should Save the Children be so concerned with mothers? Because more than 70 years of field experience has taught us that the quality of children's lives depends on the health, security and well-being of their mothers. In short, providing mothers with access to education, economic opportunities and maternal and child health care, including family planning, gives mothers and their children the best chance to survive and thrive.

The *Index* relies on information published by governments, research institutions and international agencies. *The Complete Mothers' Index*, based on a composite of separate indices for women's and children's well-being, appears in the fold-out table in this Appendix. A full description of the research methodology and individual indicators (briefly described below) appears after the fold-out.

The six indicators of women's well-being are:

- Lifetime risk of maternal mortality
- Percent of women using modern contraception
- Percent of births attended by trained personnel
- Percent of pregnant women with anemia
- Adult female literacy rate
- Participation of women in national government

The four indicators of children's well-being are:

- Infant mortality rate
- Gross primary enrollment ratio
- Percent of population with access to safe water
- Percent of children under age 5 suffering from moderate or severe nutritional wasting

Scandinavian countries "sweep" the top positions while countries in sub-Saharan Africa dominate the lowest tier. While industrialized countries cluster tightly at the top of the *Index* – with the majority of these countries performing well on all indicators – the highest-ranking countries attain very high scores for mothers' and children's health and educational status. The United States places 11th this year.

The 10 bottom-ranked countries in this year's *Mothers' Index* are a reverse image of the top 10, performing poorly on all indicators. Conditions for mothers and their children in these countries are devastating.

- On average, 1 in 19 mothers will die in her lifetime from pregnancy-related causes.
- 1 in 10 children dies before his or her first birthday.
- 1 in 8 children suffers from malnutrition.
- Nearly 1 in 4 children is not attending primary school.
- Only 1 in 3 adult women is literate.

2005 Mothers' Index

Top 10*

Rank	Country
1	Sweden
2	Denmark
3	Finland
4	Austria
5	Germany
6	Netherlands
7	Norway
8	Canada
9	Australia
10	United Kingdom

*The United States ranks 11th.

Bottom 10

Rank	Country
100*	Cambodia
100*	Eritrea
102	Gambia
103	Nepal
104	Mauritania
105	Congo, Democratic Republic of the
106	Yemen
107	Chad
108	Ethiopia
109*	Burkina Faso
109*	Mali

* Tie

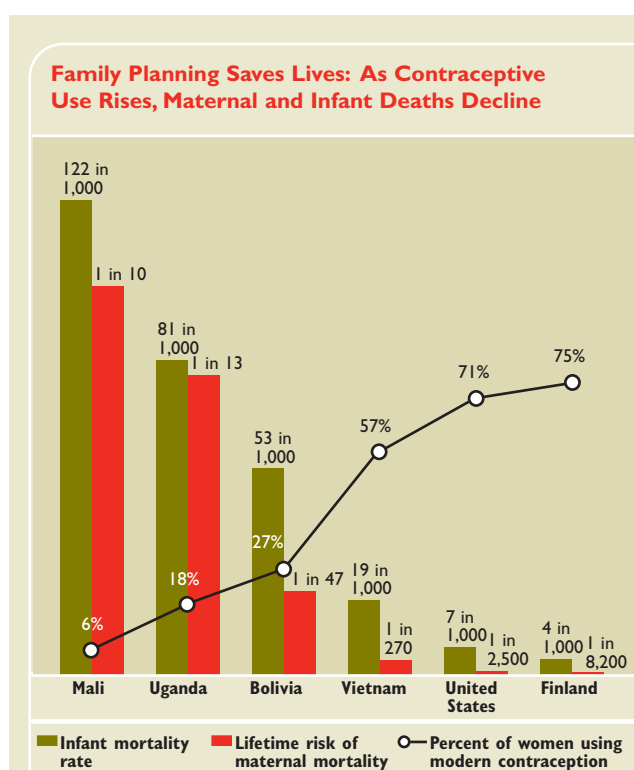


The contrast between the top-ranked country, Sweden, and one of the lowest-ranked countries, Ethiopia, is striking. A trained attendant is present at virtually every birth in Sweden, while only 6 percent of births are attended in Ethiopia. Nearly all Swedish women are literate, 72 percent are using some modern method of contraception, and only 1 in 333 will see her child die before his or her first birthday. At the opposite end of the spectrum, only 1 in 3 women is literate in Ethiopia, 6 percent are using modern contraception, and 1 in 9 children dies before his or her first birthday.

The data collected for the *Mothers' Index* document the tremendous gaps between rich and poor countries and the urgent need to accelerate progress in the health and well-being of mothers and their children. The data also highlight the regional dimension of this tragedy. Eight of the Bottom 11 countries are in sub-Saharan Africa. That region also accounts for 14 of the 20 lowest-ranking countries.

Individual country comparisons are especially startling when one considers the human suffering behind the statistics:

- Fewer than 15 percent of births are attended by trained health personnel in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Nepal.
- 1 woman in 10 dies in pregnancy or childbirth in Mali, Rwanda and Tanzania; the ratio is 1 in 7 in Malawi.
- 3 of every 4 pregnant women in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gambia, Madagascar and Turkey are anemic.



The data in the *Mothers' Index* indicate that increased access to and use of modern contraception can lead to dramatic improvements in infant and maternal survival rates. For example, in Finland, where 75 percent of women use birth control, only 1 in 8,200 mothers dies in childbirth during her lifetime and 4 out of 1,000 infants do not make it to their first birthday. Compare this to Mali, where 6 percent of women use birth control, 1 in 10 mothers dies in childbirth, and 1 in 8 infants dies before reaching age 1.

Every year, millions of women and children in the developing world die as a result of births that are too close together, too early, or too late in a woman's life. In developing countries, maternal mortality is the leading cause of death for women of reproductive age, killing 529,000 women a year. At least 1 in 9 is a teenage girl. Every minute of every day, at least one woman dies from complications of pregnancy and childbirth.

Family planning also makes important contributions to child survival. More than 10 million children under 5 die every year in the developing world. Family planning could prevent 25 percent of these deaths by spacing births at least two years apart, by helping women to bear children during their healthiest reproductive years, and by enabling parents to have their desired number of children.

- Fewer than 5 percent of women use modern contraception in Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda.
- In Burkina Faso, only 8 percent of women can read and write and fewer than half the children are enrolled in primary school.
- 1 child in 8 does not reach his or her first birthday in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali and Mauritania.
- 1 in 6 of all children under the age of 5 is suffering from moderate or severe malnutrition in Cambodia, India, Laos and United Arab Emirates.
- More than 75 percent of the population in Ethiopia lack access to safe drinking water.

What the Numbers Don't Tell You

The national-level data presented in the *Mothers' Index* provide an overview of many countries. However, it is important to remember that the condition of geographic or ethnic sub-groups in a country may vary greatly from the national average. War, violence and lawlessness may affect certain segments of the population disproportionately, especially in the case of internal ethnic conflict. These details are hidden when only broad national-level data are available.

Statistics are far more than numbers. It is the human despair and lost opportunities behind these numbers that call for ensuring that mothers everywhere have the basic tools they need to break the cycle of poverty and improve the quality of their own lives, that of their children, and of generations to come.

Frequently-Asked Questions About the Mothers' Index

Why doesn't the United States do better in the rankings?

The United States ranked 11th this year based on several factors:

- One of the four key indicators used to calculate well-being for mothers is lifetime risk of maternal mortality. The U.S. rate for maternal mortality is 1 in 2,500. Canada, Australia and all the Western and Northern European countries in the study performed better than the United States on this indicator.
- Similarly, the United States did not do as well as the Top 10 countries with regard to infant mortality rates. The U.S. infant mortality rate is 7 per 1,000 births. All Top 10 countries performed better than the United States on this indicator.

- The United States is also lagging behind with regard to the political status of women. Only 15 percent of seats in the national government in the United States are held by women, compared to 45 percent in Sweden, and 38 percent in Denmark and Finland.

Why is Sweden number one?

Sweden performed as well as or better than other countries in the ranking on all the indicators. It has the lowest infant mortality rate in the world and the highest percentage of women with seats in the national government.

Why are some countries not included in the Mothers' Index?

Rankings were based on a country's performance with respect to a defined set of indicators related primarily to education, health and nutrition. There were 110 countries for which published information regarding performance on these indicators existed. All 110 were included in the study. The only basis for excluding countries was insufficient or unavailable data.

What needs to be done to bridge the divide between countries that meet the needs of their mothers and those that don't?

- Governments and international agencies need to increase funding to improve education levels for women and girls, provide access to maternal and child health care, including voluntary family planning services, and advance women's economic opportunities.
- The international community also needs to improve current research and conduct new studies that focus specifically on mothers' and children's well-being.
- In the United States and other industrialized nations, governments and communities need to work together to improve education and health care for disadvantaged mothers and children.



2005 Mothers' Index Rankings

Country	Mothers' Index Rank*	Women's Index Rank**	Children's Index Rank**
Sweden	1	1	13
Denmark	2	2	1
Finland	3	3	1
Austria	4	4	1
Germany	5	5	1
Netherlands	6	6	10
Norway	7	7	1
Canada	8	9	7
Australia	9	8	7
United Kingdom	10	12	10
United States	11	15	10
Costa Rica	12	10	14
Cuba	13	10	15
Japan	14	17	1
Belarus	15	14	18
Korea, Republic of	16	18	16
Argentina	17	13	45
Chile	17	21	9
Israel	19	21	19
Mexico	20	21	27
Moldova, Republic of	20	19	41
Colombia	22	30	21
Panama	22	28	23
Trinidad and Tobago	22	19	31
Russian Federation	25	29	35
Kazakhstan	26	27	41
Jamaica	27	34	17
Uzbekistan	28	25	59
Ukraine	29	33	40
China	30	24	52
Turkmenistan	31	16	80
Venezuela	31	37	34
Armenia	33	47	28
Dominican Republic	33	31	50
Vietnam	33	25	54
Bahrain	36	44	31
Bosnia and Herzegovina	37	42	29
Ecuador	38	32	56
Thailand	38	39	41
Nicaragua	40	44	36
Jordan	41	58	24
Malaysia	41	55	21
Mongolia	43	36	65
Albania	44	49	52
El Salvador	45	55	39
Honduras	45	63	26
Paraguay	47	50	51
Peru	47	48	47
Namibia	49	39	63
Brazil	50	41	67
Mauritius	50	53	59
Lesotho	52	35	69
Philippines	52	50	55
Botswana	54	55	57
Lebanon	55	69	19
Tunisia	55	58	37
Indonesia	57	60	59
Kuwait	57	61	62
Guyana	59	38	78

Country	Mothers' Index Rank*	Women's Index Rank**	Children's Index Rank**
Iran, Islamic Republic of	59	67	44
Sri Lanka	59	50	68
Zimbabwe	59	53	64
Bolivia	63	63	47
Tajikistan	63	46	76
Maldives	65	42	82
Syrian Arab Republic	66	68	45
Turkey	67	75	31
Algeria	68	73	38
United Arab Emirates	69	66	71
Belize	70	70	57
Swaziland	70	62	70
Guatemala	72	80	24
Kenya	73	71	73
Egypt	74	87	30
Rwanda	74	63	82
Saudi Arabia	76	73	89
Zambia	77	77	93
Uganda	78	71	92
Tanzania, United Republic of	79	75	90
Cameroon	80	81	72
Morocco	81	100	47
Ghana	82	82	81
India	83	89	79
Nigeria	84	93	86
Haiti	85	99	74
Sudan	86	83	99
Lao People's Democratic Republic	87	79	100
Malawi	87	84	98
Papua New Guinea	87	84	103
Mozambique	90	88	84
Senegal	91	91	88
Madagascar	92	91	96
Côte d'Ivoire	93	96	87
Djibouti	93	78	105
Bangladesh	95	106	65
Benin	96	103	75
Burundi	97	95	95
Pakistan	97	97	91
Togo	99	97	97
Cambodia	100	86	104
Eritrea	100	90	101
Gambia	102	102	84
Nepal	103	107	77
Mauritania	104	101	102
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	105	94	110
Yemen	106	110	94
Chad	107	104	106
Ethiopia	108	105	108
Burkina Faso	109	108	109
Mali	109	109	107

* Due to different indicator weights and rounding, it is possible for a country to rank high in the women's and children's indices but not score among the very highest countries in the overall *Mothers' Index*. For a complete explanation of the indicator weighting, please see the Methodology and Research Notes.

** Rank out of the 110 countries included in the *Mothers' Index*.

The Complete Mothers’ Index 2005

Country	Women’s Index						Children’s Index				Rankings		
	Health Status				Education Status	Political Status	Children’s Status						
	Lifetime risk of maternal mortality (1 in number stated)	Percent of women using modern contraception	Percent of births attended by trained personnel	Percent of pregnant women with anemia	Adult female literacy rate (percent)	Participation of women in national government (% of seats held by women)	Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	Gross primary enrollment ratio (expressed as a percent)	Percent of population with access to safe water	Percent of children under age 5 suffering from moderate or severe nutritional wasting	Mothers’ Index Rank (out of 110 countries)*	Women’s Index Rank (out of 118 countries)*	Children’s Index Rank (out of 170 countries)*
Albania	610	15	94		98	6	18	107x	97	11	44	57	79
Algeria	190	50	92	42	60	10	35	108	87	3	68	81	63
Argentina	410		99	26	97	34	17	120		3	17	15	71
Armenia	1,200	22	97		99	5	30	96	92	2	33	55	49
Australia	5,800	72	100		99	28	6	104x	100		9	9	7
Austria	16,000	47	100x		99	31	4	103	100		4	4	1
Bahrain	1,200		98	20	84	8	12	98		5	36	52	52
Bangladesh	59	43	14	51	31	2	46	98	75	10	95	114	104
Belarus	1,800	42	100		100	30	13	110	100		15	16	31
Belize	190		83	65	77	9	33	118x	91		70	78	89
Benin	17	7	66	41	26	7	91	104	68	8	96	111	122
Bolivia	47	27	65	54	81	18	53	114	85	1	63	71	73
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,900	16	100		91	12	14		98	6	37	50	50
Botswana	200	39	94		82	11	82	103	95	5	54	63	89
Brazil	140	70	88	33	87	9	33	148	89	2	50	49	109
Burkina Faso	12	5	31	24	8 x	12	107	44	51	13	109	116	166
Burundi	12	10	25	68	44	19	114	71	79	8	97	103	145
Cambodia	36	19	32	66	59	11	97	123	34	15	100	94	161
Cameroon	23	7	60	44	60	9	95	107	63	5	80	89	118
Canada	8,700	73	98	3	99	24	5	101	100		8	10	7
Chad	11	2	16	37	38	6	117	73	34	11	107	112	163
Chile	1,100		100	13	96	10	8	100x	95	0	17	28	9
China	830	83	97	52	87	20	30	116	77	2	30	31	79
Colombia	240	64	86	24	92	11	18	110	92	1	22	38	34
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	13	4	61	76	52 z	11	129	50x	46	13	105	102	167
Costa Rica	690	65	98	27	96	35	8	108	97	2	12	12	27
Côte d'Ivoire	25	7	63	34	38 z	9	117	80	84	8	93	104	135
Cuba	1,600	72	100	47	97	36	6	100	91	2	13	12	28
Denmark	9,800	72	100x		99	38	3	105	100		2	2	1
Djibouti	19		61	40	56 z	11	97	40	80	13	93	86	162
Dominican Republic	200	63	99		84	15	29	126	93	2	33	39	76
Ecuador	210	50	69	17	90	16	24	117	86		38	40	86
Egypt	310	54	69	45	44 x	4	33	97	98	4	74	95	51
El Salvador	180	54	69	14	77	11	32	112	82	1	45	63	64
Eritrea	24	5	28		46 z	22	45	61	57	13	100	98	154
Ethiopia	14	6	6	42	34	8	112	64	22	11	108	113	165
Finland	8,200	75	100x		99	38	4	102	100		3	3	1
Gambia	31	9	55	73	31 z	13	90	79	82	9	102	110	131
Germany	8,000	72	100x		99	31	4	100	100		5	5	1
Ghana	35	13	44	64	66	10	59	81	79	10	82	90	128
Guatemala	74	31	41	45	63	8	35	103	95	2	72	88	38
Guyana	200		86	71	98 z	20	52	122x	83	11	59	46	125
Haiti	29	21	24	64	50	9	76		71	5	85	107	120
Honduras	190	51	56	14	80	6	32	106	90	1	45	71	41
India	48	43	43	50	46	9	63	99	86	16	83	97	126

Country	Women's Index						Children's Index				Rankings		
	Health Status				Education Status	Political Status	Children's Status						
	Lifetime risk of maternal mortality (1 in number stated)	Percent of women using modern contraception	Percent of births attended by trained personnel	Percent of pregnant women with anemia	Adult female literacy rate (percent)	Participation of women in national government (% of seats held by women)	Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	Gross primary enrollment ratio (expressed as a percent)	Percent of population with access to safe water	Percent of children under age 5 suffering from moderate or severe nutritional wasting	Mothers' Index Rank (out of 110 countries)*	Women's Index Rank (out of 118 countries)*	Children's Index Rank (out of 170 countries)*
Indonesia	150	55	68	51	83	12	31	111	78		57	68	93
Iran, Islamic Republic of	370	56	90	17	70 x	3	33	92	93	5	59	75	70
Israel	1,800	52	99 x		93	15	5	113	100		19	28	32
Jamaica	380	63	95	53	91	14	17	101	93	2	27	42	30
Japan	6,000	51	100		99	9	3	101	100		14	20	1
Jordan	450	39	100	50	86	8	23	99	91	2	41	66	38
Kazakhstan	190	53	99	27	99	10	63	99	86	2	26	34	67
Kenya	19	32	41	35	79	7	79	96	62	6	73	79	119
Korea, Republic of	2,800	67	100		97 z	13	5	104x	92		16	24	29
Kuwait	6,000	41	98	40	81	0	8	94		11	57	69	98
Lao, People's Democratic Republic of	25	29	19	62	56	23	82	115	43	15	87	87	153
Lebanon	240	37	89	49	81 z	2	27	103	100	3	55	77	32
Lesotho	32	30	60	7	90	17	63	124	76	5	52	43	112
Madagascar	26	12	46	74	61 z	6	78	104	45	14	92	99	146
Malawi	7	26	61	55	49	15	112	146	67	5	87	92	149
Malaysia	660	30	97	56	85	13	7	95	95		41	63	34
Maldives	140		70	20	97	6	55	125	84	13	65	50	129
Mali	10	6	41	58	12 x	10	122	57	48	11	109	117	164
Mauritania	14	5	57	24	31	4	120	86	56	13	104	109	155
Mauritius	1,700	49	99	29	81	6	16	106	100	14	50	61	93
Mexico	370	58	86	27	89	21	23	110	91	2	20	28	47
Moldova, Republic of	1,500	43	99	20	99	13	26	85	92	3	20	26	67
Mongolia	300	54	99	45	98	7	56	99	62	6	43	44	104
Morocco	120	42	40	45	38	6	36	107	80	4	81	108	73
Mozambique	14	5	48	55	31	30	109	99	42	4	90	96	131
Namibia	54	26	78	16	83	20	48	106	80	9	49	47	100
Nepal	24	35	11	68	26	6	61	122	84	10	103	115	124
Netherlands	3,500	76	100		99	36	5	108	100		6	6	11
Nicaragua	88	66	67	36	77	21	30	105	81	2	40	52	58
Nigeria	18	9	35	55	59	5	98	96	60	9	84	101	134
Norway	2,900	69	100 x		99	36	3	101	100		7	8	1
Pakistan	31	20	23	37	29 x	21	81	73x	90	13	97	105	140
Panama	210	54	90		92	17	18	110	91	1	22	36	36
Papua New Guinea	62	20	53	16	58 z	1	69	73	39		87	92	156
Paraguay	120	48	71	44	90	10	25	112	83		47	58	77
Peru	73	50	59	29	80	18	26	120	81	1	47	56	73
Philippines	120	28	60	50	93	15	27	112	85	6	52	58	84
Russian Federation	1,000		99	30	100	8	16	114	96	4	25	37	57
Rwanda	10	4	31		63	45	118	117	73	6	74	71	129
Saudi Arabia	610	29	91	16	70	0	22	67		11	76	81	137
Senegal	22	8	58	26	30	19	78	75	72	8	91	99	136
Sri Lanka	430	44	97	39	90	5	13	112x	78	14	59	58	111
Sudan	30	7	86 x	36	49	10	63	59	69		86	91	150
Swaziland	49	26	70		80	17	105	100	52	1	70	70	113
Sweden	29,800	72	100 x		99	45	3	110	100		1	1	17

Country	Women's Index						Children's Index				Rankings		
	Health Status				Education Status	Political Status	Children's Status						
	Lifetime risk of maternal mortality (1 in number stated)	Percent of women using modern contraception	Percent of births attended by trained personnel	Percent of pregnant women with anemia	Adult female literacy rate (percent)	Participation of women in national government (% of seats held by women)	Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	Gross primary enrollment ratio (expressed as a percent)	Percent of population with access to safe water	Percent of children under age 5 suffering from moderate or severe nutritional wasting	Mothers' Index Rank (out of 110 countries)*	Women's Index Rank (out of 118 countries)*	Children's Index Rank (out of 170 countries)*
Equatorial Guinea	16		65		76 z	14	97	126	44	7			147
Fiji	360		100		91 x	6	16	109		8x			83
Gabon	37	12	86			12	60	134	87	3			108
Georgia	1,700	20	96	30		9	41	92	76	2			84
Grenada			99			29	18	95x	95				46
Guinea	18	4	35	11		19	104	77	51	9			152
Guinea-Bissau	13	4	35	74	25 z		126	70x	59	10			157
Hungary	4,000	68			99	10	7	101	99	2x			17
Iceland					99	30	3	100	100				9
Iraq	65	10	72	18			102	99x	81	6			106
Kiribati			85			5	49	131x	64	11x			141
Korea, Democratic People's Republic of	590	53	97	71		20	42		100	8			86
Kyrgyzstan	290	49	98	55		7	59	100	76	3			89
Liberia	16	6	51	78		5	157	105x	62	6			137
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	240	26	94		71		13	114	72	3			77
Luxembourg	1,700		100 x		99	20	5	100	100				11
Macedonia,the former Yugoslav Republic of	2,100		98			18	10	99		4			41
Malta	2,100		98 x		93	9	5	105	100				11
Marshall Islands			95			3	59	101 x	85				79
Myanmar	75	28	56	58	81		76	90	80	9			121
Niger	7	4	16	41	9		154	40	46	14			169
Occupied Palestinian Territory	140		97				22	104	94	3			36
Oman	170	18	95	54	65		10	83	79	13			116
Palau			100			0	23	116x	84				86
Qatar	3,400		98		82 x		11	106	100	2			22
Romania	1,300	30	98	31	96		18	98	57	3x			92
Saint Kitts and Nevis			99			0	19	117x	99				60
Saint Lucia			100			21	16	111	98	6x			60
Samoa			100		98	6	19	103	88				47
Sao Tome and Principe			79			9	75	126	79	4			113
Serbia and Montenegro	4,500	33	99			8	12	99x	93	4			41
Seychelles					92	29	11	116	87	2x			59
Sierra Leone	6	4	42	31		15	166	79x	57	10			159
Slovakia	19,800	41			100	17	7	101	100				16
Solomon Islands	120		85			0	19		70	7x			102
Somalia	10		34	78			133		29	17			168
South Africa	120	55	84	37	85		53	105	87	3			65
Suriname	340		85			18	30	126	92	7			99
Switzerland	7,900	78			99	25	4	107	100				19
Timor-Leste	30		24			26	87	143	52	12			159
Tonga			92		99	0	15	112	100				38
Tuvalu			99			0	37	104x	93				55
Uruguay	1,300		100	20	98		12	108	98	1			23
Vanuatu			89			4	31	112	60				106

x = Data may refer to a different year than noted or may vary from the standard. z = Data are from different year or different source.

*The *Mothers' Index* ranks are out of 110 countries for which sufficient data were available. The *Women's Index* ranks and *Children's Index* ranks are out of 118 and 170 countries respectively – these include additional countries for which adequate data existed to present findings on women's indicators or children's indicators, but not both.

The Complete Mothers’ Index 2005

Country	Women’s Index						Children’s Index				Rankings		
	Health Status				Education Status	Political Status	Children’s Status						
	Lifetime risk of maternal mortality (1 in number stated)	Percent of women using modern contraception	Percent of births attended by trained personnel	Percent of pregnant women with anemia	Adult female literacy rate (percent)	Participation of women in national government (% of seats held by women)	Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	Gross primary enrollment ratio (expressed as a percent)	Percent of population with access to safe water	Percent of children under age 5 suffering from moderate or severe nutritional wasting	Mothers’ Index Rank (out of 110 countries)*	Women’s Index Rank (out of 118 countries)*	Children’s Index Rank (out of 170 countries)*
Syrian Arab Republic	130	28	76 x	41	74	12	16	112	79	4	66	76	71
Tajikistan	250	27	71	50	99	12	92	107	58	5	63	54	123
Tanzania, United Republic of	10	17	36	59	69	21	104	70	73	5	79	83	139
Thailand	900	70	99	57	91	10	23	98	85	6x	38	47	67
Togo	26	9	49	48	45	7	78	124	51	12	99	105	128
Trinidad and Tobago	330	33	96	53	98	25	17	96	91	4x	22	26	52
Tunisia	320	51	90	38	63	23	19	112	82	2	55	66	62
Turkey	480	38	81	74	79	4	33	94	93	2	67	83	52
Turkmenistan	790	53	97		98 x	26	79		71	6	31	18	127
Uganda	13	18	39	30	59	25	81	136	56	4	78	79	142
Ukraine	2,000	38	100		100	5	15	117	98	6	29	41	65
United Arab Emirates	500	24	96	14	81	0	7	92		15	69	74	115
United Kingdom	3,800	81	99		99	18	5	100	100 x	1x	10	14	11
United States	2,500	71	99		99	15	7	98	100	1x	11	17	11
Uzbekistan	1,300	63	96	27	99	7	57	103	89	7	28	32	93
Venezuela	300		94	29	93	10	18	106	83	3	31	45	55
Vietnam	270	57	85	52	87 x	27	19	103	73	6	33	32	82
Yemen	19	10	22		29	0	82	81	69	12	106	118	144
Zambia	19	23	43	47	74	12	102	79	55	5	77	85	143
Zimbabwe	16	50	73		86	10	78	94x	83	6	59	61	103
WOMEN'S INDEX ONLY													
Belgium	5,600	74	100 x		99	36	4	105				6	
France	2,700	69	99 x		99	14	4	105				20	
Latvia	1,800	39	100		100	21	10	96				23	
New Zealand	6,000	72	100		99	28	5	102x				11	
Poland	4,600	19	99 x		100 z	21	6	100				25	
Portugal	11,100	33	100		90	19	4	116				19	
Singapore	1,700	53	100		89	16	3			4x		34	
Slovenia	4,100	59	100 x		100	12	4	103				22	
CHILDREN'S INDEX ONLY													
Afghanistan	6	4	14				165	23	13	25			170
Angola	7	5	45	29		16	154	74x	50	6			157
Antigua and Barbuda			100			14	11		91	10x			93
Azerbaijan	520	12	84			11	75	93	77	2			97
Bahamas	580		99 x		96 z	27	11	92	97				45
Barbados	590		91		100	18	11	108	100	5x			41
Bhutan	37	19	24			9	70		62	3			116
Bulgaria	2,400	25			98	26	14	99	100				26
Cape Verde	160		89		68	11	26	123	80	6x			101
Central African Republic	15	7	44	67	34		115	66	75	9			150
Comoros	33		62		49	3	54	90	94	12			109
Congo	26				77	11	81	86	46	4			133
Croatia	6,100		100		97	18	6	96		1			24
Cyprus	890		100 x		95		4	98	100				19
Czech Republic	7,700	63	99	23	99		4	104		2x			19
Dominica			100			19	12	100x	97	2x			24

1. In the first year of the *Mothers' Index* (2000), a review of literature and consultation with members of the Save the Children staff identified health status, educational status, political status and children's well-being as key factors related to the well-being of mothers. Indicators were selected to represent these factors, and published data sources for each indicator were identified. In some cases, the factors were difficult to capture because few countries reported related statistics. To adjust for these variations in data availability when calculating the final index, the indicators for maternal health and children's well-being were grouped into sub-indices (see step 6). This procedure allowed researchers to draw on the wealth of useful information on those topics without giving too little weight to the factors for which less abundant data were available.

2. Data were gathered for six indicators of women's status and four indicators of children's status.

The indicators that represent women's health status are:

Lifetime risk of maternal mortality

A woman's risk of death in childbirth over the course of her life is a function of many factors, including the number of children she has and the spacing of the births as well as the conditions under which she gives birth and her own health and nutritional status. Calculations are based on maternal mortality and fertility rate in a country. Some country estimates are derived using a WHO/UNICEF methodology.

Source: *Maternal Mortality in 2000: Estimates developed by WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA*. Available online at: http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/publications/maternal_mortality_2000/mme.pdf

Percent of women using modern contraception

Access to family planning resources, including modern contraception, allows women to plan their pregnancies. This helps ensure that the mother is physically and psychologically prepared to give birth and care for her child. Data are derived from sample survey reports and estimate the proportion of married women (including women in consensual unions) currently using modern methods of contraception (including male and female



sterilization, IUD, the pill, injectables, hormonal implants, condoms and female barrier methods). All of the data were collected in 1995 or later. The most recent survey data available are cited. The database was updated in 2003.

Source: *United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) 2004. State of World Population 2004*. Available online at: http://www.unfpa.org/swpl/2004/pdf/en_swp04.pdf

Percent of births attended by trained personnel

The presence of a trained attendant at birth reduces the likelihood of both maternal and infant mortality. The attendant can help create a hygienic environment and recognize complications that require urgent medical care. Percentage of births attended by trained personnel is defined as those births attended by physicians, nurses, midwives or primary health care workers trained in midwifery skills. Data are from 1995-2003.

Source: *UNICEF 2004. The State of the World's Children 2005 (Table 8)*. Available online at: http://www.unicef.org/sowc05/english/sowc05_Tables.pdf

Percent of pregnant women with anemia

Poor nutritional status puts pregnant women and their children at risk for complications at birth, and makes them more susceptible to other types of illness. Anemia reflects nutritional deficiencies and possible malaria. The World Health Organization defines anemia in pregnant women as likely to be present when the hemoglobin level is less than 110 grams/liter. It also defines nutritional anemia as a condition in which the hemoglobin content of the blood is lower than normal as a result of a



deficiency of one or more essential nutrients, regardless of the cause of such deficiency. Data are from 1989-2000.

Source: The Manoff Group and the Micronutrient Initiative: *Iron Improves Life* (wall map). Available online at: <http://www.manoffgroup.com/images/anemiamap.pdf>

The indicator that represents women's educational status is:

Adult female literacy rate

Educated women are more likely to be able to earn a livelihood and support their families. They are also more likely than uneducated women to ensure that their children attend school. Female literacy rate is the percentage of women aged 15 and over who can read and write. Data are from 2002.

Source: Table 24, pp. 217-220, from *Human Development Report 2004: Identity, Diversity and Globalization* by United Nations Development Programme, copyright 2004 by the United Nations Development Programme. Used by permission of Oxford University Press, Inc. Available online at: http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/pdf/hdr04_HDI.pdf

The indicator that represents women's political status is:

Participation of women in national government

When women have a voice in public institutions, they can participate directly in governance processes and advocate for issues of particular importance to women and children. This indicator represents the percentage of seats in national legislatures or parliaments occupied by women. In bicameral legislatures and parliaments, a weighted average of the upper and lower house seats occupied by women is used.

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union 2004. *Women in National Parliaments – Situation as of 30 November 2004*.

Available online at: <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>

The indicators that represent children's well-being are:

Infant mortality rate

The infant mortality rate is likely to increase dramatically when mothers receive little or no prenatal care and give birth under difficult circumstances. Infant mortality rate is the probability of dying between birth and exactly one year of age, expressed per 1,000 live births. Data are from 2003.

Source: UNICEF 2004. *The State of the World's Children 2005* (Table 1). Available online at: http://www.unicef.org/sowc05/english/sowc05_Tables.pdf

Gross primary enrollment ratio

The gross primary enrollment ratio is the total number of children enrolled in primary school, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the total number of children of primary school age. Data are from the 1998/1999 to 2002/2003 school years.

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2004. *Gross and Net Enrolment Ratios for School Years 1998/1999, 1999/2000, 2000/2001, and 2001/2002*. Available online at: http://www.uis.unesco.org/TEMPLATE/html/Exceltables/education/gerner_primary.xls

Percent of population with access to safe water

Safe water is essential to good health. Families need an adequate supply for drinking as well as cooking and washing. This indicator reports the percentage of the population with access to an adequate amount of water from an improved source within a convenient distance from a user's dwelling, as defined by country-level standards. "Improved" water sources include household connections, public standpipes, boreholes, protected dug wells, protected springs and rainwater collection. In general, "reasonable access" is defined as at least 20 liters (5.3 gallons) per person per day, from a source within one kilometer (.62 miles) of the user's dwelling. Data are from 2002.

Source: UNICEF 2004. *The State of the World's Children 2005* (Table 3). Available online at: http://www.unicef.org/sowc05/english/sowc05_Tables.pdf

Percent of children under age five suffering from moderate or severe nutritional wasting

Poor nutrition affects children in many ways, including making them more susceptible to a variety of illness and impairing their cognitive development. Moderate or severe wasting is defined as more than two standard deviations below median weight for height of the reference population. Data are from 1995-2003.

Source: UNICEF 2004. *The State of the World's Children 2005* (Table 2). Available online at: http://www.unicef.org/sowc05/english/sowc05_Tables.pdf

3. Standard scores, or Z-scores, were created for each of the indicators using the following formula:

$$Z = \frac{X - \bar{X}}{S}$$

where Z = The standard, or Z-score
X = The score to be converted
 $\bar{X}$ = The mean of the distribution
S = The standard deviation of the distribution

4. The standard scores of indicators of ill-being were then multiplied by (-1) so that a higher score indicated increased well-being on all indicators.

Notes on specific indicators

- To avoid rewarding school systems where pupils do not start on time or progress through the system, gross enrollment ratios between 100 and 105 percent were discounted to 100 percent. Gross enrollment ratios over 105 percent were discounted to 100 and any amount over 105 percent was subtracted from 100 (for example, a country with a gross enrollment rate of 107 percent would be discounted to 100-(107-105), or 98.)

- Developed countries that lacked data for percent of pregnant women with anemia or percent of children under age 5 suffering from moderate or severe nutritional wasting were given a dummy score based on the developed country average to avoid penalizing industrialized countries for missing data in comparison with high-performing developing countries.

5. Z-scores were divided by the range of Z-scores for each variable in order to control for differences in the range of possible scores. These percentage scores (that is, actual score as percent of range of scores) were then averaged to create the index scores.

6. The percentage scores of the four indicators related to women's health were averaged to create an index of women's health. An index of child well-being was created the same way. At this stage, cases (countries) missing more than one indicator for either sub-index were eliminated from the sample. Cases missing any one of the other indicators (that is, educational status or political status) were also eliminated.

7. The *Mothers' Index* was calculated as a weighted average of women's health status (30 percent), maternal educational status (30 percent), children's well-being (30 percent) and maternal political status (10 percent). The scores on the *Mothers' Index* were ranked.

NOTE: Data exclusive to mothers are not available for many important indicators (for example, literacy rate, government positions held). In these instances, data on women's status have been used to approximate maternal status, since all mothers are women. In areas such as health, where a broader array of indicators is available, the index emphasizes indicators that address uniquely maternal issues.

8. Data analysis was conducted using Microsoft Excel software.

Endnotes

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Uganda. *A teacher helps a girl learn to read in a Save the Children-supported school*

Page 7 – Michael Bisceglie
Mozambique. *A mother gives her 18-month-old daughter treatment for diarrhea*

Page 8 – UNHCR/Natalie Behring-Chisholm
Afghanistan. *Girls recently returned from refugee camps in Pakistan study in Kabul*

Page 10 – Betty Press
Kenya. *A girl in primary school reads aloud to her classmates*

Page 12 – Michael Bisceglie
Ethiopia. *A mother with her two daughters who will both attend a new school being constructed with support from Save the Children*

Page 13 – Michael Bisceglie
Burkina Faso. *A girl in Targho village is proud to show her abilities in math*

Page 16 – Nicole Amoroso
Iraq. *Girls in Basra enjoy Save the Children training on participation*

Page 19 (top) – Michael Bisceglie
Bolivia. *A fifth-grade girl at a Save the Children-supported school in Oruro*

Page 19 (bottom) – Michael Bisceglie
Malawi. *A 2-year-old girl orphaned by AIDS*

Page 20 (top) – Caroline Irby
Sudan. *A girl in a camp for internally displaced persons whose school has more than 150 students per classroom*

Page 20 (bottom) – Michael Bisceglie
Bolivia. *A girl on her way to a Save the Children-supported school*

Page 21 – Michael Bisceglie
Philippines. *A 6-year-old with a book she picked out at Save the Children's Reading for Kids program*

Page 22 – Susan Warner
USA. *A boy helps a girl learn to use the computer*

Page 23 – Michael Weymouth
Bolivia. *A fourth-grade girl listens to her teacher in a school supported by Save the Children*

Page 25 (top) – Michael Bisceglie
Bangladesh. *Primary school girls ride in a small boat to get to school*

Page 25 (bottom) – Farid Ahmed
Bangladesh. *Shamina and her husband Kanchan prepare their 4-year-old to succeed in school*

Page 26 – Adam Bernstein
Egypt. *Om Kalsoum, a graduate of Save the Children's Ishraq program, prepares sweets in her bakery*

Page 27 – Michael Bisceglie
Egypt. *14-year-old Fatma gets ready for a soccer game with other girls*

Page 28 – Jacob Silberberg
Benin. *Girls attend school in the village of Koutagba*

Page 30 (top) – Save the Children Staff
Bolivia. *Daniela and her teacher at a Save the Children-supported school*

Page 30 (bottom) – Michael Bisceglie
Bolivia. *A 10-year-old girl at a Save the Children-supported school*

Page 31 – Michael Bisceglie
Philippines. *Children leave at the end of the school day*

Page 32 – Carolyn Watson
Nepal. *A girl from a highly disadvantaged community works on basic literacy skills. Save the Children provides teacher training, teacher salaries, books and other learning materials.*

Page 35 – Michael Bisceglie
Nicaragua. *A young girl attends a Save the Children preschool program in Managua*

Page 36 – Michael Bisceglie
Jordan. *A mother and baby who benefit from Save the Children reproductive health services*

Page 38 – Michael Bisceglie
Nicaragua. *A nurse shows 6-year-old Anielka how to feel the baby inside her mother, 20-year-old Alma. Alma was barely a teenager when she gave birth to Anielka. With assistance from a Save the Children reproductive health program, she used contraceptives to delay her second pregnancy.*

Page 39 – Chad Stevens
Uganda. *A girl who attends a school supported by Save the Children*

Page 41 – Michael Bisceglie
Vietnam. *Two women role-play on how to care for a newborn infant at a community health meeting sponsored by Save the Children*

Page 42 – Michael Bisceglie
Bangladesh. *Women learn to read and write in training organized by Save the Children*

Back cover – Bill Foley
West Bank. *A Palestinian girl enjoys educational activities that give her a break from worries about violence*

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Some 58 million girls in the developing world are not in school. Lack of education can mean the difference between life and death. In comparison to their educated counterparts, unschooled girls are more likely to be poor, marry early, die in childbirth, lose a child to sickness or disease, have many births spaced at unhealthy intervals, and have children who are chronically ill or malnourished.

In contrast, girls who go to school and stay there are likely to be healthier, to postpone marriage and childbirth, to have fewer children, to have the resources to ensure their children's health and education, and to contribute to the improvement of society as a whole.

State of the World's Mothers 2005 looks at girls' education as a proven investment in economic and social development. It presents a first-ever *Girls' Education Progress Report*, which ranks 71 developing countries in terms of their success or failure in educating girls.

The report also presents *Forecasts for Children*, which use girls' education, combined with other key factors, as a predictor for success in three important areas of global development over the next ten years. The *Forecasts* predict which countries will have the best chance of achieving smaller, healthier families, educating the most children (both girls and boys) and reaching the Millennium Development Goal targets aimed at building a more peaceful and just world.

As in previous years, *State of the World's Mothers 2005* presents a *Mothers' Index*. Using the latest data on health, nutrition, education and political participation, the *Index* ranks over 100 countries – both in the industrialized and developing world – to show where mothers fare best and where they face the greatest hardship.



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