

Unleashing the Power Within: Educated Girls Will Lead



David Rochkind/CARE

Girls are powerful, both for what they contribute to their families and communities in their youth, and for their unlimited potential as mature women. Equipped with the proper resources, women have the power to help their own families and entire communities overcome poverty.

Education is the route to this power. An educated girl is more likely to earn greater income, raise a smaller family, have healthier children, participate in political processes, and send her own children to school. An educated girl also is less likely to become infected with HIV. Girls truly have the power to change the world, and girls' education provides perhaps the single highest return on investment in the developing world.

As one of the world's leading international humanitarian organizations, CARE places a special focus on empowering marginalized girls and women. They are at the heart of CARE's efforts to improve basic education, prevent the spread of HIV, increase access to clean water and sanitation, expand economic opportunity and protect natural resources.

CARE currently is developing a new signature program to support girls – who are tomorrow's women and mothers – in the world's poorest countries.



Why a Girls' Education and Leadership Initiative?

CARE believes that quality education is essential to girls' and women's long-term success. But they can have an even greater impact on the future if they are trained to be leaders. CARE's aim is to move beyond expanding girls' knowledge to preparing them to influence others in positive ways.

CARE defines girls' leadership as helping girls become aware of their rights and responsibilities, and working to realize those rights for themselves and others. This is not about top-down leadership in the traditional sense, but rather about the ability of girls to take action and be influential in their families and communities. For example, acts of leadership can be seen when a girl exercises her influence to:

- help another person;
- improve the condition of her family;
- enhance her school environment;
- facilitate change in her community or her country.

Finally, girls need three things to be effective: personal competencies; supportive attitudes; and ample opportunity to be engaged in civic life. Consequently, CARE's girls' leadership initiative includes:

- demonstrating approaches in quality education for marginalized groups, combined with policy advocacy for replication;
- leadership opportunities that challenge entrenched attitudes about the ability girls have to be leaders;
- collective national/global action for girls;
- girls demonstrating continued leadership, including mentoring and continued education.



Proposed Goal and Outcomes

CARE's goal is to help 10 million vulnerable girls complete primary school and benefit from girls' leadership. The program will emphasize girls ages 10-14 from the world's most vulnerable groups.

CARE is developing a strategy that will:

- increase the number of girls completing primary school education;
- increase girls' knowledge about leadership concepts, such as roles and responsibilities in a democracy, people to influence, ways to influence them and potential allies;
- increase girls' leadership skills through communication, negotiation and advocacy;
- develop advocates who support girls' rights;
- cultivate opportunities for girls to practice their leadership skills in public spaces.

**SHE HAS the POWER to change her world.
YOU HAVE the POWER to help her do it.**

For more information or to get involved, contact:

Geeta Menon
gmenon@care.org

Archer Heinzen, Ph.D., Senior Researcher
(703) 548-6713
heinzen@verizon.net

CARE
151 Ellis Street
Atlanta, GA 30303
800-422-7385

www.care.org



Defending dignity.
Fighting poverty.