

# THE RIPPLE EFFECT

Educating Women Changes Lives

**The Vast Majority of Young People Globally (Aged 15 to 24) Are Literate<sup>1</sup>**

From 1990-2012, the global literacy rate increased from:

**79%**  
to  
**87%**  
for young women

**88%**  
to  
**92%**  
for young men

**Education Empowers Women and Grows Economies<sup>2</sup>**

Overall, secondary education for girls leads to:  
**15-25% boost**  
in wages

As little as a **1% increase** in girls completing secondary school boosts the entire country's per capita income **by 0.3%**

**Increasing Women's Tertiary STEM Study Will Increase Incomes**

**1 in 5** men graduated in engineering<sup>3</sup>

**1 in 20** women graduated in engineering<sup>4</sup>

Women remain overrepresented in bachelor's degree programs such as teaching and nursing—ultimately leading to occupational segregation into lower-paying jobs...

while men are overrepresented in STEM programs leading to higher-paying work.<sup>5</sup>

According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, men are at least twice as likely as women to graduate with an engineering degree.<sup>6</sup>

**There Are Regional Disparities in Women's Educational Progress<sup>7</sup>**

**Secondary school enrollment:**

**38%** girls  
Sub-Saharan Africa

**45%** boys

nearly **100%**

Australia, Canada, the Caucasus, Europe, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States

nearly **90%**

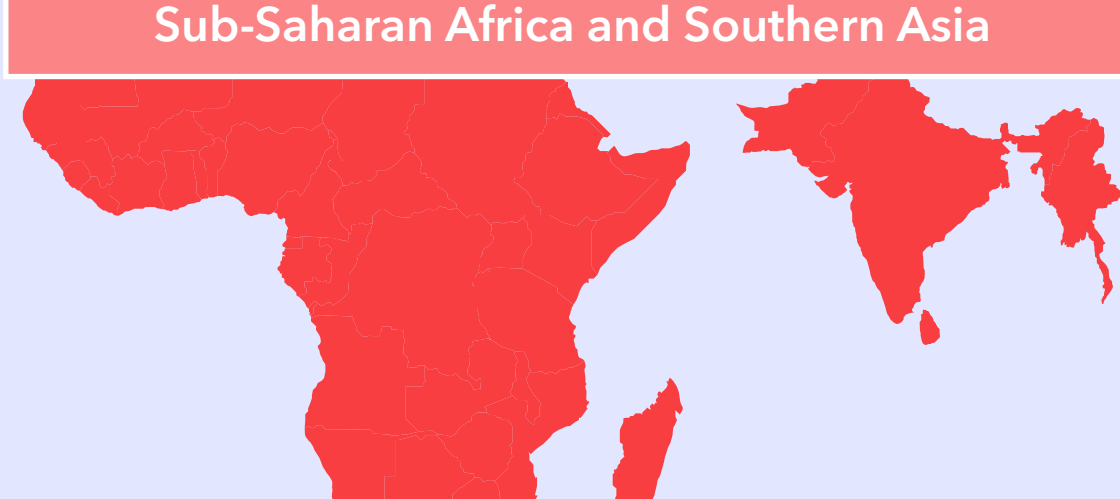
Eastern Asia, Northern Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean

**Primary school enrollment:**

**58 million** primary school-aged children worldwide do not attend school

**More than half of these are girls**

The majority of out-of-school children are in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia



## RIPPLE EFFECT

According to the UN, educated women are more likely to marry later, have smaller and healthier families, work and earn income, and invest in their own children, breaking negative cycles for the next generation.<sup>8</sup>

**Creating Change: Three Global Drivers**

Despite regional differences, the drivers to change around the world are the same.

**1**  
Teach parents that their daughter's education is an economic investment

**2**  
Engage men and boys as advocates for girls' education

**3**  
Encourage girls to study STEM for higher-paying jobs

Improving women's standing in the world not only allows them to reach their maximum potential, but also improves the prosperity, health, stability, and security of entire societies.

**CATALYST**

WORKPLACES THAT WORK FOR WOMEN

Please also see [Ripple Effect: Working Women Grow Economies](#).

<sup>1</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *The World's Women 2015: Trends and Statistics* (2015).

<sup>2</sup> Barbara Herz and Gene B. Sperling, *What Works in Girls' Education: Evidence and Policies From the Developing World* (Council on Foreign Relations, 2004).

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *The World's Women 2015: Trends and Statistics* (2015).

<sup>4</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *The World's Women 2015: Trends and Statistics* (2015).

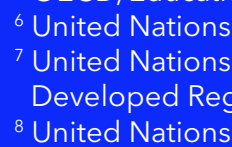
<sup>5</sup> OECD, *Education at a Glance 2015: OECD Indicators* (2015).

<sup>6</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *The World's Women 2015: Trends and Statistics* (2015).

<sup>7</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *The World's Women 2015: Trends and Statistics* (2015); United Nations Statistics Division, "Grouping: Developed Regions," *Methodology: Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use M49* (2017).

<sup>8</sup> United Nations Population Fund, "Promoting Gender Equality: Empowering Women Through Education."

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