

Helpdesk Research Report: Women's Education, Conflict and Stability

Date: 23.04.2010

Query: What international evidence exists on whether states where women are better educated are more stable and less affected by conflict?

Enquirer: DFID

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1. Overview

Much of the literature puts forward rights and capability-based arguments in favour of equal access to education as an important end in itself. This argument is especially persuasive when one takes into account that the level of education, whether primary, secondary or tertiary, is much lower in fragile states than in other developing countries. Furthermore, the gap between female and overall education is much deeper in fragile states than other developing countries.

There is also anecdotal evidence to suggest that striving for gender equality is a vital conflict prevention/stabilisation strategy. However there are very few studies which provide empirical support to the view that cultures where women are politically, socially and economically repressed are more prone to violent conflict and instability. Furthermore, evidence for a direct relationship between the level of educational attainment amongst women and girls and the degree of fragility or stability is scarce and no studies that establish direct causality specifically between secondary education for women and fragility were identified during the period of this short review.

Amongst the few relevant empirical studies that do exist, there is an emphasis on exploring the relationship between gender equality more broadly and the incidence of internal or external conflict, the willingness of states to use violent conflict and the prospects for peace building. There is a body of empirical work spearheaded by Mary Caprioli which link measures of gender inequality to state and inter-state level variables of conflict, stability and peace building. These draw upon and attempt to validate feminist theory which argues that gender is an important variable in explaining the willingness of states and other political actors to use force in external and internal conflict interactions.

These studies use econometric or statistical analyses which rely upon various measures and proxies of gender equality; and whilst educational attainment is undoubtedly a contributory factor

to gender equality, none use measures of women's education per se in their analysis. In fact, quite a few argue that whilst women's education is a potential measure of women's status, it is statistically difficult to include as a variable in analysis for two principal of reasons. Firstly, education and per-capita income are highly correlated difficult to disentangle and it is therefore difficult to establish causality one way or the other. Secondly, female education rates tend to be high in many former communist states that fare poorly on other measures of gender equality.

However, one could make inferences from the findings of these studies with regard to the impact of women and girls' education on stability and risk of conflict. For example, these studies show that:

- States with lower percentages of women in parliament, higher fertility rates and low participation of women in the labour force are more likely to use military violence to settle disputes;
- States with higher fertility rates and a lower participation of women in the labour force are more likely to experience internal conflict;
- Greater female empowerment (using the ratio of life expectancy of women to the life expectancy of men as a proxy for empowerment) and participation in peace building processes can help UN-led peacekeeping operations establish a stable peace.

Literature which looks at the rights-based imperatives for education suggests that women can be agents for peace and stability in fragile contexts – although the evidence for this is largely anecdotal. Much of the literature draws upon existing multi-lateral agreements such as the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which was the first resolution passed by the Security Council to specifically address the impact of war on women, and women's contributions to conflict resolution and sustainable peace. It explicitly recognises that institutional arrangements to guarantee the full protection and participation of women in peace processes contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security¹. In this regard studies argue that:

- Women who have successfully entered government in post-conflict contexts have tended to build governance systems that are more stable and transparent, and often more accepted as legitimate by society;
- Women demonstrate an ability to bridge political cleavages, highlight women's concerns, facilitate participatory policymaking and press for government accountability;
- Women enable a broader range of issues to be brought to the table - beyond usually predominant issues of military action, power and wealth sharing;
- Women led organisations have played instrumental roles in peace building and in delivering services which meet a range of post-conflict advocacy, capacity building, education and health needs.

In all cases, it has been argued that education constitutes a tool for empowerment and increases the ability for women to participate as equals and ensure that their perspectives are considered. A lack of education, on the other hand, increases women's vulnerabilities.

Lastly, there are broader developmental imperatives for ensuring equal access to education for women. The evidence presented here provides a compelling argument in favour of focussing on women and girls' education, particularly because when one considers that fragile states are unlikely to meet any of the current MDG targets. Evidence collated here suggests that increasing access to education for women and girls:

- Has a positive effect on the overall labour supplies and can contribute to economic growth;

¹ See <http://www.peacewomen.org/un/sc/1325.html> for an annotated version of the resolution.

- Changes household behavior and practice leading to improved sustenance, lower mortality and higher educational attainment rates of children;
- Has a negative impact on fertility rates, which in turn lowers the dependency burden and contributes to increased national savings;
- Increases participation of women in politics and government.

In conclusion, arguments in favour of increasing access to education for women and girls' in fragile states can be made on the basis of: (1) empirical evidence that suggests a there is a correlation gender equality with conflict; (2) rights-based imperatives; and (3) evidence suggesting that increasing access to education and girls is fundamental to achieving broader developmental objectives such as those outlined in the MDGs. Furthermore, the literature asserts that education which leads to gender empowerment is as worthwhile in fragile contexts as pursuing other stabilisation objectives such as security sector reform, institutional reform and macro economic development.

2. Empirical studies on the relationship between gender inequality, conflict and security

Caprioli, M., 2000, 'Gendered Conflict', Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 23, No. 5, pp.53-68:
<http://jpr.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/37/1/51>

This study quantitatively tests the relationship between state militarism and domestic gender equality. The author draws on feminist research, international relations literature and conflict studies which suggest that increased gender equality results in more pacific foreign policy behaviour – i.e. women are more peaceful because they are less likely than men to support the use of international violence. The author concludes that higher levels of domestic gender equality correlate with lower levels of violent military solutions to resolve disputes.

The empirical analysis tests whether higher levels of gender equality (social, political, economic) yield lower levels of militarism (measured by the use of military action as a foreign policy tool from 1960 through to 1962) using a dataset which encompasses interstate conflict in 159 states. The results presented here support the view that domestic inequality represents a level of intolerance which translates into a bellicose foreign policy.

The level of gender equality is determined by evaluating women's social, political and economic equality in relation to that of men. Social equality is determined using fertility rate (not education) as the variable, which Caprioli states provides a measure of a women's overall status by capturing the level of education and a measure of self-empowerment through control of her own life. There are numerous studies which prove that higher fertility rates result in lower levels of education, employment and involvement in decision-making, which in turn affect women's' access to reproductive health services. The variables used to determine political equality are the percentage of women in parliament and suffrage, the former could be linked to levels of secondary education amongst women. Economic equality is determined using the percent of women in the labour force as a variable, which is largely contingent on the level of social status of women, of which education could also be a factor.

The results of Caprioli's analysis show the following:

- States with lower percentages of women in parliament are more likely to use military violence to settle disputes. A five percent decrease in the proportion of women in parliament results in a state being nearly five times as likely to resolve international disputes using military violence;
- Higher fertility rates are indicative of a low social status for women and states exhibiting high fertility rates are more likely to use force in international disputes. Decreasing the fertility rate by one-third makes a state nearly five times less likely to use a military solution to settle international disputes;

- The percentage of women in the labour force (which presumably results in other types of participation including voting and other forms of political activism) shows statistical significance in explaining state aggression. A five percent increase in the proportion of women in the labour force renders a state five times less likely to use military force to resolve conflict.

In conclusion, Caprioli recommends that foreign policy (and assumedly donor) goals aimed at peace-building should concentrate more on supporting organisations that promote the social and economic status of women.

Caprioli, M., 2005, 'Primed for Violence: The Role of Gender Inequality in Predicting Internal Conflict', *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 49, pp.161-178
<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/118686002/abstract>

In this paper, Caprioli argues that states characterised by higher levels of gender inequality (which normally are also characterised by discrimination, structural hierarchy and are permeated by norms of violence) are more likely to experience internal conflict. This hypothesis is confirmed using a statistical analysis based upon a cross-national, longitudinal study of intrastate conflict from 1960-2001. Internal conflict is defined as conflict confined within a recognised state boundary between the government and one or more groups within the state. Gender inequality is measured using fertility rates and the percentage of women in the labour force. High fertility rates, as mentioned above, can have a detrimental impact on levels of education, health, employment and decision-making authority amongst women whilst the proportion of women in the work force can be indicative of the levels of social status and empowerment more broadly. The statistical analysis shows that:

- States with higher fertility rates (3.01 and higher) are nearly twice as likely to experience internal conflict than those with low fertility rates (3 and lower);
- States where ten percent of women are in the labour force are nearly thirty times more likely to experience internal conflict than states with forty percent of women in the labour force.

Caprioli concludes that donors should support policies aimed at reducing fertility rates through education and family planning. However, lowering the fertility rate is also contingent on a broader need to raise women's overall societal status and ability to participate in the economic sector. Social, economic and political gender inequality must be tackled simultaneously and economic growth will not necessarily achieve gender equality without the broader provision of education and opportunities for women.

Marshall, M.G. and Marshall, D.R., 1999, 'Gender Empowerment and the Willingness of States to Use Force', *Centre for Systemic Peace, Occasional Paper Series No. 2*.
<http://www.systemicpeace.org/CSPpaper2.pdf>

This study seeks to answer the question, "Does gender empowerment affect a states' willingness to utilise violent military force to influence political outcomes in interstate relations?" The authors test this with a statistical analysis which uses the UNDP gender empowerment measure (GEM) and the "willingness of states to use force" as key variables. GEM measures economic, political and professional participation and therefore acts as an indicator of the effect of gender on public policy. Data for the latter variable comes from the Militarised Interstate Dispute (MID) events database. Their results confirm the following findings:

- Gender empowerment is closely associated with a state's willingness to use force;
- Seemingly contending explanations of the use of force are better understood as complementary explanations. Therefore gender empowerment as well as military

capability, developed economic capacity, institutional authority and the security environment all have strong and significant relationships with a state's willingness to use force.

Gizelis, T., 2009, 'Gender Empowerment and United Nations Peacebuilding', *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol.46, No.4, pp.505-523.

<http://jpr.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/46/4/505>

In this article, the author argues that the prospects for post-conflict peace building under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) are generally better in societies where women have greater levels of empowerment. The author reinforces this argument using empirical analysis and drawing from a case study of peacekeeping in Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leone generally ranks low on most standard indicators of development and therefore one would expect low prospects for stable long-term peace in the wake of a civil war. However, by looking at measures of the relative status of women, one can see that women do comparatively better in Sierra Leone than in other developing societies of similar or even higher levels of development. The role of women in post-conflict Sierra Leone has been quite diverse and has included: playing a leading role in negotiations that led to the Lome peace accord; mass mobilisations and demonstrations by women's organisations against the renewed outbreak of violence after the initial accords were signed; practical assistance by women's organisations in the reintegration of former combatants into society.

The statistical analysis uses variables that measure the success of peace building operations and the relative standing of women. For the latter, the measure used is based on the ratio of the life expectancy of women to the life expectancy of men, which reflects gender inequality in terms of unequal access to basic public services such as sanitation and health. The author argues that this is more accurate than alternative social measures of female status such as fertility rates, levels of female education and economic factors such as employment rates and income differentials. On education rates specifically, the author states that data for the ratio of female to male secondary school enrolment is problematic since female education rates tend to be high in many former communist states that fare poorly on other measures of female empowerment.

The policy implications of these findings are:

- Greater female empowerment and participation can help UN-led peacekeeping operations (PKOs) establish a stable peace. This is because the improved status of women is an indicator of social capital and domestic capacity;
- Therefore, by allowing women a voice in the peace building process and supporting more inclusive participation, UN-led PKOs can capitalise on additional and distinct forms of social capital or social networks;
- Policies that address the concerns and needs of women can therefore provide a good foundation for successful peace building.

Chauvet, L. and Collier, P., 2007, 'Education in Fragile States', Paper commissioned for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2008, Education for All by 2015: will we make it?, UNESCO, Paris <http://unesco.unesco.org/images/0015/001555/155518e.pdf>

This paper focuses on the role of education in fragile states and offers some interesting insights despite not having a gender focus. The authors argue that fragile states may exhibit poor governance precisely due to low educational levels. In addition to education being an objective in its own right, there is reasonable evidence to suggest that secondary education is instrumental in improving the prospects of both reform and peace. They arrive at this conclusion by studying the process of structural, economic, social inclusion and public sector reform in fragile states and the

role of education in determining whether a reform is initiated and then whether the reform maintains sufficient impetus to become decisive.

In looking at education as a precondition for reform, the authors estimate the probability, year by year, that a country will initiate a reform that ultimately proves to be decisive in the sense of achieving an exit from the category of a fragile state. Using an econometric model, they find that secondary education and population both increase the probability that substantial reform will be initiated. Furthermore, an increase in one percent of the population having completed secondary education has a large impact on the probability of exiting the fragile state category. These results suggest that reforms may need a critical mass of reasonably well-educated people.

The authors also discuss whether education has any effect on the risk of civil war and upon recovery in post-conflict situations. It is statistically difficult to determine the former because when investigated separately, both societies with more education and higher per capita income are less prone to civil war and therefore it is difficult to establish the causality of education. However, evidence does suggest that education is important priority in post-conflict recovery and contributes significantly to reducing the risk of civil war relative to other economic or structural policies.

The authors conclude by stating that fragile states are not currently meeting the MDG education targets. This could constitute an irreversible failure, which will be more difficult to redress at a later stage. There is much scope for aid for education in fragile states but aid needs to be targeted on those components of education that are most important, and delivered in a manner that overcomes problems of leakage.

3. Agency, role and contribution of women to peace building and stabilisation

Schmeidl, S., and Piza-Lopez, E., 2002, 'Gender and Conflict Early Warning: A Framework for Action', International Alert, London <http://portals.wi.wur.nl/files/docs/ppme/getdata4.pdf>

This paper presents a framework on how to 'engender' conflict early warning. It argues that incorporating gender-sensitive indicators into information collection and subsequent analysis allows for previously overlooked signs of instability to be taken into account. Early warning that incorporates a gender analysis is more comprehensive because it ensures that the concerns of men and women are equally considered – and could ultimately lead to more practical, accurate and realistic responses. The paper proposes a series of gender-sensitive conflict early warning indicators and distinguishes between: root (or structural) causes; proximate causes which would indicate a higher likelihood of armed conflict; and a series intervening factors which can decrease or increase the likelihood of conflict.

With regard to the root causes of armed violence, the authors assume that the more inclusive a society is, the less likely it is to resort to force as a means of conflict resolution. This assumption is built upon research which suggests that cultures where women's access to resources (economic, social and political) and decision-making power is inhibited are more prone to repression and violent conflict. Therefore, the following root causes are necessary but not sufficient factors leading to conflict:

- Political equality: States with lower percentages of women in parliament are more likely to use military violence to settle disputes;
- Economic equality: The percentage of women in the labour force shows statistical significance in explaining state aggression or bellicosity;
- Fertility: Countries with a high fertility rate, a function of female literacy which determines women's' access to reproductive health services, are also more likely to engage in violence.

The authors argue that a key 'intervening factor' is the existence of peace organisations, particularly women's peace movements and organisations. Women's organisations often perform crucial roles at the grassroots level and therefore can be crucial in providing information on entry points for external actors in supporting local conflict prevention/peace-building initiatives. One could therefore infer that that ability of women to set up or engage movements and organisations is related to education, as educated women are more likely to be involved in such initiatives.

The Institute for Inclusive Security, 2009, 'Bringing Women into Government', Strategies for Policymakers, No. 1, March

http://www.huntalternatives.org/download/1648_bringing_women_into_government_mar_09_final.pdf

This policy briefing makes the case for increasing the number of women participating in government in post-conflict contexts. It argues that those women who have successfully entered government in post-conflict contexts have tended to build governance systems that are more stable and transparent, and often more accepted as legitimate by society. Furthermore, they have demonstrated an ability to bridge political cleavages, highlight women's concerns, facilitate participatory policymaking and press for government accountability. The paper discusses examples from Rwanda, Cambodia and Afghanistan but at the same argues that women have largely been excluded despite their documented contributions.

In Rwanda, the 2008 election gave women 56 percent of the seats in the lower house of parliament making it the only country in the world with a female majority in its parliament. Capacity building and education initiatives led by the UNDP and other donors have been one of the contributing elements – combating a previous situation where the lack of education and limited skills acted as obstacles to women's involvement. The benefits of increased women's participation have been:

- Policymaking has been informed by broader perspectives. For example, healthcare spending increased from three to twelve percent of the budget in 2006;
- Reconciliation was promoted through women's cross sector, multi-ethnic and multi-party initiatives;
- The government's image has improved because women are viewed as being less corrupt and more adept at reconciliation than men.

In Cambodia, women have increased their representation in government substantially in recent years. Women, backed by civil society and the international community, are finding creative ways in which to enter politics. NGOs, government officials and political parties are contributing to capacity-building programmes, political advocacy and policies that promote gender parity. Part of the mechanism for promoting women's inclusion involves the Cambodian Ministry of Women's Affairs, which has been working with NGOs to prepare women for effective leadership. Women's participation has led to:

- Greater attention to domestic violence;
- Improved cross-party communication;
- Increased government accountability due to female parliamentarians pushing for increased transparency and oversight;
- Policy priorities that are more in tune with community needs.

However, the paper also cites the fact that there is a need for increased higher education opportunities for women. Currently, only 0.2 percent of women in the Cambodian labour force have a university degree and women make up only twenty percent of university candidates. The gender gap in government service is directly related to the gender gap in education because senior government positions demand higher levels of education.

The Institute for Inclusive Security, 2009, 'Bringing Women into Peace Negotiations', Strategies for Policymakers, No. 2, October

http://www.huntalternatives.org/download/1825_negotiations_april_2010_final.pdf

This briefing provides strategies for successfully bring women into peace negotiations. It argues that, when women are actively involved in peace agreements, they are more credible and cover a broader range of issues beyond issues of military action, power and wealth sharing.

For further reflections on the agency and role of women in post-conflict environments, please refer to feedback provided by Ecoma Alaga on the experience of women's networks in West Africa.

4. Rights based arguments for the education of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings

Kirk, J., 2003, 'Women in Contexts of Crisis: Gender and Conflict', Paper commissioned for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2003, Gender and Education for All: The leap to equality, UNESCO, Paris

http://portal.unesco.org/education/es/files/25755/10739047211Women_in_contexts_of_crisis_Gender_and_conflict..doc/Women+in+contexts+of+crisis.+Gender+and+conflict..doc

In this paper, the author argues that conflict impacts in particular ways on the educational opportunities of girls and women. This may imply the need for increased emphasis on education for girls' and women to rectify educational inequalities. Furthermore, gender-aware post-conflict reconstruction of the education system that addresses the specific constraints to girls' enrolment, retention and achievement can make an important contribution to peace building, conflict prevention and stabilisation.

Education is a crucial element of the often complex humanitarian responses required during times of conflict. This is especially pertinent for women and girls, as coping with conflict and post-conflict situations requires new skills and information. In this regard, education has an important role to play in protecting women and girls who have particular educational needs to help them come to terms with their experiences, catch up on missed schooling and develop the skills necessary for participation in peaceful communities.

School-going girls are often forced to drop out and those excluded in pre-conflict times may have less chance of access once the conflict is over. One also has to account for the fact that household resources are likely to be scarce during conflict and crisis and educational discrimination in favour of boys may be stronger in certain cultural contexts. In addition, early marriage and pregnancy are features of many conflict situations and this can significantly impact upon girls' education by causing early drop-out. Conflict often tends to result in women taking on additional responsibilities and economic necessity may mean that they are forced into income generating activity rather than attending school. Therefore conflict and instability often exacerbates existing gender inequalities and vulnerabilities and bring about a reversal in hard-won rights.

Education can be a protective force in itself: appropriate formal and non-formal education can provide alternatives to social and cultural alienation, to violence, child soldiering and other forms of exploitation. Education for women and girls can also bring about increased and more equal participation in peace building. Active participation by women and girls, not only as beneficiaries (or students) but also in decision-making and planning, can provide a platform for more positive individual and collective futures. Education is also a stabilising force that is essential for maintaining and re-establishing a sense of normalcy during and after destructive events. It can help reinforce community development and individual social well-being.

Understanding the linkages between gender, education and conflict is an important issue for achieving the MDG and Education for All (EFA) objectives. It is significant that (at the time of publication) of the 25 countries targeted by UNICEF for accelerated action to improve girls' participation in education, eight have experienced recent conflict. Further, of the 25 countries with the lowest levels of female adult literacy, ten are either experiencing armed conflict or are recovering from it.

There is thus a need to mitigate the impact of conflict through education for girls and women. However, this entails much more than women or girl targeted interventions: past gender sensitive peace building initiatives have met with limited success because they have failed to address underlying norms that define gender relations and power dynamics of specific contexts. There is a concern, however, of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations being marginalised into specific programmes. Whilst such programmes may ensure equal access to education, broader gender mainstreaming strategies are needed for a move towards a more long-term, systemic and institutional gender equality.

Zuckerman, E. and Greenberg. M., 2004, 'The Gender Dimensions of Post-Conflict Reconstruction: An Analytical Framework For Policymakers', Gender and Development, Vol.12, No. 3

<http://www.genderaction.org/images/ez-mg%20oxfam%20g&d%20gender-pcr.pdf>

In this article, the authors propose a conceptual framework to ensure that gender issues are included in the analysis, planning, implementation and evaluation of post-conflict reconstruction. Without gender equality, it is impossible to achieve economically and physically secure societies cleansed of structural violence. A transformation of gender roles entails the building of social capital, which is essential to peace, by interventions that increase women's rights provide employment and educational opportunities.

The paper explores three inter-related dimensions of engendered post-conflict reconstruction: (1) Women focussed activities; (2) Gender aware programming; and (3) Ways for societies to transform gender roles. Within these dimensions, the authors argue that women are assets for successful reconstruction and that a failure to recognise gender-related impediments may undermine efforts while purposeful efforts to strengthen gender equality may strengthen results.

Women focussed activities compensate for gender disparities in rights, education and power and thereby enable women to contribute more fully to reconstruction. Such activities should work to strengthen women's rights to political participation, property ownership, employment and freedom from violence. With regard to political rights, evidence from post-conflict countries that have attempted to increase women's political participation (through parliamentary quotas or otherwise) suggests it is necessary to strengthen women's capacity for leadership and this strengthening requires resources to be spent on building the capacity of women to run for office and serve effectively. This further implies training and educational opportunities.

Gender aware programming entails identifying and addressing gender issues that may obstruct or improve development programmes. This is required in all macro and micro-economic development activities associated with post-conflict reconstruction, which often flounder because they fail to address unequal gender relations and power dynamics. Programming must address shortages in human resources and skills, and take account of the fact that educational disparities between men and women in post conflict contexts are often exacerbated. Education for women in such contexts provides opportunities to aim higher rather than merely recreating the pre-conflict scenario and education can contribute to developing male and female vocational skills, civic skills and values that are essential for a non-violent society.

5. Developmental imperatives for equality of access to education

UNESCO, 2003, 'Gender and Education for All: The Leap to Equality', United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Paris

<http://www.unesco.org/en/efareport/reports/20034-gender/>

The first chapter of this UNESCO report details the impact of gender equality in education on other development indicators. Whilst the moral basis for gender equality in education and the right to Education for All is compelling, there is also a very strong instrumental argument. This is reinforced by a large body of evidence, which shows that it is in the interests of people and communities to reduce gender inequalities in education. The impacts of gender equality in education on other development indicators are:

- The private rates of return to education (estimated on the basis of the private costs of undertaking education and the impact it has on lifetime earnings) are significant and at least as high as other ways in which families may invest money;
- Increasing female education has a greater effect on overall labour supply by increasing the amount of time that women work. Furthermore, strategies to increase women's education relative to that of men will tend to increase overall labour-force participation and have positive effects on the tax base and on economic growth;
- Gender parity in terms of the relative 'stocks' of education that men and women hold affect economic growth prospects independently of their absolute levels;
- The effect on economic growth of increasing the educational level for girls in low-income countries is particularly pronounced. A likely reason for the growth impact of female education in these contexts is its positive effects on levels of agricultural productivity;
- The education of girls and women brings about a change in household behavior and practice such as the improved sustenance, lower mortality and educational attainment rates of children. On the latter, the education of female parents in particular increases the probability of their children attending school;
- The schooling of women has a negative impact on fertility rates, which in turn lowers the dependency burden and contributes to increased national savings. It also increases the labour force as a proportion of the population and therefore can help to boost per capita incomes. There can also be considerable effects on economic growth and evidence from East and Southeast Asia where high levels of female education contributed to their economic boom reinforces this view.

Patrinos, H.A., 2008, 'Returns to Education: The Gender Perspective', in Tembon, M. and Fort, L. (Eds), Girls' Education in the 21st Century: Gender Equality, Empowerment and Economic Growth, World Bank, Washington D.C.

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-1099080014368/DID_Girls_edu.pdf

This chapter, part of a larger World Bank publication, reviews the empirical literature on rates of return to education. The evidence shows that the social benefits associated with schooling, particularly women's schooling, suggest that primary schooling investment is a key priority. The social benefits of women's schooling are significant, especially in developing countries:

- A year of schooling reduces infant mortality by five to ten percent;
- Children of mothers with five years of primary education are forty percent more likely to live beyond the age five;
- When the proportion of women with secondary schooling doubles, the fertility rate is reduced from 5.3 to 3.9 children per women;
- Providing girls with an extra year of schooling increases their wages by ten to twenty percent;

- There is evidence of more productive farming methods attributable to increased female schooling and a forty-three percent decline in malnutrition;
- Educating women has a greater impact on children's schooling than educating men;
- Evidence from Bangladesh shows that educated women are three times as likely to participate in political meetings.

6. Additional information

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