

UN reveals global number of girls not in school is increasing

Official global data quietly reveals reverse of progress for young girls

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, September 10, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Ahead of the 73rd United Nations General Assembly in New York, UN [data](#) reveals an increase of over 6% in the number of girls not in primary school, in just one year. This is a key metric for UN Sustainable Development Goal 4: achieving quality education for all, which now appears to be moving in the wrong direction.

In response to the worrying revelation, Bridge International Academies is launching a new campaign called [#GirlSuperPower](#) calling on policymakers to prioritise the need for gender equality in education.

Equal education for girls is an unfulfilled promise for the majority of the poorest families in low-income countries. Around 131 million girls worldwide are still out of school, and for them equality remains elusive. According to the latest UN reports, the number of out of school girls at primary level grew from 32 million in 2015 to 34 million in 2016. Girls usually have to overcome multiple hurdles to access the same learning opportunities as boys. Around 16 million girls between ages 6-11 never enter a school as a student.

This new campaign focuses on science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) skills for girls. STEM skills are traditionally gendered as 'male' subjects in many low and middle-income countries. The new campaign highlights how young girls in underprivileged communities are pursuing their dreams of becoming doctors, engineers and mathematicians, against the odds.

The stars of the new campaign highlight the way with a good school a great teacher and a chance to learn, girls can defy expectations, challenge stereotypes and escape poverty.

There are real trailblazers who show how STEM education can be truly transformational for young girls. Jacintah Mwenda is eight-years-old and attends a Bridge school on the edge of a slum community in Kenya. Jacintah loves everything science, it's her best subject and she knows it will help her thrive in later life. She wants to become a doctor so she can treat sick people in her community. She lives in an area where doctors are in short supply.

Dr Shannon May, co-founder of Bridge International Academies, said, "Girls in low and middle-income countries almost need superpowers to gain a decent education. It is deeply disappointing if the number of girls being failed is on the rise despite ongoing international efforts. We know that when given a chance in the classroom girls excel, but they often have to defy the odds and overcome near impossible hurdles to reach the classroom. Even if they do make it into the classroom, enabling them to learn and succeed is a challenge that requires super teachers and a super program. The good news is that many girls are aspiring to a better future thanks to transformative schools in needy parts of the world. We are working to make that the norm rather than the exception."

Nine in ten children in Africa are not learning the most basic reading and maths, and if you're a girl the situation is especially bad. Around the world today:
-only 34% of girls in the poorest households living in the poorest countries complete primary

school.

- young women are nearly 90% more likely to be out of secondary school than their counterparts

- 68 million girls of upper secondary school age are out of school

- 32 million girls of primary school age are out of school

A key reason most children in the world are not learning is that there is a chronic shortage of opportunities to learn, especially for girls. This can be because there simply is no local school, or if there is a school it's not a place of real learning.

Shannon May continued, "We believe that part of the solution in helping girls to access quality education and achieve SDG4 is enabling a wider range of partners to support the improvement of schools and education systems."

Creating more opportunities to learn is a challenge that the UN and global leaders are united in tackling. Billions of dollars are being channelled towards this cause. Solving this issue will unlock talents, raise standards of living, boost economies, and even improve health and security. As Gordon Brown rightly said, this is the civil rights struggle of our time.

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