

## Just the Facts

### Girls are part of the largest youth generation in history.

There are more than 1.2 billion young people between the ages 10 and 19 in the world today. Half of these are girls, making them the largest youth generation in history. Research shows that investing in girls' health, education and empowerment leads to better educated, safer, healthier and economically powerful girls. However, most adolescent girls face challenges that make it difficult to achieve their potential.

- Data shows that in some cases, 80-90 percent of youth program participants are boys.
- Less than two cents of every development dollar goes to programs specifically for girls, particularly those ages 10-14.
- Despite the important role adolescent girls face in shaping our global future, on average, close to 40 percent of adolescent girls feel their opinions are not taken into consideration enough or at all when household decisions are made on their behalf.

### Education can change a girl's future.

Not all girls have the chance to go to school. Equal treatment in education for girls is a human right, and is also a means of achieving progress in other areas.

- Girls make up more than half of the 140 million children and adolescents that are out of school.
- In many countries, more than half of girls drop out before they get to the 6th grade.
- On average, 90 percent of girls who spend less than 14 hours on housework attend school, but only 70 percent of those who spend 28 hours or more per week on household chores do so.

For girls in developing countries, going to school can be more than just an opportunity to be educated – it can mean avoiding long work hours, staying healthy, and the possibility of getting a job that otherwise would not be possible.

- Girls who receive an education marry later, have fewer children, and are more likely to seek healthcare for themselves and their children.
- Girls with secondary schooling are up to six times less likely to be married than those who have little or no schooling.
- Every year of schooling increases a girl's potential future earnings by 10-20 percent.
- The positive impact of girls' education has been shown to transcend generations, resulting in better health among women, their children, and eventually their grandchildren.



## Access to health services helps girls thrive.

We might dread going to the doctor's office, but regular visits and health information are important to ensure we're healthy. In developing countries, girls often cannot afford visits to see a doctor or need to travel long distances to reach a clinic.

- One in seven girls in the developing world (excluding China) will be married before the age of 15, increasing their chances of becoming pregnant at an early age.
- Medical complications from pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death among girls ages 15-19 worldwide.
- Girls between the ages of 10 and 14 are five times more likely to die in pregnancy or childbirth than women aged 20 to 24. The vast majority of these deaths take place within marriage.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, 75 percent of HIV-infected youth between the ages of 15 and 24 are girls.

## Keeping girls safe is a global issue.

In many places around the world, girls are subject to violence and discrimination just because they are girls, and often as a result of poverty.

- Violence kills and disables as many women between the ages of 15 and 44 as cancer.
- Worldwide, nearly 50 percent of all sexual assaults are against girls 15 years or younger.
- Younger women are at higher risk of abuse than older ones.
- Educated women are more likely to resist abuse such as violence, and discrimination at home, in society or the workplace.

## Girls are the next generation of leaders.

The choices adolescent girls make in the coming years will shape their lives, their communities and our world.

- Statistics show that women and girls re-invest 90 percent of their income in their families and communities, compared to only 30-40 percent for men.
- Providing girls with leadership skills and including them in the decision-making process is one of the major tools to spark economic and social change.



By starting a Girl Up club, you are joining the movement to “Unite Girls to Change the World.”