

African Girls Learn To Beat Poverty

Doreen Ochieng, 16, has no parents. She lives in one of Nairobi's poorer neighborhoods. Most men she meets tell her the same thing: "Quit school. Forget a professional career. Get married and stay at home." But the high school junior stays in school because she has made a simple equation: no education means continuing to live in the bruising poverty that has affected her childhood. "You have to go to school to get somewhere in life."

That is especially true for girls in Africa, where governments have traditionally left them out of the education circle. But today students such as Doreen can remain in school, because Kenya and other countries are expending more energy and putting more resources into efforts aimed at closing the enormous education gap between boys and girls. In Uganda, a law prohibits families from sending only male children to school. Malawi funds scholarship programs to boost female enrolment in schools. In Guinea, girls' enrolment has leaped from 25 percent to 45 percent since 1990. Five years ago in Ethiopia 9 percent of girls were in school; today, the figure is 22 percent. In Kenya, there are as many girls in primary schools as there are boys, a rare achievement in Africa. The emphasis on girls' education has paid off: in national standardized tests this year, five of the schools which ranked in the top 10 were girls' schools.

Governments "have come to see female education as crucial to the development of their countries," said Eddah Gachukia, executive director of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), which funds projects that promote girls' schooling. "If Africa is going to survive, there's a need to pay more attention to putting girls in schools." Decades ago, the countries that colonized Africa educated only males, a tradition that post-independent governments embraced with disastrous results. Of the more than 50 million eligible Africans who are not in school, 35 millions are girls. Fifty percent of girls who enroll drop out by the fourth grade. Only 10 percent make it to the secondary level.

Because free public education is rare in Africa, the poverty that pervades the continent, along with a high fertility rate, has made it nearly impossible for families to send all their children to school. For many, the choice is between paying schools fees and feeding the children. Many families send only their boys to schools, believing that girls should learn their lessons at home. Yet, others see education as the only hope for tugging their children out of poverty. "I know families who will sell their last goat to send their children to school," said Sister Maria Pacis Vogel, principal of Precious Blood Secondary School in Nairobi.

Girls living in poverty rarely end up with an education. And because they lack education, they rarely climb out of poverty.

I. COMPREHENSION: (15pts)

(Base all your answers on the text. (15 points))

A. Are these statements TRUE or FALSE? Justify: (3 pts)

- Doreen is encouraged to continue her studies.
.....
- The African governments have always been aware of the importance of female education.
.....
- Half of the African girls are not educated because their parents cannot pay for their education.
.....

B. Answer these questions: (3 points)

- How did African governments try to solve the problem of the low rate of girls' schooling?
.....
- What are the two factors that prevent many African children from going to school?
.....
- Why did post-independent countries educate boys?
.....

C. Complete these sentences: (2 pts)

- By "getting somewhere in life." Doreen means
.....
- "Selling the last goat" is used by Sister Maria to show.....
.....

D. Fill in this chart: (3 pts)

Country	The rate of the girls' schooling in the past	The rate of the girls' schooling today
1. Guinea		45%
2.	9%	22 %
3.	////////////////////////////////////	50%

E. Find words that mean the same as: (2 pts)

1. pays for (paragraph 3) :
2. adopted (paragraph 3) =.....

F. What do the underlined words refer to? (2 pts)

1. Their (paragraph 3) =
2. others (paragraph 4) =

II. LANGUAGE (15 pts)

A- CHOOSE AN AUXILIARY FROM THE LIST TO COMPLETE EACH SENTENCE, PUT IT AND THE VERB IN THE CORRECT FORM. (2PTS)

must - mustn't - need - needn't - should - can - can't - have to

1. The room isn't messy. You(to tidy) it.
2. I was very late for work this morning, and I(to apologize).
3. It's your fault. You(to be) more careful when you were driving.
4. It's incredible! She(to be) at the party. I was there and didn't see her.

B- PUT IN THE CORRECT FORM OF THE VERBS. (4PTS)

1. He went to a company for(have) an interview with its manager.
2. Before he retired, he(work) in many international companies.
3. I'd like.....(know) more about how Malhoun singers become skillful at(improvise).

C- PUT THE WORDS BETWEEN BRACKETS IN THE CORRECT FORM. (2PT)

1.education tries to integrate marginalised and excluded children into society. (include)
2. Students' success at school depends on their regular (attend).

D- FILL IN THE BLANK WITH THE RIGHT WORD FROM THE BOX. (4PTS)

hampered – thrilled – filthy – quarrelsome – compulsory – disparity - boarding - inquisitive

1. She'sabout her trip to New York. Surely, it'll be an unforgettable experience for her.
2. My little sister is so She can't help asking questions.
3. Due to the rubbish thrown away everywhere, the city is in astate.
4. The government is making great efforts to eradicate gender.....and give girls equal chances to enroll in schools.

E- WHAT CAN SAY IN THESE SITUATIONS? (3PTS)

1. You are sick. Ask the pharmacist to give you some medicines and advice. **Make a request.**
.....
.....
2. Your teacher is explaining the reasons why some girls are uneducated. **Tell her you don't understand and ask for clarification.**
.....
.....
3. The majority of youth use the internet for negative purposes. **Express your point of view in a formal way.**
.....
.....

III. WRITING (10pts)

Many students drop out of school for many reasons. This has a serious impact on their lives and on society as a whole. Write about the causes and effect of dropping out of school.