

April 2009



Girls around the world: Challenges and Opportunities



According to the World Bank Group's Gender Action Plan, "500 million adolescent girls and young women live in the developing world. They are a significant part of the next generation of global economic and

social actors, but these young women do not have the same opportunities as young men to access jobs, gain financial independence and become productive members of society. The purpose of the Adolescent Girls Initiative (AGI), a part of the World Bank Group's Gender Action Plan, [Gender Equality as Smart Economics](#), is to smooth the transition from school to productive employment for girls and young women aged 16-24 by helping them complete their education, build skills that match market demand, find mentors and job placements, and by offering incentives to potential employers to hire, retain and train young women. AGI aims to increase women's economic opportunities by improving their access to the labor market, agricultural resources, land, credit, and infrastructure services."

Research has demonstrated that gender-based violence (GBV) is a major public health problem and a violation of human rights, severely limiting women's access to education and opportunity and the contributions she can make to social and economic development. GBV is linked to a wide range of physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health problems among women and girls, and a major factor in the inter-generational transmission of violence from parents to children.

In this newsletter we feature programs working to overcome challenges facing many young women and girls, which make them vulnerable to multiple forms of violence. We also highlight opportunities being created to overcome these

challenges. We celebrate the power of girls, young leadership, and the possibility that our collective, international vision and framework will move us forward, eliminating forms of discrimination that perpetuate violence against women.

IN THE NEWS: [Who is helping Rihanna?](#)

A statement on Rihanna and Chris Brown from the National Women of Color Network, A National Organization Responding to Violence Against Women of Color.

[Young girls at Nwamba School in Bugiri, Uganda promote education for girls.](#)

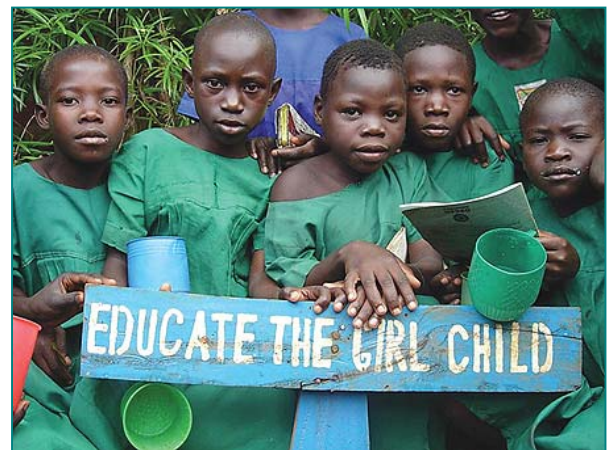


Photo by 2006 Karen Smith/MSH, courtesy of Photoshare

"Across the world, girls are less likely to be en-rolled in school, and even less likely to complete a basic education, than boys. In many countries, girls face much higher barriers to getting into school. Entrenched

traditions, poverty, inadequate facilities and sometimes lack of government are some of the many hurdles that disproportionately affect girls and hamper their education.

As long as girls are left behind, the goals of educating all children and ensuring real human development can never be achieved. A girl who is denied an education is more vulnerable to poverty, hunger, violence, abuse and exploitation, trafficking, HIV/AIDS and maternal mortality – a legacy that may well be passed on to her own children.”

UNICEF [Read more about girls](#)



Have the courage to live ; anyone can die.

[Rape is Never Justified™](#) is a movement to try and help, both, victims and survivors of sexual abuse and rape to find their voice and speak out. “I think the most unique thing about RNJ is that, as a staff, we don't encourage you to report your act of violence, we don't encourage you to talk with anyone-professionals included, and we don't encourage you to turn to a Higher Power/religion to become a survivor. We only encourage you to fight when you're ready and willing- and we want to be here along the way.”

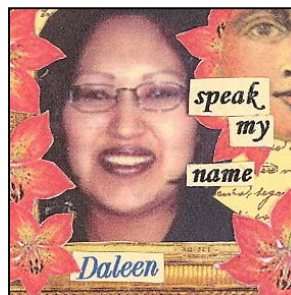


[Justice for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in "Canada"](#)

A Facebook group is responding to the fact that over 510 Indigenous women have gone missing or been murdered since 1980. The actual number is thought to be much

higher, as many cases go unreported to authorities (the main reason being that there is a historical sense of distrust between Indigenous communities and police). Some estimates are as high as 3000 or more. Maisy Odjick and Shannon Alexander join the growing list of hundreds of missing and murdered Canadian aboriginal women. **Related story:** [Stolen Sisters](#)

This month we honor Daleen Kay Bosse, a 27 year old university student and mother from the Onion Lake First Nation in Saskatchewan, Canada who went missing in May 2004. Her remains were found on August 8, 2008.



Shakti Girls is a social-change initiative by [Turn Your World Around](#) that seeks to empower sex-trafficking victims and girls throughout India with holistic education, vocational training, building sustainable business models and girls schools to prevent and end sex-trafficking; fostering a global movement for change. "Shakti", (means power in Hindi)



[Global Report on Trafficking in Persons](#)

A February 2009 United Nations report indicates that despite major advance's in the response to trafficking in persons, and the increase in of their convictions around the world, traffickers still act with massive impunity.

["The Hills Have Eyes"](#)

*By Rape is Never Justified
Co-Founder, Ali Mark*



In April of 2007, I was confronted with- what seemed to be a no-brainer situation. A few classmates and I were discussing favorite movies and "The Hills Have Eyes" came up. Seeing as how I had never seen the movie and a good friend of mine had to get up and leave due to the violence, we tuned out as best we could. One of our fellow students asked why we hadn't seen the movie and my friend replied, "The opening scene is of a rape!" This was enough for me to chime in with my two cents. I told him that I felt there was no need for the plot line to show a rape being performed for the sake of the movie. This fellow student was persistent in telling me that the actors were... [Read More](#)

Girls Educational & Mentoring Services



(GEMS), founded in 1999 by Rachel Lloyd, a young woman who had been sexually exploited as a teenager. She came

to the U.S as a missionary to work with adult women exiting prostitution. She is committed to ending commercial sexual exploitation and domestic trafficking of children by changing individual lives, and transforming public perception.