

THE WORLD WE

WANT FOR GIRLS

POVERTY
FEAR VIOLENCE
ABUSE HUNGER
DISCRIMINATION
MORTALITY
INJUSTICE

PROSPERITY EQUALITY
VOLUNTEERING ADVOCACY
EDUCATION POWER SKILLS
PEACE LIFE HEALTH RIGHTS
OPPORTUNITY ASPIRATION
LEARNING CITIZENSHIP
TOOLS RESPECT SAFETY
PARTICIPATION TOLERANCE
SOLUTIONS LEADERSHIP
VOICES DEVELOPMENT
FUN AUTONOMY

WHAT?

First International Day of the Girl

WHEN?

11 October 2012

WHY A SPECIAL DAY?

An international day dedicated to girls helps bring attention to girls' rights and the unique challenges girls face due to their gender and age.

Having a special day for girls emphasizes that the world is different for girls than it is for boys, as well as being different for girls than it is for women. WAGGGS is proud to have supported the campaign for this long-awaited day! The day provides an opportunity to attract attention to the issues girls are facing, to solutions that are required from decision-makers and society, and to empower girls to change the world for the better.

WHO?

There are 900 million adolescent girls and young women in the world, 10-24 years old.

WHAT IS THE SITUATION FOR GIRLS AROUND THE WORLD?

The Convention on the Rights of the Child guarantees the rights of ALL children.

World leaders agreed that children needed a special convention just for them because those under 18 years of age often need special care and protection that adults do not. The Convention protects children's rights by setting standards in health care, education, legal, civil and social services. However, entrenched gender discrimination undermines the efforts towards ensuring human rights for all children. The fact is that despite the near-universal ratification of the Convention, millions of girls today are denied their human rights.

FACT SHEET



World Association
of Girl Guides
and Girl Scouts

SO WHAT IS THE REAL SITUATION FOR GIRLS TODAY?

In every walk of life, girls and young women lag behind boys and young men due to persistent discrimination, inequality and injustice. Here are **11 major issues** girls face today.

2. POVERTY

Women and girls constitute 70 per cent of the world's poor, which is largely attributable to their limited access to education.⁵

4. HEALTH

Millions of girls lack access to health services and are subject to harmful practices. Some 14 million women and girls between ages 15 and 19 give birth each year.⁶ For this age group, complications of pregnancy and childbirth are a leading cause of death. The survival and health of mothers is essential to the well-being of the entire family - children are 10 times more likely to die within two years of their mothers' death.⁷

6. HIV / AIDS

HIV disproportionately affects girls in many parts of the world. Today women account for more than half of all people living with HIV worldwide, with young women at particular risk in many regions. In sub-Saharan Africa, the rate of HIV infection is nearly three times as high among young women (aged 15-24) as among young men.¹⁰

8. CHILD LABOUR AND TRAFFICKING

While more boys than girls are involved in child labour, it is estimated that roughly 90 per cent of children involved in domestic labour are girls.¹² Girls, on average, earn less than boys doing the same work. Women and girls make up 80 per cent of the people trafficked across national borders annually with the majority (79 per cent) trafficked for sexual exploitation.¹³

10. IDENTIFICATION DOCUMENTS

About 51 million births go unregistered every year.¹⁵ Lack of registration exacerbates children's poverty and marginalization. With no documents to prove their age or even their identity, basic services, such as health and education become beyond reach for those children. And girls with no documents to prove their age become particularly vulnerable to forms of violence such as rape, forced labour and trafficking.

1. EDUCATION

Girls still lag behind boys in secondary school participation.¹ Often kept home to care for the household and younger siblings, girls comprise nearly two thirds of the 130 million children in developing countries not in school.² By age 18, girls have received on average 4.4 years less education than boys.³ Yet for every year of schooling a girl's individual earning power increases by 10 to 20 per cent.⁴

3. EARLY MARRIAGE

About one in six adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 in the developing world are married. Early marriages are often enforced, limit the life choices for girls and are more likely to be violent relationships.

5. VIOLENCE

Violence against girls is commonplace and often tolerated. Globally up to 6 out of every 10 girls and women will experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime.⁸ Up to 50 per cent of sexual assaults are committed against girls under 16 years of age.⁹

7. NUTRITION

Girls run a greater risk of nutritional difficulties, particularly due to preferential feeding of boys. In sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia there is a considerably higher incidence of anaemia among female adolescents aged 15 to 19 as compared to their male counterparts.¹¹

9. FEMALE FOETICIDE

Girls face discrimination even before they are born. There are an estimated 100 million girls and women missing from the world because of the practice of female foeticide.¹⁴

11. PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

While participation of young people in decisions that affect their lives remains limited for both girls and boys, adolescent girls and young women face more challenges in participating in decision-making processes and having a fulfilling role in society.

Today, women make up less than 10 percent of world leaders. Globally less than one in five members of parliament is a woman.¹⁶ Among Fortune 500 companies, women constitute only three percent of the CEOs.¹⁷

1 UNICEF. The State of the World's Children 2011. <http://www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publication-pdfs/sowc2011.pdf>

2 UNICEF. Fact sheet: the Rights of girls. http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_of_girls.pdf

3 www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/briefing/girl/gcoverview.htm

4 www.unicef.org/gender/files/UNGEL_Recommendations_to_WGEFA_and_HLG_Feb11.pdf

5 www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_of_girls.pdf

6 UNFPA. Giving Special Attention to Girls and Adolescents. www.unfpa.org/gender/girls.htm

7 www.unicef.org/mdg/maternal.html

8 www.wagggsworld.org/en/take_action/violence/issues

9 social.un.org/youthyear/docs/fact-sheet-girl-youngwomen.pdf

10 UNFPA Aids Clock. www.unfpa.org/aids_clock/

11 & 12 www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publication-pdfs/sowc2011.pdf

13 Say No Unite to End Violence against Women campaign. www.saynotoviolence.org/issue/facts-and-figures

14 Plan. 2007. Because I am a girl: The State of the World's Girls 2007.

www.plan-international.org/about-plan/resources/publications/campaigns/because-i-am-a-girl-the-state-of-the-worlds-girls-2007/

15 www.unicef.org.nz/ChildProtection

16 www.unwomen.org/2011/09/world-leaders-draw-attention-to-central-role-of-womens-political-participation-in-democracy/

17 www.womenmovingmillions.org/how-we-do-it/facts/



11 THINGS THAT MUST HAPPEN TO CREATE THE WORLD WE WANT FOR GIRLS

The world has failed to make an equal and fair world for girls. But girls possess the potential and the power to change it. Girls and young women are powerful agents of change in their families, communities and countries. While recognition of their value and contribution continues to grow, much remains to be done.

We have identified **10 key interventions** that can begin to make the world we want for girls a reality.

1. EDUCATE GIRLS

When educated, girls are key to unlocking many of the world's most pressing problems: reducing poverty, advancing their communities and countries' social and economic development, decreasing maternal and child mortality, halting the spread of diseases, mitigating and adapting to climate change and promoting human rights. An educated girl turns challenges into opportunities.

3. CHANGE ATTITUDES AND CHALLENGE STEREOTYPES IN RELATION TO GIRLS

Positive changes in attitude towards girls so that they are valued, equal and respected widen their life opportunities, including healthy and safe futures, better and satisfying careers, stable employment, and an equal role in decision-making.

5. EMPOWER GIRLS

With enhanced leadership skills and knowledge, girls act as powerful agents of change and add to the multiplier effect in their communities, countries and globally. Girl leaders are instrumental in achieving improvements in their communities' environmental practices, gender balance in political representation, educational and economic achievements.

7. RESPECT AND REINFORCE THE LAW CONCERNING GIRLS

Make sure human rights envisaged by international conventions are not beyond reach for girls. Girls are particularly vulnerable to human rights abuses as they are often victims of double discrimination as females and as children. Enforced and fair legal system is an important precondition for protecting girls' rights and unlocking their fullest potential.

2. ENSURE GIRLS ARE HEALTHY

Ensuring girls have access to health services, have nutritional meals and adequate drinking water and sanitation facilities has intergenerational impact. Besides the fact that access to effective healthcare is a basic human right, improving girls' health and well-being is critical to achieving virtually all international development goals, from reducing maternal and child deaths and promoting gender equality to stimulating economic growth and poverty reduction.

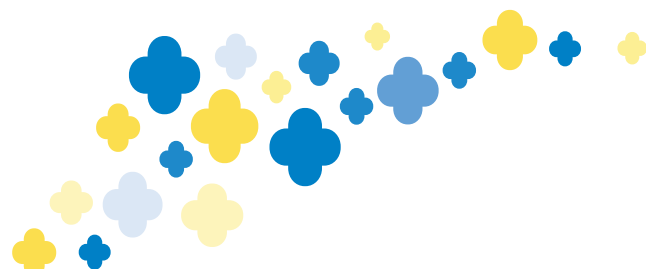
4. ENSURE GIRLS ARE PROTECTED AND FREE FROM VIOLENCE

Violence against girls constitutes a violation of basic human rights. It further reduces human capital, hampers productivity and undermines economic growth.¹⁸

6. LISTEN TO GIRLS AND INVOLVE THEM IN DECISIONS ABOUT THEIR OWN LIVES

Girls voices are important. Girls and young women's interests and priorities need to be taken into account. This will lead to decisions that are more responsive to their needs and better reflect their priorities and interests. When girls are equal partners in designing, planning and implementing policies and programmes that will affect their lives, their views and inputs provide an invaluable perspective and through their peer-to-peer networks they reach a significant amount of their peers.

¹⁸ www.unifem.org.au/Content%20Pages/Gender%20Issues/violence-against-women



8. INVEST IN GIRLS

Investing in girls is smart economics. It leads to better educated, healthier, and financially independent girls and young women. The impact of healthy and educated girls is intergenerational. When women and girls earn income, they reinvest 90 percent of it into their families.¹⁹

10. SUPPORT WOMEN TO BE ROLE MODELS FOR GIRLS

Provide girls with opportunities to see and talk to women who demonstrate what it means to reach their fullest potential. Set up and support existing programmes that encourage women role models to connect with girls.

9. PROVIDE GIRLS WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO REST, LEISURE TIME AND MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION IN THEIR COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY

Ensure girls have time to play with friends and explore different activities and ideas. Provide girls with positive environments where they can develop friendships, interact with their peers, speak freely and build their leadership skills.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

1. Imagine **the world we want for girls** by adding your ideas, films, pictures, quotes and stories to www.theworldwewantforgirls.tumblr.com
2. Make 11 October 2012 **a perfect day for girls** by holding events and doing activities on the day, using our activity pack
3. Help make the imaginary reality by making a **commitment to girls** at theworldwewantforgirls.tumblr.com/commitment
4. Make sure 11 October 2012 is just the beginning...
Help us implement the **2012 Day of the Girl action plan**

¹⁹ The Girl Effect Media Kit. http://www.girleffect.org/uploads/documents/2/Girl_Effect_Media_Kit.pdf

