



## EMPOWER GIRLS WITH EDUCATION

The Keeping Girls in School Act (H.R. 4134, S. 2276)

### IMPACT

- When a girl in the developing world receives 7 years of education, she marries 4 years later and has fewer children.
- Women make up more than two-thirds of the world's 796 million illiterate people.
- If all women had a secondary education, child deaths would be cut in half, saving 3 million lives.
- An extra year of secondary school boosts girls' eventual wages between 15–25%.
- All girls finishing secondary education by 2030 could boost the GDP of developing countries by 10% on average over the next decade and every \$1 spent on girls' empowerment and education would generate a \$2.80 return.<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

COVID-19 has devastated the livelihoods of many families around the world, limited the accessibility of quality education, and recent estimates suggest 11 million girls may not return to school due to the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. This is in addition to the 130 million girls globally who were out of school before the pandemic. Child marriage, early pregnancy, family pressures, violence, harassment, and poverty keep girls-- especially adolescent girls-- from staying in school. We must address these critical barriers that keep girls from reaching their full potential.

### Why it matters

When we invest in girls, the dividends are immeasurable. Adolescent girls who remain in school are more likely to live longer and marry later. The economic benefits of girls' education are substantial. Educated women earn higher wages and raise healthier and more educated children. Their voices are better heard in their communities. This results in stronger economies, more peaceful nations, and more equitable systems.

### ASK

Please cosponsor the Keeping Girls in School Act. This bill leverages innovative financing to build stronger partnerships prioritizing adolescent girls' access to education worldwide. It fights poverty and promotes global stability.



## About this bill

Significant progress has been made toward gender parity in primary school, but a gap exists when girls reach secondary school. This bill brings critical attention to programs and policies that support adolescent girls' access and enrollment in quality education by focusing on overcoming barriers that stand in their way. The Keeping Girls in School Act:

- Recognizes the importance of secondary education for girls and highlights the key barriers that girls face in completing their secondary schooling.
- Emphasizes both access to and the quality of education for girls and requires that foreign assistance programs take a more holistic approach, reducing specific barriers that keep adolescent girls out of school, allowing them to thrive.
- More important now than ever. With the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic affecting nearly 91 percent of the world's student population, 11 million girls globally may not return to school because of COVID-19 related disruptions to education.



### STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR GIRLS EDUCATION IN UGANDA

In Uganda, only one in four girls makes it past grade 10. Once out of school, girls are at high risk of HIV infection, gender-based violence, child marriage, and pregnancy. World Vision's DREAMS Strengthening School Community Accountability for Girls Education (SAGE) project in Uganda, funded by the State Department and PEPFAR, aims to reduce girls' secondary school dropout. It engages teachers, parents, faith leaders, and community members, who all play an important role in girls' education.

Across the 151 schools in 10 districts, 95 percent of the girls at high risk of dropping out stayed in school, including 17 who dropped out and returned to school after a home visit.

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1 <https://www.planusa.org/docs/The-Case-For-Holistic-Investment-In-Girls.pdf>



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