

WOMEN & EDUCATION

"Investment in girls' education may well be the highest-return investment available in the developing world," Larry Summers, former Chief Economist of the World Bank.

Globally

- **Two out of three** countries in the world face gender disparities in primary and secondary education and as many as half will not achieve the goal of gender parity in education by 2015 (a UN Millennium Development Goal).¹
- Each year of primary school **boosts girls' eventual wages** by 10-20%. An extra year of secondary school will boost them by 15-20%.²
- Women make up **two thirds** of the world's illiterate.³
- Of all the primary-school age girls globally, **20% are not in school**.⁴
- Girls face **many barriers** to getting an education that boys do not. Some of these include:
 - Forced child marriage / Pregnancy
 - Domestic / Carer responsibilities
 - The commute to school may be too dangerous
 - Perceptions that women should not have an education
 - Poor families will send their sons to school before they send their daughters
- A 6-year-old girl in South Asia will typically spend **6 years** in school, compared with 9 years for a boy.⁵

¹http://www.alternet.org/story/148292/why_girls_around_the_world_dont_get_to_go_to_school accessed on 12/08/2014

² United Nations International Year of Youth *Fact Sheet: Girls and Young Women* <http://social.un.org/youthyear/launch.html#facton> 13 March 2014

³ http://www.womensagenda.com.au/talking-about/opinions/the-preschool-gender-gap-hurting-australian-girls/201407024264?utm_source=Women%27s+Agenda+List&utm_campaign=382555676c-Women_s_Agenda_daily_01_07_2014&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f3750bae8d-382555676c-30659725#.U7TEcRaWduY accessed on 11 November 2014

⁴ Half the Sky <http://www.halftheskymovement.org/issues/education> Accessed on 12/08/2014

⁵ World Bank 'Gender, ICT and Education.'

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTGENDER/EXTICTTOOLKIT/0,,contentMDK:20272989~menuPK:562602~pagePK:64168445~piPK:64168309~theSitePK:542820,00.html> accessed on 12/08/2014

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Locally

- The Asia-Pacific Region is losing **\$16-30 billion** annually as a result of its gender gaps in education.⁶
- Young Australian females continue to participate in full-time education at higher rates than males and are more likely than males to remain at school until Year 12. Despite this, they are more **likely to be underemployed** than young Australian males.⁷
- Young Australian women now make the decision to go on to university studies at a rate almost 1.4 times higher than young men and around 150,000 more women are enrolled in an Australian university than men. **Despite this**, women receive lower returns from university education than men, with women holding a bachelor degree earning on average 58% of what men with a bachelor degree will earn over their lifetime.⁸
- An often overlooked side-effect of this is that women therefore take far longer to pay off their HECS/HELP debt, which **increases** the required interest.⁹
- In Australia in 2013, women accounted for only **28%** of academic appointments above senior lecturer generally; and in the natural and physical sciences, they accounted for **only 17%**.¹⁰
- Many young Australian females not engaged in employment, education or training are occupied with **childcare or domestic duties**, while young Australian males are more likely to be travelling or on holidays.¹¹
- Fewer young Australian women than young men are fully engaged in education, training and/or work and the gap between women and men **has not improved** over the last 10 years.¹²
- In Australia, **3.4% fewer girls** than boys attend a preschool program and in NSW this figure is 6%.¹³

⁶ The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) <http://www.unescap.org/publications> accessed on 12/08/2014

⁷ Foundation for Young Australians *How Young People are Faring – Report 2013* <http://www.fya.org.au/research/hypaf2013/> accessed on 12 March 2014

⁸ <http://theconversation.com/higher-education-changes-another-hit-for-australian-women-27370> accessed 11/11/14

⁹ <http://theconversation.com/higher-education-changes-another-hit-for-australian-women-27370> accessed 11/11/14

¹⁰ <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/opinion/gender-gap/story-e6fgrcko-1226685084114> accessed on 13/10/15

¹¹ Foundation for Young Australians *How Young People are Faring – Report 2013* <http://www.fya.org.au/research/hypaf2013/> accessed on 12 March 2014

¹² COAG Reform Report 'Comparing Outcomes for Women and Girls Across Australia' <http://www.coagreformcouncil.gov.au> accessed on 15/06/2014

¹³ [http://www.womensagenda.com.au/talking-about/opinions/the-preschool-gender-gap-hurting-australian-girls/201407024264?utm_source=Women%27s+Agenda+List&utm_campaign=382555676c-](http://www.womensagenda.com.au/talking-about/opinions/the-preschool-gender-gap-hurting-australian-girls/201407024264?utm_source=Women%27s+Agenda+List&utm_campaign=382555676c-Women_s_Agenda_daily_01_07_2014&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f3750bae8d-382555676c-30659725#.U7TEcRaWduY)

[Women_s_Agenda_daily_01_07_2014&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f3750bae8d-382555676c-30659725#.U7TEcRaWduY](http://www.womensagenda.com.au/talking-about/opinions/the-preschool-gender-gap-hurting-australian-girls/201407024264?utm_source=Women%27s+Agenda+List&utm_campaign=382555676c-Women_s_Agenda_daily_01_07_2014&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f3750bae8d-382555676c-30659725#.U7TEcRaWduY) accessed on 13/10/14