

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.

II COMPREHENSION: (15pts)

(Base all your answers on the text)

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

1 Doreen is encouraged to continue her studies.

.....
.....
.....

2 The African governments have always been aware of the importance of female education.

.....
.....
.....

3 Half of the African girls are not educated because their parents cannot pay for their education.

.....
.....
.....

B Answer these questions: (3 pts)

1 How did African governments try to solve the problem of the low rate of girls' schooling?

.....
.....
.....

2 What are the two factors that prevent many African children from going to school?

.....
.....
.....

3 Why did post-independent countries educate boys?

.....
.....
.....

C Complete this sentence: (2pt)

1 "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? (2pts)

1 Their (paragraph 3) =

2 others (paragraph 4) =

II LANGUAGE (15 POINTS)

A Read this conversation and put the verbs in brackets into the correct tense: Present perfect or Past simple (4 pts)

Alex : In the evenings I often play chess with my next door neighbor Jack Speed. I(play) chess with him ever since I (come) to live here ten years ago. He(be) here all his life; he (inherit) the house from his father, another great chess player.

Bob : you ever(play) chess with Jack's father?

Alex: We (play) once or twice but he (die) a year after I (arrive).

B Circle the correct words (3 pts)

- A- Just look at those dark clouds!
B- I see. It looks like *we're going to have / we'll have* some rough weather ahead.
- A- I'm tired. I think *I'll take / I'm taking* a little nap. Wake me up when the movie begins.
B- OK. Sweet dreams.
- A- Last Friday at 5.30 P.M., a blue Honda Accord *has hit / hit* 35-year-old Lisa Coleman while she *crossed / was crossing* the street at Broadway and 10th Avenue.
- He *never feels / is never feeling* relaxed when he's behind the wheel.
- It was a holiday yesterday, so I *didn't have to be / mustn't be* at work.

C Complete the sentences with the correct form of these phrasal verbs: (5 pts)

run away – live up to – go on – knock down – run after

- The boxer said he would his opponent in the first round.
- The police the guy who'd stolen it, but he was too fast for them.
- I was disappointed. The concert didn't my expectations.
- Tony and on talking about his adventures and I was so bored.
- You can't from the consequences. You have to face them.

D Rewrite the words in capitals in the correct form (3 pts)

- Look at that old man. He acts as if he were **INSANITY**
- Shall we try Zorbing together or shall we go? **SEPARATE**
- Many things about Venus remain , including the cause of mysterious bursts of radio waves. **KNOW**
- What will we need to go camping. **EQUIP**
- How many does the museum get every month? **VISIT**
- I didn't like being in a harness, but I had to do it for my own safety. **STRAP**