



## Women Education and Women Health: Inseparable Attributes and Ingredients for a Healthy and Economically Productive Population

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### Woman as primary and necessary source of new life

Humanity is blessed to have women as the primary and necessary channel, incubators and shelter of the initial stages of life. New human life begins with the process whereby a sperm from a man is shed into the vagina, travels meandering the landscape of the uterus with energy to follow the narrow path of the fallopian tubes and meet a ripe and healthy egg just released from the ovary of a healthy woman. The resulting union initiates a vibrant and delicate process whereby millions of cells are formed and organised into complex organs and structures creating one of the most beautiful miracles, a living creature- a new human being, who shall dwell and enjoy wonderful nine months of swimming and floating in a quiet buoyant and safe heaven, the belly of a woman. In this period, the new human creation shall never want because mother shall provide her with all the necessary resources she needs for her development and growth to reach birth. Blessed be to dear mother for providing unconditionally this heavenly home for the new human being, albeit for a temporary period.

The same woman shall then endure the pains that only she can describe of giving birth and yet smile, cuddle the new-born with maternal love and begin another long and challenging journey of taking care of the new born in the harsh environment to which herself and the new-born are so vulnerable. Mother shall always be there for her from the time of birth, through the dangerous first year of life as she gets confronted by monstrous threats from diseases she has never known before. Mother shall have passed to her some protective immunity, to shield and give her a chance to survive for some initial months. This gracious woman will be there as the first teacher to take her through learning how to crawl, stand, walk and begin fighting for the worldly resources and to demand

the right to be heard, recognized and respected. There is no greater human bond than that of mother and child in the first year of life. How that bond influences the future of the child is a matter for research. However, every child learns to demand a decent, respectable life, good health and education and mother is the first teacher to educate her and encourage her to stand up and recognise her rights as a human being. These rights including right to life and liberty, freedom of opinion and expression, right to work and education are enshrined among others in the human rights charter [1].

### Women education for health and economic gains

Mothers have the noble role as our first teachers on how to survive and thrive. They mould our lives as we grow to become resilient against social and economic challenges posed by the tempestuous world. We must therefore accept women's need for education and give every woman EDUCATION! Good education that makes her well informed of herself, her strengths, her vulnerabilities and how best to maintain herself in the best physical, emotional and mental status. Education that informs her of her vulnerability during pregnancy and childbirth and give her the ability to make informed decisions about pregnancy and in addressing its challenges. Education that will empower her and prevent her from being a victim of societal misleading practices like vaginal genital mutilation, child marriages and violence that makes her a slave at her own household like women battering. Education that shall give her a powerful voice to become giant informed decision maker and changer of societal norms, hence preventing the vicious cycle of poor uneducated girls getting married at childhood and falling victims of sexual abuse and harassment to bear children in poverty who will not have a chance for education and shall fall into the same deadly poverty pit that their mother fell into. Women education is vital for

social and economic development of the global community, countries, communities and individual households. It is key to achieving the sustainable development goals [2-5].

### Women unquestionable unmet needs and global shame

If we boast of civilization and are truly committed to achieving the sustainable development goals, then we must be ashamed of our failure to meet the many physical, social and economic needs of women. Failure to give women their human rights!

#### It is a shame that:

- Maternal mortality ratio remains unacceptably high in many low- and middle-income countries when we have the means for safety in pregnancy and childbirth.
- Neonatal mortality and infant mortality rate stand unacceptably high when we have the means for protecting all children from early childhood diseases and health risks.
- Vaccine coverage against childhood illnesses remains unacceptably low in many low- and middle-income countries.
- We still have children who never get the chance to attend school and majority of these are girls
- School girls' needs are not addressed to the extent that Sanitary pads remain an impediment to good school attendance for girls.

The gains of investing in girls' education are numerous and vital for our social and economic development [2-5]. Having girls in school is key to ending childhood marriage and sexual slavery [6,7].

### System change is inevitable for our survival

Global, national and societal systems are still posing strong barriers against women education denying them of decision-making powers at all levels of society. Shameful acts against the health and well-being of women, like women battering and sexual violence still exist. Unacceptably many women and children die for lack of access to health because health seeking decision is in the hands of their male partners, who may put money first before health [9].

Educating women is educating the community and will result in informed decisions and effective positive behaviour change for a healthier and more prosperous world. In the wake of the 2020 Women's Day with the theme "Women's rights", let us join hands in solidarity and determination towards giving women one of the important human rights "right to EDUCATION".

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