

PM steps up UK effort to get every girl in the world into school

New UK funding to give millions of girls around the world the chance to go to school and get a quality education will be announced by Boris Johnson today.

Speaking at the UN General Assembly the Prime Minister will announce £515 million to help get over 12 million children – half of them girls – into school, this will boost economic growth and improve women's rights in some of the poorest countries in the world.

Supporting the empowerment of girls and women is a priority for the Prime Minister, who used his first speech on the steps of Downing Street to underline the pledge he made as Foreign Secretary that all girls should receive 12 years of quality education.

Globally 131 million girls do not go to school, with teenage girls and young women three times more likely than young men to be out of school or work. In Tanzania, one in three girls marry and become pregnant before the age of 18, and more than one in ten girls are victims of sexual violence on their way to school.

But girls' education is a key driver determining a country's economic success. A child whose mother can read is 50% more likely to live past the age of five and twice as likely to attend school herself, one additional school year can increase a woman's earnings by 20%, and \$28 trillion would be added to global GDP if women had the same role in the labour market as men.

Today's funding builds on the £90 million the Prime Minister committed at the G7 Summit last month for education in conflict areas.

Ahead of an event on education and the Sustainable Development Goals today, the Prime Minister said:

Four years ago the world came together and agreed that every child has a right to an education and a fair chance in life. We enshrined that promise in the Sustainable Development Goals. Right now, we are breaking our promise to the world's children, and to countless girls and young women who deserve better.

On current estimates it will take another eighty years to achieve the equality of opportunity we said we would deliver within fifteen. That means decades of girls who should be growing up to be doctors, teachers, entrepreneurs, and prime ministers having their dreams snatched away from them.

I want girls to achieve their potential. I want that for all girls, whether they were born in London, Lagos, Lima or Lahore. And I want the world to stop wilfully neglecting the enormous benefits that

accrue for everyone when girls are given an education and a job.

UK funding will ensure even more girls can fulfil their potential by:

- teaching basic literacy and numeracy
- getting children living in conflict zones including the Sahel into school
- and mobilising an additional \$5 billion of investment for education in Africa and Asia, with a focus on the most marginalised children

This new spending commitment will contribute to global efforts to meet a number of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals – in particular the goal of ensuring equal access for men and women to education.

International Development Secretary Alok Sharma said:

It is staggering that a child whose mother can read is 50% more likely to live past the age of five and twice as likely to attend school themselves.

If we educate girls today we will transform the world of tomorrow and ensure all future generations thrive. That is why the UK is increasing support to give every girl across the world the chance to go to school.