

THE REVOLUTION WILL BE LED BY A

12-YEAR-OLD GIRL

IF YOU WANT TO END POVERTY AND HELP THE DEVELOPING WORLD, THE BEST THING YOU CAN DO IS INVEST TIME, ENERGY, AND FUNDING INTO ADOLESCENT GIRLS. IT'S CALLED THE GIRL EFFECT, BECAUSE GIRLS ARE UNIQUELY CAPABLE OF INVESTING IN THEIR COMMUNITIES AND MAKING THE WORLD BETTER. BUT HERE ARE 10 THINGS THAT STAND IN THEIR WAY:

1 LET'S SEE SOME ID
Without a birth certificate or an ID, a girl in the developing world doesn't know and can't prove her age, protect herself from child marriage, open a bank account, vote, or eventually get a job. That makes it hard to save the world.

2 ILLITERACY DOES NOT LOOK GOOD ON A RESUME...
70% of the world's out-of-school children are girls. Girls deserve better. They deserve quality education and the safe environments and support that allow them to get to school on time and stay there through adolescence.

4 THE FACE OF HIV IS INCREASINGLY YOUNG AND FEMALE
When girls are educated about HIV, they stand a better chance of protecting themselves. But education is not enough. Girls need to be empowered and supported to make their own choices.

3 ...AND PREGNANCY DOESN'T LOOK GOOD ON A LITTLE GIRL
Child marriages are the norm in many cultures where girls' bodies aren't considered their own property. Pregnancy is the leading cause of death for girls 15-18 years old. Girls have a right to be able to protect their health and their bodies.

5 A NICE PLACE TO WORK WOULD BE NICE
If girls have the skills for safe and decent work, if they understand their rights, if they are financially literate and considered for nontraditional jobs at an appropriate age, if they get their fair share of training and internships, they will be armed and ready for economic independence.

7 ADOLESCENT GIRLS AREN'T JUST "FUTURE WOMEN"
They're girls. They deserve their own category. They need to be a distinct group when we talk about aid, education, sports, civic participation, health, and economics. Yes, they are future mothers. But they actually live in the present.

6 THE CHECK IS IN THE MAIL, BUT IT'S GOING TO YOUR BROTHER
LESS THAN TWO CENTS of every international aid dollar is directed to girls. And yet when a girl has resources, she will reinvest them in her community at a much higher rate than a boy would. If the goal is health, wealth, and stability for all, a girl is the best investment.

8 LAWS WERE MADE TO BE ENFORCED
Girls need advocates to write, speak up, lobby, and work to enforce good laws and change discriminatory policies.

9 SHE SHOULD BE A STATISTIC
We won't know how to help girls until we know what's going on with them. Hey, all you governments and NGOs and social scientists: You're accountable! We need an annual girl report card for every country so we can keep track of which girls are thriving and which girls are not.

10 EVERYONE GETS ON BOARD OR WE'RE ALL OVERBOARD
Boys, girls, moms, dads. If we don't all rally to support girls, nothing is going to change. Not for them, and not for us. Change starts with you. So get going.

