



Global Symposium: ***“Education: A Critical Path to Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment”***

On **October 2–3, 2007** the Human Development Network (Education) and the Poverty Reduction and Economic Management (Gender) of the World Bank will hold a global symposium.

What is the Global Symposium about?

The symposium is about:

- Reenergizing the global discourse on gender and education in development;
- Highlighting the significant progress achieved in the past two decades in gender parity especially at the primary level and identifying ways of sustaining and increasing similar gains at other levels;
- Exploring new avenues for accelerating the response to intransigent issues and emerging challenges.

Why a symposium at this time?

- In spite of significant gains that have been made especially at the primary level, many countries are still struggling with a backlog of out of school girls while trying to ensure that those enrolled successfully complete their studies.
- We now face the difficult downstream issues of access to and graduation from other levels of education and training required for women’s empowerment and contribution to economic growth.
- To backstop and underpin the 2006 World Bank Gender Action Plan¹ which addresses these goals, recognizing education as the most critical pathway to their achievement.

Who will attend?

The symposium will bring together key Government representatives from all regions, senior officials from bilateral and multilateral agencies, NGOs, charitable foundations, academic institutions and the private sector.

How will the discussions be organized?

The discussions will be organized around six themes, notably:

- Quality and gender equality
- Social exclusion
- Post–primary education/training and transition from school to work
- Emerging issues such as HIV/AIDS, gender based violence, disabilities and fragile states
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Financing mechanisms

What is the expected outcome of this symposium?

- Exchange of experiences of innovative practices that have worked effectively to improve gender equality
- Identification and promotion of promising new initiatives for tackling intransigent issues
- Agreement on concrete measures to expedite the transition from advocacy to results driven initiatives

More information is available at <http://www.worldbank.org/education/girls/>.

¹World Bank (2006): *Gender Equality as Smart Economics: A World Bank Group Action Plan*