

Week 2 Discussion Guide: Girls' Education



S. Smith Patrick

Themes from the Week

- Gender Preference and Unequal Access
- Millennium Education Goals
- Education as a Step for Empowering Women
- Quality Education vs. Access to Education
- Cultural Factors

Before You Begin

Visit the Discussion Toolkit instructions page and read the instructions thoroughly to prepare for group discussions: <http://internationalwomenshealth.org/interact.html>

The toolkits are a jumping-off point to start your conversations. You may have questions of your own that you wish to discuss with your group, which we also encourage.

As you plan your discussion session and choose which of the following questions to address, please remember that you do not have to get through all of the topics. The main purpose of meeting together is to have an engaged and thoughtful discussion about International Women's Health and Human Rights.

Part I. Initial Response (5-10 minutes)

Briefly introduce yourself to your teammates and describe one new idea or fact that you learned from the course this week.

Part II. Topical Questions to consider with your group. We have left space for you to write down your thoughts on the subject as you meet with your group.

Unequal Access to Education (15 minutes)

1. Education seems to be an essential platform for women's empowerment. Describe the challenges and benefits of women and girls having access to education.

2. How do culture and patriarchy hinder women from obtaining equal access to educational opportunities?

Millennium Development Goals (15 minutes)

3. Consider the Millennium Development Goals pertaining to education (www.un.org/millenniumgoals/education.html). Where has there been success, and where does girls' education still lag behind? Discuss the situation in Latin America, the Middle East, or in your own country.

Taking Action (10-20 minutes)

4. What are some ways that women's groups around the world are confronting the issue of education? Think about various organizations mentioned in the course textbook *From Outrage to Courage* or experiences in your own country.

BONUS QUESTION: In Her Shoes

5. Imagine you are a girl living in Afghanistan under the Taliban. The enforcement of discriminatory laws denies you the right to go to school, to work, and to leave the house without a male escort. You value education, but your only option is to attend an underground, illegal school. Getting caught could put you and your family at risk of violent abuse or even death.

How do you respond? Is it worth it to risk your life to gain access to education? If you attend classes illegally, how might this affect your family?

Please reference the experiences of real women in Afghanistan:

Afghan Woman Fights for Women's Education. NPR. 2 July 2013.
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=198013799>

Trust in Education. "Life As an Afghan Woman." <http://www.trustededucation.org/why-afghanistan/life-as-an-afghan-woman>

Part III. Submit a Report

When you have finished, please share your group's reflections with the IWHHR community. As a team, make sure to fill out the information needed for the Discussion Toolkit report **before you conclude your meeting**. Your group only needs to submit ONE report.

The online report form asks for the following:

Date of your Meeting

Group Members participating

What you discussed (short write-up of a few sentences)

City and Country of each participant

Was the meeting **online** or **in person**?

Access the Sharing Portal at:

www.setsail.io

Note: For those interested in a Statement of Accomplishment from Stanford University, you should also write an individual reflection on today's group meeting and post it on the Sharing Portal. You must attend at least three group meetings during this course to receive the Statement of Accomplishment.