

==== CHAT BOX TRANSCRIPT ====

• LIVE •

PANEL CONVERSATION

05.04.22

12PM - 13:30PM CET




Improving Rural Girls Access to Education: how integrating solutions to transport poverty reduces systemic barriers



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Winnie
Sambu



Susan
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Nicole
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Lauren Rumble
(Moderator)

Around the world, about [258 million children](#) are currently not attending school - including [12 million children who never enrolled](#) and will likely live out their lives having never set foot in a classroom. According to the World Bank, “*The single most important determinant of primary school enrollment is the proximity of a school*”. The further children are from school, the less likely they are to attend school - this is especially true for girls.

In low and middle-income countries, the long walk to school amplifies the already considerable challenges facing rural girls including poverty, insecurity and violence, and social norms hostile or indifferent to girls' education.

Representatives from three NGOs demonstrated how transport poverty is a barrier to girl's attending and staying in schools. They also presented the solutions they are implementing to improve education outcomes, support girls' autonomy, and reduce early marriage and pregnancy in India, Zambia, and Malawi. The Population Council shared findings and implications from a new systemic review of policies and interventions on gender-barriers to girls' school participation and learning.

OUR PANELISTS:

- [Safeena Husain](#), Founder of Educate Girls, a non-profit focused on mobilising communities for girls' education in India's rural and educationally backward areas.
- [Winnie Sambu](#), Research and Evaluation Manager for World Bicycle Relief, an organisation partnering with communities for 16 years to

improve rural access to education, economic opportunity, gender equality and healthcare.

- [Susan Silka](#), the national director of CAMFED, Malawi, a pan-African movement revolutionizing how girls' education is delivered through a model that radically improves girls' prospects of becoming independent, influential women.
- [Nicole Haberland](#), a senior associate at Population Council, a leading research organization in health and development issues, particularly girls education and empowerment

The discussion was moderated by [Lauren Rumble](#), director of gender quality at UNICEF, a global leader in girls' education and gender equality.

Winnie Sambu : Hi Anna!

GW - Kathleen Holmlund : We are in Geneva

margaritaforster : HI, my camera is not working, sorry!!! I'm in Zürich!

Manuela Balliet : London

Sandrine Furter : I'm in Paris

JRS - Jill : Jill Drzewiecki from Rome - with Jesuit Refugee Service

susan bornstein : Greetings from Washington, DC

Nikolai Räber, Deborah Bieri, Michel Ducommung from Velafrica : Greetings from Berne, Switzerland

Winnie Sambu : Greetings from Cape Town!

Farayi : Greetings from Harare!

Nicole Haberland, Population Council (she/her) : Hi! From New York

Safeena Husain, Educate Girls, Mumbai : hello from Mumbai!

GW - Kathleen Holmlund : Hello everyone! We'll be starting in a minute. Welcome to the "Panel Conversation: Improving Rural Girls Access to Education: how integrating solutions to transport poverty reduces systemic barriers" in collaboration with World Bicycle Relief. With Lauren Rumble director of gender quality at UNICEF, moderating. Our panelists are:

- Safeena Husain, Founder of Educate Girls
- Winnie Sambu, Research and Evaluation Manager for WBR
- Susan Silka, the national director of CAMFED, Malaw
- Nicole Haberland, a senior associate at Population Council

From GW - Kathleen Holmlund : We are happy to have you here!

Lauren Rumble : Wonderful to see so many friends online. Lauren from New York

Chantal Goetz : hi from Liechtenstein

GW - Kathleen Holmlund : We ask that you kindly put your full name on your profile so that we can keep attendance

Manuela Balliet, Together for Girls : Amazing work, Safeena
Nicole Haberland, Population Council (she/her) : Policies and interventions to remove gender-related barriers to girls' school participation and learning in low- and middle-income countries: A systematic review of the evidence
Full paper: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/cl2.1207>
Summary: <https://www.campbellcollaboration.org/better-evidence/gender-related-barriers-to-girls-school-participation.html>

Nicole Haberland, Population Council (she/her) : egeresource.org

Atalanti Moquette : Please put your question or comments on the chat.

Chantal Goetz : where do these bicycles come from? can these girls take care of the bikes?

Atalanti Moquette : Those answers will be given by Winnie.

Oren Whyche-Shaw : As a board member of WBR, proud of the work that Winnie and everyone at WBR is doing!

Oren Whyche-Shaw : Hi, Susan. Glad I could catch some of the program. Anyone else from the board here?

susan bornstein : The study Winnie is referring to is at
https://worldbicyclerelief.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/WBR_IPA-Research-Brief_031522.pdf

GW - Kathleen Holmlund : Any questions on this topic? Please share them with us in the chat section. We will take all questions at the end of the session.

Vibeke Thomsen : Thank you for these great presentations! For Winnie: are the girls also taught to take care / repair the bikes? How is the follow-up done on the quality of the bikes in the long term?

susan bornstein : Girls with bicycles were 19% less likely to drop out of school in the WBR study.

Vibeke Thomsen : On average, for how many years can a girl keep a bike until it's not usable anymore?

Lisa Martilotta's iPhone : Yes, a question for Winnie: security issue - do the girls and/or their families become targets of robber/other crime because they have this asset? How do you address that?

susan bornstein : With maintenance the bikes last well over 10 years. There are many bikes in Zambia that are still being ridden 12+ years later. We see them across the country, still in use. Accessing spare parts and mechanics in the communities.

Thelma Ayisi : Who pays for the maintenance of the bikes?

Delia Mamon, Fondation Graines de Paix : Does the WBF work both directly and with education NGOs?

Vibeke Thomsen : Thank you Susan, yes I am also curious to know who does the maintenance of the bikes (and provides the tools)

Thelma Ayisi : Does the need for maintenance and the cost discourage some families from keeping these bikes?

GW - Kathleen Holmlund : Thanks for joining us today. If you missed the beginning of this session or would like to watch it again, or share it with others, we are pleased to inform you that that all our sessions are recorded and available after the event finished.

Sarah Egbo : Great intervention onow are community members engaged to safeguard girls

susan bornstein : The participating families pay for bike maintenance. supported by the Bicycle Supervisory Committee, which manages the mechanic to ensure preventive maintenance and repairs are made

Atalanti Moquette : Distance, safety are barriers for girls continu using in school what happens areas where the terrain is not suitable for bikes?

Sarah Egbo : Provision of bicycles is a great idea! beyond this, I'll like to know how WBR & Camplife engages community members to ensure girls are not attacked on their way to school.

Thelma Ayisi : Thank you for the response Susan

susan bornstein : In the core WBR model the Bicycle Supervisory Committee determines which girls should receive bikes and whose families can sustain the bicycle. We are also piloting a model where the schools (vs the households) manage the bicycles to compare the approaches

susan bornstein : To Delia's question, yes, WBR works closely with both education NGOs, education ministries, communities (PTA, etc.) and schools

Delia Mamon, Fondation Graines de Paix : thanks! I will discuss this internally. Who should we contact pls. to discuss this with WBR?

Vibeke Thomsen : At Shecanhecan, we do lots of work in terms of providing girls (in France mainly for now) with period products and breaking the taboo. Feel free to get in touch if you're interested in collaboration on that topic! Let's break that taboo together :-)

JRS - Jill Drzewiecki : preach it sister!

Corinne Namblard : Thank you soooooo much dear Safeena for this key statement ! This are girls & women's rights !!!

Lisa Martilotta's iPhone : Yes yes amen

Atalanti Moquette : Well said Safeeba. Women's rights are human rights

susan bornstein : Please reach out to engage with WBR.
sbornstein@worldbicyclerelief. We'd love to talk with you

Corinne Namblard : May I strongly suggest you read "INVISIBLE WOMEN" from
Caroline Criado Perez

Lisa Martilotta's iPhone : Jerry McGuire 🥰💥

Farai Mpofu : Safeena ...yay! \$\$\$\$!

Corinne Namblard : By the waythe subtitle of INVISIBLE WOMEN is " exposing
data bias in a world designed by men" !

Winnie Sambu : On the question of safety for girls who have bicycles - our research
shows that actually girls report feeling safer because of the bicycles. Prior to
receiving bicycles, they reported feeling harassed/teased while walking to school
and afraid to walk alone. But feelings of safety has increased while using the
bicycles.

Kristen Knupp : Thank you everyone for this amazing panel discussion - your work
is fantastic and let's keep going on this effort in improve the lives of women and
girls!

GW - Kathleen Holmlund : Thank you for joining us today on this online session.
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regarding the upcoming events here: <https://givingwomen.ch/>

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Giving Women Events and Projects, please leave your email or contact
contactinfo@givingwomen.ch. Thank you!

Anna Weyerhaeuser : Power of one, Magic of many!

Anna Weyerhaeuser : Fantastic conversation!

Farai Mpofu : Enriching; galvanises us to keep at it in our corner, for now
@NdunaGirls

Sarah Egbo : Thanks everyone!