

## Give a Girl a Chance background readings New Community Project

**Reading One** This week (or month or whatever time frame beings used) we're giving you the chance to help out girls around the world who can't go to school. I'm not talking about a college education—I'm talking about finishing elementary school or having the chance to go to high school. Overall, about 100 million children in the world aren't even in grade school—and the number goes way up when you consider high school.

In the African nation of Sudan, only 1 out of 3 children who should be in school is in school. By high school, only 1 out of 20 is still in school. It's fun to miss a day or two of school sometimes, but do you think these children like not going to school? What's bad about not going to school (invite responses). Which of these are reasons children sometimes don't go to school in Sudan: a) their parents are too poor to send them b) there's not a school nearby c) there's no water at their school and they don't have a bottle to carry water from home d) because they're a girl e) because there aren't bathrooms—and if there are, there aren't separate ones for boys and girls. Which do you think? All of the above!

Some families in Sudan earn less than 50 cents a day for their work. It's hard to do about anything with that much money, much less send your children to school—even if it only costs a \$5 a month in a like place Sudan. What are some things you sometimes spend \$5? Would you be willing to give up some of those things to help a child in Sudan go to school for a month?

Jesus said, "Let the little children come," when his disciples wanted to shoo them away. With our offerings this week, we can help little children come to school who might not have been able to otherwise. I think Jesus would like that.

**Reading Two** More girls than boys don't go to school in the world. What good is an education for a young woman? (invite responses) An educated girl will marry later—rather than at 14 or 15 years old. She will have fewer and healthier children. She can get a better job, earning more money for her family. And she'll have less chance of getting diseases like AIDS.

Gloria is an 18 year-old Sudanese girl without much education. In fact, her family was so poor, they sent her off to work. Not at a fast-food place or the mall. They don't have those there anyway. They sent her to work for a gravel-maker. Her job was to make gravel by using a hammer to break big rocks into small rocks. She did this every day, all day, for 50 cents a day.

Sound like fun? You can do something about it. The Give a Girl a Chance project gives girls like Gloria a chance for a better life by helping them go to school. That's where our offerings are going this week. And all the money we collect goes to the girls—for real! And how much does it take to keep a girl in school for a month in Sudan? How much would that be for a year? Let's see how many girls we can keep in school for a year.

**Reading Three** In the south Asian nation of Nepal they have a saying, "To be born a daughter is a lost life." Families often don't value their daughters, and don't treat them very well. And what's worse, they sometimes sell them off to the highest bidder for as little as \$50—or send them to work factories in neighboring India.

Or they have a job like Puja. New Community Project director David Radcliff met her outside Kathmandu, Nepal. She and her mom were carrying bricks up a hill all day long. Together, they would earn 75 cents.

Once a girl has an education, she can begin to prove her worth to her family and community. That's what your contributions are helping to do today. The average US teenager spends \$100 every week on stuff—cars, CD's, caffeine, candy, clothes. That much money would keep a girl in Nepal in school for five months. And when we send money to the New Community Project for this program, they send every bit of it to the people who need it—something hardly any other groups do. Cool!

**Reading Four** Fatima (Fa'-ti-ma) is trying her best to take care of her three children, but it's not easy. She is a single mother, she can't read and write, and she lives in the country of El Salvador, where she is one of millions of poor people just trying to make ends meet.

In order to have enough food for her children and send them to school, she has to do what most other people in her village of Las Americas do to earn money—pick coffee. During the coffee picking season from November to February, this means getting up very early to walk up the mountain to where she will be picking coffee for the large land-owner. Once there, she gets her large bag and starts walking along the rows of coffee trees picking off the small ripe red beans. Not all of them are ripe—some are still green—so she has to pick carefully. She's a very good worker, but it takes her just all day to fill her sack—about 100 pounds of coffee. And the mountain is so steep that when the bag is full, she has to strap it to her forehead and crawl up the mountain on all-fours.

For all this hard work, she earns \$5. “No, it's not fair,” she says. “It's barely enough to buy food for my children and send them to school. But it's the only job I have.”

Here's a little math quiz for you: If we can get 30 cups of coffee from each pound of coffee, how many cups are there in 100 pounds? (3000) And if the coffee shop sells the coffee for \$2 per cup, how much money do they earn from 100 pounds of coffee? (\$6000) Hmmm, Fatima did all the hard work, and got paid \$5 for 100 pounds—while someone earned \$6000 for selling the 100 pounds of coffee after it had been brewed. Do you think that's fair?

Jesus treated women with a lot of respect. He had friends who were women, he protected a woman who was going to be hurt, he talked with women that no one else would talk to. How do you think he would feel about the way Fatima was being treated?

The New Community Project is sending \$3000 a year to El Salvador to help mothers like Fatima be able to have other kinds of work—to help them find jobs or start small businesses. It will be work that is not so hard and that pays a little more, making life better for Fatima and her children.

### **Reading Five**

Listen to what a young woman who volunteers in Sudan through the New Community Project wrote recently: *“I would also just like to say that I attended a meeting in which they handed out the uniforms to the girls receiving the scholarships and was able to represent NCP at that meeting and am delighted to tell you that the students, parents, headmasters and headmistress, and local officials are all giving Thanks and Praise to God for the blessing they've received and send their thanks and prayers back to the New Community Project. I was told to pass the message on and just wanted to let you know that the work you started here is prospering and God is definitely blessing these projects!”*

You can see how much difference our gifts make—to parents, teachers, people in the village—but most of all to the schoolchildren themselves!

*Give a Girl a Chance*  
New Community Project  
718 Wilder Street  
Elgin, IL 60123  
[www.newcommunityproject.org](http://www.newcommunityproject.org)