



STATEMENTS FROM ISSUE EXPERTS

"We at the World Bank know that gender equality is smart economics because investing in women promotes economic growth as well as social progress. Developing countries with higher gender equality tend to have lower poverty rates, and better progress on health, nutritional status and girls' education. Under the Gender Action Plan we have significantly increased focus on women in our projects in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America. Working with private sector partners is critical in the effort to empower women." ***Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Managing Director, The World Bank Group***

"We cannot build a world which is livable if it walks only on one foot—continuing to neglect, by obscure prejudices, 50 percent of the talent, skill, and energy available. Women throughout the world serve as powerful catalyst for change, and their immense talent, skill and entrepreneurial spirit is an incredible resource that should be tapped, developed and leveraged for overall benefit and advancement of societies." ***Aude Zieseniss de Thuin, President and Founder, The Women's Forum for the Economy and Society***

"By expanding access to education and promoting economic opportunity around the world, you address two critical pillars of development inextricably linked to the issues of global health and poverty. They are powerful undercurrents that affect a rising tide of socioeconomic advancement, advancement which is further amplified when this opportunity is extended to women." ***Jamie Drummond, Executive Director, ONE***

"Women's entrepreneurial capital has gone untapped for far too long in the developing world. Building women's human capital will have a multiplier effect: not just filling existing needs for scarce business skills, but creating new demands, new jobs, new wealth—and, let's hope, a more people-friendly global economy." ***Nancy Birdsall, President, Center for Global Development***

"It is vitally important that women have opportunities to develop their financial leadership skills. This initiative will help catalyze and promote the role of women in financial services for the poor and empower them to be leaders of the future." ***Dr. Helene Gayle, President and CEO, CARE USA***

"We know that primary and secondary education for girls is crucial to their ability to shape the course of their lives. But for girls to succeed, the skills they gain in school must match the jobs available in today's global marketplace. Yet that critical space – when girls transition from school to work – has been invisible to the financial and international development communities alike and investments to ensure a smooth transition have been limited. More than survive, we want women to thrive." ***Geeta Rao Gupta, President, International Center for Research on Women***

"The professional development of talent is a critical component of addressing global inequities. Providing women with access to education gives them entrepreneurial tools they need to build their own futures – which in turn creates a corps of leaders with the skill and will to effect broader change." ***Jacqueline Novogratz, Founder and CEO, Acumen Fund***

"Around the world women leaders are increasingly driving economic, political and social progress. They are the catalysts of change of our time. We know from a growing body of research—from the World Bank to the World Economic Forum—that investments in women's education and training pay significant dividends for society. Without women's full participation, no country can prosper, but in order to tap their potential, women need the tools for effective leadership. There is no better



investment for our world.” **Melanne Verveer, Co-founder and Chair Vital Voices Global Partnership**

“Creating more female entrepreneurs in developing and emerging economies satisfies all the requirements of smart development: the benefits will multiply far beyond the investment; it is sustainable over the long run; it is adaptable to local needs; it is focused; it is measurable and it helps beneficiaries, communities and states alike.” **Linda Rottenberg, Co-founder & CEO, Endeavor**

“Education and training are the foundation of women’s empowerment. When women are equipped with solid business knowledge and skills, they can effectively compete in the job market or become successful entrepreneurs, and in turn, empower other women to gradually transform society.” **Dr. Codou Diaw, Executive Director, Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE)**

“We cannot talk about building sustainable economies, sustainable democracies and sustainable societies without having strong and empowered women. Strong women lead to strong nations. This makes investments in their education, economic opportunities and political participation vital elements to building a more peaceful and secure world.” **Zainab Salbi, Founder and CEO, Women for Women International**

“While entrepreneurship is key at all levels of society, nowhere is it more important than for women and the dispossessed, who often do not have access to the traditional paths to progress and must carve out their own roads. By teaching the teachers to pass on the lessons of management, Harvard Business School will have the opportunity to contribute to the kind of practical education that can change people’s lives and help reshape societies.” **Michael Chu, Senior Lecturer of Business Administration, Harvard Business School**

“Reversing cycles of poverty can be an abstract conversation. With incentives of financial gain, families choose to keep their girls unmarried, healthy and in school. More girls grow up to become businesspeople, who create more opportunity for the girls that follow. Cycles of poverty are replaced by positive spirals of growth.” **Maria Eitel, President, Nike Foundation**