

Case Studies

on an Integral Approach to International Development



**Harnessing
Human
Potential for
True Social
Change.**

Educate Girls Globally

by Gail Hochachka

Drishti-Center for Integral Action • www.drishti.ca

drishti
centre for integral action

*This publication was made possible through a grant from
Canada's International Development Research Centre • www.idrc.ca*

Published © 2006

Table of Contents

Background	1
Research on Girls' Education	2
Global Attention and Action	2
The Context	3
Barriers to Girls' Education.....	3
Interior Barriers to Girls' Education	5
Integral Analysis of Barriers to Girls' Education	7
Description of The Approach: Educate Girls Globally	8
Brief Summary of Unique Elements of the EGG Approach	9
Program Results and Expansion	15
Analysis: Catalyzing Potential Via Education	16
Taking What Works to Scale	16
All Quadrant Focus	19
Communicating to Different Worldviews.....	20
From Dependency to Empowerment	24
A Preliminary Note on Working with Government.....	25
Further Discussion.....	26
Methodologies for Accessing Human Potential.....	26
A Cross-Cultural Approach.....	27
Results	27
Conclusion	28
Appendix 1: Key Informant Interviews	29
References.....	30
Endnotes	30

Background

The field of international development offers a view into some of the most heart-wrenching human suffering, as well as some of the most thrilling expressions of human potential. Among these, talking with girls about their dreams for an education particularly offers this dual-view—it is thrilling, in terms of the potential that girls around the globe contain in their very selves; and heart-wrenching to understand the large and complex challenges to actually obtaining that much sought-after education.

Sitting in her adobe house with a dirt floor, a rural Salvadoran girl once spoke to me about her dreams to become an architect, the design plans that she envisioned, and how architecture is, in her understanding, an expression of poetry in physical structure. We were in one of the most economically depressed parts of El Salvador, and without the income or connections, the reality of her dream becoming real was close to impossible. In this sense, the poverty of such a region is expressed as an erosion of opportunity. My heart overflowed hearing her vision, and it also broke considering the larger challenges to her realizing that vision.

Her story is echoes many others worldwide. Similar stories abound, and the unfulfilled dreams scatter the globe. Statistics are startling, despite international efforts to universalize girls' education. A recent report by Herz and Sperling (2004) entitled,

“What Works in Girls' Education. Evidence and Policies from the Developing World” reports:

104 million children aged 6–11 are not in school each year—60 million are girls. Nearly 40 percent of these out-of-school children live in sub-Saharan Africa; 35 percent live in South Asia.²

Facts on Girls Education

Research shows that when women in poor countries are educated:

- The birthrate falls;
- Family health improves (a United Nations study found that education of girls had a greater impact on health than medical, nutrition, water and sanitation interventions);
- Literacy accelerates (a mother with a primary education is 5 times [500%] more likely to send her child to school than a mother with no education);
- Perceptions of a woman's value in society change; and
- Both family and national income grow (10-20% for each additional year of schooling).

Research on Girls' Education

Recent research on girls' education goes beyond both stories and statistics, to draw unsuspecting connections between girls' education and overall social wellbeing.³ United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Kofi Annan, in his groundbreaking address to the Millennium Assembly reminded us that there can be no significant or sustainable transformation in societies—and no lasting reduction in global poverty—until girls receive the basic quality education they deserve—and take their rightful place as equal partners in development.⁴ A report published by the Department for International Development (DFID) in January 2005, explains how educating girls helps in tangible ways to make communities and societies healthier, wealthier, and safe, and it can also help to reduce child deaths, improve maternal health and tackle the spread of HIV and AIDS.⁵ Most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are interconnected and woven—success in one, stimulates positive gains in others, and vice versa—and this is particularly so with girls' education.⁶

The benefits to girls' education are social, physical, and even psychological, but they are also undeniably economic. Larry Summers, Harvard's president and a co-chair of the World Economic Forum, said in an interview before the conference:

The education of girls is
the single most important

investment that can be made in the developing world. Beyond the tangible economic benefits, it promotes smaller, healthier and happier families. Greater education of girls would pay off for its economic benefits alone, it would pay off for its social benefits alone and it would pay off for its health benefits alone as well.⁷

UNICEF notes how educating girls is a strategy to empower the next generation of women. This contributes to addressing many other related development issues, such as reducing poverty,⁸ decreasing infectious diseases including HIV/AIDS,⁹ and increasing community economic sustainability.

Global Attention and Action

Clearly, the global attention on girls' education places it as a key priority for international development. Yet the questions remain as to *how* to increase and sustain the numbers of girls in school. The UN Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality¹⁰ offered a series of recommendations focusing on developing countries and donor countries to improve both quality and access to schooling. For developing countries, these include: breaking the cycle of low education by supporting adult literacy programs designed for women and young girls.¹¹ While much money has been spent on promoting girls education, many international negotiations

and efforts from many different countries. Yet the projected impacts for 2005 were not met internationally, and the questions about effective implementation remain.

A number of successful projects exist, which shed light on the way forward. In this case study, I look at one such initiative. Educate Girls Globally is an NGO based in San Francisco, USA, currently working in India with an innovative, inspiring and inexpensive approach to promoting girls' education. This case study on this organization's approach is part of a project entitled *Case Studies on an Integral Approach to International Development* carried out by Drishti-Centre for Integral Action and funded by Canada's International Development Research Centre. My main research objective was to learn more about the EGG approach, particularly regarding how the project intends to work with the interior dimensions of international development and specifically girls' education. To engage this inquiry, I carried out key informant interviews with the project director and coordinators (see Appendix 1) and reviewed documentation regarding girls' education.

This case study is part of a series of six others from Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and South Asia. Each case study explores some of the innovative and unique methodologies currently being used to address and engage interiority in international development work. They case studies are available individually and as a series, for other development

practitioners and organizations as learning resource.

A complete description of this research project, including objectives, methodology, and findings can be found in the *Case Studies Overview and Synthesis*.

Below, I first discuss the context of the problem, including a brief analysis of the barriers to girls' education. Then, I continue to discuss the approach, methodologies and insights that Educate Girls Globally contributes to addressing this paradoxically thrilling and heart-wrenching issue.

The Context

The single most important factor preventing girls from attending and achieving in school is gender discrimination. Girls and boys both have hurdles to overcome. For girls the hurdles are, for the most part, higher and more frequent—simply because they are girls.

UNICEF¹²

Barriers to Girls' Education

The barriers to girls' education are varied, interrelated, and diverse. The general barriers include: the cost of schooling, unsafe or unhygienic school environments,

unsupportive legal frameworks around girls' education, social exclusion (due to caste, ethnicity, religion, pregnancy, or disability), heavy household duties, and the weak position of women in society.¹³

The first in that list is one of the most difficult barriers. Girls' education is perceived to be an economic burden to parents, particularly those who have come to rely on girls' contributions to the family income. Costs for girls' education tend to come in four forms (although this can vary greatly between cultures): tuition fees and other direct school fees; indirect fees (such as PTA fees, teachers' levies and fees for school construction and building); indirect costs (such as transportation and uniforms); and opportunity costs (such as lost household or paid labour).¹⁴

In certain countries that are not accustomed to sending girls to school, the social fabric is not set up to enable their education. Hidden costs appear when a family "goes against the grain" of the society to educate their girl children. For example, educating girls can incur extra costs, such as special transport or chaperones for safety and 'decency'. Moreover, an education may actually reduce girls' marriage prospects and raise dowry payments to unaffordable levels. For communities that rely heavily on economically active children, the price for girls attending school may be the entire family losing vital income.

UNICEF studies show how, often, when a choice is to be made between sending a girl or a boy to school, the family will put its scarce resources into the education of the boy, believing that it is a better long-term investment.¹⁵ Investing in sons, rather than daughters, is seen to bring higher financial returns for families as boys are more likely to find work and be paid a higher salary. Anjula Tyagi, Project Coordinator of Educate Girls Globally adds that another critical reason that families invest more in males is due to the social fabric of communities that view boys as future security.¹⁶

In many countries, girls require different levels of safety and hygiene than boys, not only for the travel distance from home to school, but also in the school. Girls require adequate hygiene and sanitation facilities on or near school premises, and this can present a major problem, particularly for adolescent girls. Physical violence en route to school and in schools affects both boys and girls, yet girls are more likely to be victims of sexual violence, including rape. The risks to girls' personal safety, including the costs associated to protect them as well as the social taboos and stigmas which might impact a girl's whole life if she is victimized, may be too great for parents to consent to their attendance.

Laws and policies in certain countries put girls at a particular disadvantage. UNICEF states how, worldwide, an estimated 50 million children are not registered at birth, and the majority of these are female.¹⁷ Lack of a birth

certificate, in certain contexts, can prevent admission to school or block eligibility to take examinations. Most countries have laws and policies that prohibit pregnant girls from attending school or returning to school after the birth of their child, which is a widespread issue considering that early marriage and pregnancy are common in many countries.

Some interior factors that limit girls' access to education include:

Social norms and worldviews that dictate girls' position in the family and household, and place less worth on girls' and women's public contributions to society.

Traditions that can inhibit girls from both school and other forms of social engagement.

Shared beliefs that girls should not learn as boys learn, and the consequent emphasis on boys' growth and development without equal emphasis on girls.

Lower expectations of parents for girls performance, which often translates into lower achievement.

Shared values in the community or culture that do not look well, nor encourage, girls' education.

Few female role models exist for girls to be inspired and motivated to go to school.

Interior Barriers to Girls' Education

Many resources point out these general barriers to families educating their daughters. Yet, there are also interior barriers that stem from the social norms, traditions, and attitudes about women that are less mentioned. While the problem is definitely related to economic costs, other important reasons for low girls' attendance in school are also due to less visible and interior reasons. These include traditional beliefs, cultural perceptions, social norms, and sense of self. They may also include the ways development practitioners think about and approach the issue of low girls' education. These types of interior phenomena may in fact be equal or even greater contributors to the issue.

Maureen Quinn, US Ambassador to Qatar in Doha, Ghana speaks about the need for commitment on behalf of leadership, to begin to conceptualize and care about the need for girls' education:

Opportunities are coming now for women slowly. But we really are only seeing change and evolution here since about 1995, 1996.... You know, resources matter in improving girls' education, and they have certainly made a difference here in Qatar. But resources are not everything. Qatar had oil wealth for years. And it was really under the leadership of the current emir, since about

1995, 1996, that they have focused on education. It's the personal involvement and the commitment of the leadership in Qatar that is making a difference. Both the emir and his second wife, Sheika Mossa, are involved and committed. Their involvement conveys a sense of empowerment to people, including to young women and girls.¹⁸

These reflections point to the invaluable interior work needed for addressing this issue—not only for the motivation and care on behalf of leaders to begin directing resources to provide education for girls, but also for the sense of empowerment that can be transferred from older women to younger girls, which also contributes to the process.

Without this cultural support and inclusion, it is difficult for girls to go against the grain of their culture to demand schooling. Girls who suffer from social exclusion often are not encouraged or actively discouraged from attending school. This social exclusion stems from a number of different reasons that are specific to the context and culture; some of which relate to caste, class, ethnicity, religion or disability. In many countries, women's participation in society is limited to certain and few socially acceptable venues, which often do not include school. While the international community agrees that education for girls is a universal right, many cultures do not value girls' education in this

way. This alone can be the obstinate barrier against girls' education.

UNICEF points out how children are more likely to drop out of school if it is irrelevant to their realities. In other words, if girls are not aware of the positive reasons to become educated, it will be difficult to stay in school or to be motivated to advocate for access education. Moreover, if the social norms continually frame girls' education as "irrelevant" and therefore resist their participation in the education system, it makes it difficult for families to accept the concept of girls' education, let alone follow through with sending them to school.

These interior barriers, such as attitudes and social norms, are much more difficult to identify than exterior barriers (such as costs or policies) as they are unseen, largely intangible. Many stem from the passive acceptance that this is just "how things are." The interior barriers may manifest as high costs for girls education, yet their roots are deeper than the pocketbook. Such barriers deal with mindsets and values regarding the place of women and girls in society, and thus also of girls' education. The consequent cultural norms, policies, and systems set up are thus inhospitable to girls going to school. An Integral analysis of girls' education reveals these interior contributions to the issue, and suggests that any response shall include both interior and exterior factors.

Integral Analysis of Barriers to Girls' Education

When the barriers to girls' education are understood with an Integral Framework, it becomes clear that the interior quadrants support or resist girls' education (figure 1).

This is not to under-emphasize the difficulties of the exterior quadrants, which definitely contribute to the problem.

This analysis serves to point out how there are equal if not more resistance from the interior barriers as the exterior. Some mechanisms

Figure 1: Understanding barriers to girls' education with the quadrants of Integral theory.

<p>UPPER LEFT – experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lower expectations of parents for girls performance, which often translates into lower achievement. ○ The understanding that education is irrelevant. ○ Lack of motivation, inspiration for education; or sufficient self-confidence to advocate for schooling. 	<p>UPPER RIGHT – behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Distance from home to school, and associated difficulties with girls traveling. ○ Insufficient hygiene and safety in the schools.
<p>LOWER LEFT – culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social exclusion due to caste, class, ethnicity, religion or disability. ○ Shared values in the community or culture that do not look well, nor encourage, girls' education. ○ Few female role models for girls to be inspired and motivated to go to school. ○ Social norms and worldviews that dictate girls' position in the family and household, and place less worth on girls' and women's public contributions to society. ○ Traditions that can inhibit girls from both school and other forms of social engagement. ○ Shared beliefs that girls should not learn as boys learn, and the consequent emphasis on boys' growth and development without equal emphasis on girls. 	<p>LOWER RIGHT – systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Laws and policies in certain countries put girls at a particular disadvantage. ○ Education system lacks sufficient safety and hygiene for girls. ○ An additional economic burden to parents, particularly those who have come to rely on girls' contributions to the family income, or who have to pay more for girls uniforms, protection, and replacement in family income generation. ○ The education system also lacks relevance, and as such is unable to fulfill the needs and aspirations of the girls and also their parents.

exist to address some of these interior influences, alongside the more conventional efforts to address the issue. In the remainder of the case study, I explain how the NGO Educate Girls Globally is working with both interior and exterior dimensions of girls' education.

Description of Approach: Educate Girls Globally

Educate Girls Globally (EGG) is a non-profit organization founded in 2000 to promote the education of girls in developing countries. The NGO works with local partners in several countries, with a unique strategy and model for promoting girls, education K-12.

Despite the fact that girls' education has been a priority in many countries for more than two decades, and despite enormous monetary efforts to address the issue by governments and donors, more than 65 million girls are not in school in the world today. Two-thirds of adult women remain illiterate in South Asia and one-half are illiterate in Sub-Saharan Africa. The NGO Educate Girls Globally (EGG) conducted research into which efforts have been successful, and then built off what works with a unique response to the promoting girls' education.

Many other education programs focus their efforts on building independent model demonstration projects. Some of these projects, such as the Ammal Project in

northwest Pakistan and the UNICEF Girls, Community Schools in Upper Egypt, have worked well. However, they rarely affect more than a few schools in the original demonstration. Until recently, the main challenge has been to transfer the lessons of these demonstration projects at scale to operating government schools, which serve the greater majority of children.

Rising to this challenge, EGG focuses on reforming government schools via promoting parental and community participation in education. The approach captures the inherent energy and commitment of local families and communities to build and improve on the government school system. One of the expected results is increased interest on behalf of government to leverage this effort with greater investments in these schools.

In addition to this, another unique aspect of EGG's approach is its emphasis on empowerment. This focus on empowerment not only includes girls via education and women via leadership in decision-making, but also encourages entire communities to move from passive to active participation in the education system. As a recent evaluation report on EGG approach explains:

...although providing formal schooling for girls is a crucial piece of meeting the challenge of providing equal opportunities for a girl, that is only the starting place. Beyond formal schooling, a larger objective

must be *to cultivate a sense and confidence in the girls' abilities to advocate for themselves* from an understanding of their right to equal opportunity. This project... aims at both objectives. It aims at removing gender discrimination in formal schooling, and it also seeks to go beyond this and aim for *shifting cultural attitudes* at the macro-level. (Italics added.)¹⁹

In this sense, the EGG model in its farther reaches encourages changes in how people view and value girls in society, as well as how people view themselves in the larger community processes.

EGG launched its first pilot project in the state of Uttaranchal in northern India. In the first year (2003), EGG, working through its local partner Sri Bhuvaneshwari Mahila Ashram (SBMA), operated substantially ahead of its objective of 300 schools, serving 18,000 children, half of them girls. In less than six months, the program earned the support of the state Ministry of Education, which pledged support to expand the program into every school in the state K-12 (16,000 schools, serving about one million children). The Progress Report from May 2005 reports how the EGG education model now serves 1,000 schools, with about 75,000 children, half of them girls.

EGGs work is based on partnerships with local organizations—previously with MAYA

in Karnataka, Southern India, with SBMA in Uttaranchal, Northern India, and more recently with the government of Rajasthan. The partnerships are unique, but generally follow the format in which local partners carry-out implementation and local training, and EGG oversees implementation, raises funds, assesses political environments, does monitoring and evaluations, and markets the program to outside entities.²⁰ EGG is now building off this model in Rajasthan, to partner with Government Schools across the province.

Brief Summary of Unique Elements of the EGG Approach

The EGG model emerged in a unique format from its inception. To begin with, the core team at EGG viewed girls' education not merely as a question of education per se, but as a public policy problem. Therefore, their immediate and on-going interventions are directed towards changing attitude and approach of governments, creating space in policy circles for this discourse and action on girls' education. This brought their focus not only to individual schools, but the very systems in which those schools exist, which also served to amplify their efforts at a larger scale than other such initiatives.

Secondly, EGG recognized that many other initiatives in girls' education in other countries were, in a sense, "reinventing the wheel," partly due to the lack of a good system for transferring knowledge between projects. Therefore, EGG's core team first

researched what had worked elsewhere, to then orient their work accordingly. Chickering (July, 2005, pers. comm.) explains how most people doing this work focus on the barriers and what is wrong, and then attempt to correct the barriers. He points out that some of these barriers, such as poverty, no toilets, bad curriculum, and no female teachers, cannot be corrected without immense investments of money. EGG began with an approach to girls' education that was not about confronting and addressing barriers, and rather sought to implement what was needed to promote girls' education in the midst of existing barriers. In other words, given that the above barriers exist, what can be done to promote girls' education? What local resources, capacities, and motivations can be mobilized for carrying this out, in spite of the existing barriers? It is from this line of thinking, that EGG developed their community mobilization program to girls' education.

Thirdly, from the success stories EGG had found on girls' education, the one thing in common is that *where girls are involved, parents are heavily involved as well*. Chickering refers to this as a move "beyond the mechanical culture" as it signifies a shift from passive to active involvement in the school's, and community's, wellbeing. He explains how, if the project includes parents and does not just rely on teachers to solve issues of, for example, school hygiene, suddenly there are twenty people caring about the lack of toilets not just two (2005, pers comm.). Based on research into what

works in girls' education, Chickering found how in the northwest frontier province of Pakistan, a region that is Islamic and fundamentalist, when parents became involved in the schools, all the schools had toilets. In Karnataka, Southern India, on the other hand, less than 5% of rural schools have toilets. EGG's education programs recruit parents to take ownership of schools to make schools work for girls, whether that means to provide necessary hygiene, or whether it means a deeper shift in the attitudes around girls' going to school.



Details of How EGG Engages

EGG creates its own model through a core team and then collaborates with partners for expanding the work with local partners. It is built on the foundation of mobilizing parents and communities, and the more recent work in Rajasthan now focuses on working with and through government agencies. The program was implemented in Uttaranchal with a 7-step methodology, which can be adapted and replicated on a larger scale in EGG up-coming work in Rajasthan. The following description of the 7-step methodology is drawn from a recent action research report (carried out by the International Center for Research on Women to evaluate the EGG approach and work to date in northern India), and it is also based on key informant interviews with the director and staff of EGG.²¹

The seven-step methodology used is as follows:

1) *Baseline Survey:*

A baseline survey consisting of twenty three-page comprehensive questionnaire is carried out, which is formulated during the orientation (the 3-day training program). This questionnaire was initially designed by the local partner SBMA to be used by EGG in its' project implementation in three other districts of Uttaranchal.²² The sections on the questionnaire included both exterior and interior factors relating to girls' education. Information about exterior factors includes:

school infrastructure and facilities; in-house school management and teachers; information about dropout girls; functioning of school management committees (SMCs) and village education committees (VECs), among others. Information about interior factors includes: the prevalent attitudes of girls towards education and school environment, and parent's attitude towards girls' education.

The time for the baseline study ranges between 2-3 months depending upon the geographical area and the extent of coverage. During which time the staff go door-to-door to conduct the baseline survey in *Gram Sabhas*²³, villages, Primary Schools, Junior High Schools, and Senior Secondary Colleges. The staff interact closely with village heads and such conversations become crucial avenues for establishing initial rapport with community leadership and sharing the project goals and desired objectives with the communities. Data collected and analysed during this inform the design of appropriate responses for girls and their communities..

2) *Village Meetings:*

The next stage of this methodology is to garner community support for the project, by organizing village meetings called *Gram Shiksha Sabhas*. Staff design meetings such that all stakeholders are able to be represented, including the village head, teachers, members of women and youth welfare groups, parents, dropout girls, and when possible, officials from the education

departments. The approach followed in the village meetings includes the following:

- Sharing knowledge with village members (from the baseline survey) and facilitating discussion about the findings;
- Establishing the importance of girls' education as a right;
- Sensitizing the community to the role of girls in the community and linking the empowerment of women to the prosperity of the village;
- Facilitating a sense of community ownership over education and more specifically girls' education; and,
- Initiating a dialogue about the low attendance and performance of girls' in schools;

This meeting creates a space for local people to be active and involved. Two key results from the village meetings include 1) sensitizing community people to the plight of girls' struggle for education, to invoke their empathy and motivation for action; and 2) fostering commitment action to improve girls' education and drawing-up a written action plan involving all stakeholders.

For the former objective, EGG staff explain the value of educating girls, such as, infant mortality goes down and health of family improves and they ask girls who have dropped out of school to speak to the village people, sharing their stories about not going to school. This process is very meaningful, as

those that are listening have an opportunities to “step into their shoes” for a moment, to try on the perspective of the girls. For the girls, this is an opportunity to be heard and to evoke the empathy of the community. At that first meeting, often every girl re-enrolls.

For the latter objective, the meeting provides a beginning point for further work in capacity development and action via committees to improve girls' education. Tyagi explains:

“During these meetings we try to create a sense of ownership within the community to foster the process of educational change. The community leaders and specially the members of school committees are capacitated to design an action plan and commit themselves to work on it in the days to follow. They are provided with all necessary information needed to design and implement this action plan. Further motivation and inputs are provided in larger group meetings of natural leaders where members of 4-5 or more committees interact and share their progress ,problems and prospects. This group of ‘natural leaders’ which we name “People’s Action Group (PAG)” builds the strongest political constituency to advocate for girls education at District & State level.”

3) *Capacity development/ Institutional building:*

Capacity development initiatives are directed towards School Management Committees, women welfare groups, and the women village heads. The SMCs have been mandated — under the decentralized system of governance in India — to undertake institutional responsibility and thus have the power to reform and ensure school quality in the primary schools. To guarantee that women's voices are adequately represented, care was taken to ensure that at least 3-4 stakeholders in the SMC were women.

These SMCs are trained in identifying the problems that plague primary education including undertaking needs assessment analysis, making action plans, and being effective advocates with the Government. In addition, the training focused on sensitizing the members about the role of the SMC, their powers, and responsibilities.

The women welfare groups, locally known as *Mahila Mangal Dals* (MMDs), were selected because of their institutional trajectory and past accomplishments in influencing community affairs and collectively organizing village women. MMDs are not a Government or NGO creation but a locally born community organizational structure. Most importantly, MMD members are the mothers of those girls who drop out of schools. If these mothers can be convinced of the importance of their daughter's education, they will encourage other mothers to do the same.

The trainings with the MMDs consisted in identifying the issues pertaining to women's empowerment and the role of girls' education within that framework. The trainings with almost all these MMD's focused on facilitating issue-based discussions (specifically girl's education), accounts and book keeping, and maintaining meetings records.

Tyaji explains further, "Similar trainings were imparted to SMC's and VEC's. The biggest lacuna within the community was a complete information gap. Community lacked in all kind of information regarding the school system, the programs and schemes of Government, their rights and responsibilities as members of the committees etc. Hence we realized even if they articulated their needs and problems, they were unable to find appropriate resources to resolve them. Thus one of the major components of our trainings was to flood them with all and almost every information regarding the school system, Government schemes for the betterment of girls, resource allocation for schools, hierarchy of the education department, role & responsibilities of concerned Government officials etc. Mentioning this aspect of filling the information gap is very crucial in the whole process because as soon as we emphasized on this, we realized that the community felt itself empowered and was then very little dependent on us or any other for implementing their action plans."

With the women village heads, capacity development was oriented towards helping these women effectively navigate the local

governance system. This includes building confidence, imparting knowledge about the Panchayat (local governance) system, and provide support to these women village heads so that they can better lead their villages, with an eye towards improving the situation of girls.²⁴

4) Implementation Action Plan:

Action plans are created in the village meetings and written so that accountability can be maintained. Many of the actions focus on infrastructure development that would achieve the end-objective of increasing and sustaining the attendance of girls in schools.²⁵ However, there is also a keen focus on cultivating and maintaining commitment and motivation for improving girls' education, and therefore those who are responsible for an action are required to report their progress at the follow-up meetings.

The underlying goal of these committees is, in fact, leadership development. This emphasizes women's empowerment, but in a more general sense, the committee meetings create opportunities for the spirit of independence and self-governance to emerge in the community. Usually each committee is encouraged to set three goals for positive change in the schools, one that can be accomplished and then shared with other communities.²⁶

5) Special Program for Girls:

Many girls who are above the age of 14 are embarrassed to go back to school and study with students much younger than them. They tend not to be motivated to return to school even when parents were encouraging them to go. For these older girls, therefore, EGG and its local partners carryout a 30-day skill development training that is specific to the local region and resource practices. In Uttaranchal, skills training workshops were conducted in candle making, chalk making, cutting and tailoring, fruit processing, weaving, and production of hand-made greeting cards. These girls were also given an orientation of how to access loans, market their products, and maintain business records. The staff also invited heads of MMD to the trainings, which in turn offered financial assistance for the girls' entrepreneurial endeavors.

These workshops serve not only to provide technical capacity, but also to engage the girls in new ways in their communities. The consequent increase in self-empowerment and self-esteem is often as important as the concrete skills learned.

6) Recruiting Ministry Support:

Engaging ministry support is crucial in the overall strategy to sustain and retain the process and make it viable over the longer term. Thus, a relationship with the Government (primarily the local officials in charge of education) is built — they were gradually acquainted with

the program and their support garnered during project implementation. Local leadership, including the State-level Ministers, are invited to participate in the village meetings and listen to problems plaguing the entry and retention of girls in schools. In these meetings, written proposals on the problems faced by local girls in accessing education were handed over to the local Government officials — villagers are encouraged to follow up on such proposals at every stage.

In addition, meetings are organized with the educational bureaucracy, the local leadership, and the community. These meetings/forums serve to educate the officials about the issues/problems facing the communities and how best to handle them in a manner that ensures that the needs and interests of the communities are reflected. Equipped with knowledge of communities' needs and demands, local public officials assist in the process of carrying these messages to the higher policy levels for appropriate action.

7) Documentation of Process:

EGG and its local partners analyze and document the baseline survey, monthly reports, quarterly reports, semi-annual report, and final report during the duration of the project period. For some of the activities, visual documentation (photographs) were also taken and photocopies of some of the proposals have also been compiled. The project team conducted regular monitoring in the form of pre-decided meetings as well as impromptu, unannounced visits to the villages.

Program Results and Expansion

While much work and innovation remains to be done, and the longer-term impacts have yet to be evidenced and documented, the results of this approach to date are positive. The ICRW (2005) report indicates that EGG is cutting the dropout rate of girls from about 20% to less than 5% in rural schools. EGG has experimented with introducing quality improvements in the schools, based on the material taught as well as the pedagogy used, and have mobilized the communities to push the Ministry to introduce reforms in the curriculum designed to increase the relevance of education for rural girls (L. Chickering, per comm., March 2005). The recent collaboration with the government of Rajasthan to take this approach to scale across the highly populated province is indeed a positive step for girls' education in India, and with strategies to share with other efforts to promote girls' education worldwide.

With support from the Inter-American Development Bank, in 2004-2005 EGG did projects in four Latin American countries, including Argentina, Bolivia, Guatemala, and Peru, to assess the challenge of educating indigenous girls in rural areas and to evaluate the value of secondary schooling to prepare girls for employment in urban areas. In 2005, EGG also began actively planning its first pilot project in East Africa (Tanzania), partnering with Global Partners for Development, which has worked in Africa for more than fifteen years.

Analysis: Catalyzing Potential Via Education

I describe further some of the unique elements of the EGG model, using an Integral Framework to better understand both the exterior and interior dimensions of the approach, its process and impacts. These unique elements include:

- 1) A focusing on what works, enabling community, and taking it to scale;
- 2) Attention to the interior and exterior factors that contribute to girls' education;
- 3) Communicating with a diversity of worldviews; and
- 4) Fostering shifts in awareness, from disempowerment and dependency, to empowerment and independency, with girls, parents, leaders and community people.

1) Taking What Works To Scale

Lawrence Chickering, the founder and president of EGG, explained in his remarks at an Open Forum on Perspectives on Globalization: Women, Families and Social Change -- A Discussion on Girls' Literacy and Sustainable Development in Washington, DC, March 25, 2002:

The key to solving these problems [related to girls' education], I think, is to stop

focusing on barriers to girls' education... and to focus instead on what is working. We should focus on what is happening in a school system like the girls' community schools in Upper Egypt, the UNICEF schools around Asyut, or the Ammal Project schools in the Northwest Province in Pakistan. These schools are getting 100% girls' enrollment rates in the most fundamentalist Islamic cultures, in cultures so traditional that in prior times, the mythology of the treatment of women was that they were only allowed out of their homes twice in their lives—once to marry and once to die. And why are they getting 100% enrollment rates?

Well, we have concluded and believe that the reason is that because instead of running the schools bureaucratically without any connection to the village, these schools are all run with strong, close connections to the village. The parents sit on the governing bodies of these schools. And in fact they are often referred to as community-based schools in many NGO projects in Africa and South Asia and other places.²⁷

Parents play an important role in improving schools' hygiene to meet the unique needs of girl students.

"If there are problems like no toilets, parents solve them. In India, I believe fewer than 10% of public government schools have toilets. In the Ammal Project in the Northwest Province with 89 girls schools, every single one had a toilet within two weeks of the schools opening. Why? Because the parents sat around, and toilets were important to them, so they provided them. Maybe they were going to their homes, and maybe they were doing something else. But they simply took the initiative, and didn't wait to try to get a bureaucracy to try and deliver that."

L. Chickering, 2002

Building on the approaches to girls' education programs that have worked well, EGG has focused its programming to promote community-based initiatives for girls' education. This inner conviction for local responsibility and action runs deep within the organization and its approach. The report from ICRW (2005) explains:

Underlying the ethos of this project is a belief that the key shaper of community development should be the community themselves. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Governments, and academic institutions should provide the knowledge,

training, and resources to enable the flourishing of the community's capacity to tackle issues by themselves. *Communities that are healthily interdependent thrive; communities that are dependent wither.*

In addition to enabling local action on behalf of girls' education, EGG also focuses its work at the meso, and macro scales to encourage "governments, international donors, and NGOs to adopt this process and achieve the scale that will really make a difference even in large countries." This work at the micro, meso and macro scales aims to demonstrate that EGG's strategy can increase girls' attendance in school in local contexts, can improve the quality of schools, and is scalable to a larger region or sub-region. One reason for limitations in the international commitment to educate girls is that until now there has been no strategy capable of accomplishing education at scales that would really make a difference in large countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan and Egypt. EGG and its local partner organizations are developing such a scalable strategy. To date, this strategy has been tested in thousands of schools and which can be implemented at very large scales and low cost.

EGG partnerships with local organizations and government agencies that are embedded and able to carry out model and programs, are a central aspect of this strategy. However, the strength of this community-based orientation

also comes from its ability to catalyze interest, motivation, and commitment from parents. Parental involvement changes, literally, everything about a school, from parents helping to improve the schools (i.e. increased hygiene necessary for girls' involvement), to monitoring teacher absenteeism, to enrolling and motivating their children in their education.

An important interior aspect to this involvement is that parents feel an ownership of the school and education process. Explains Chickering (2002):

Parents, not governments, decide who goes to schools. And when parents own the schools, then it's natural they would allow their children to go to it. If they feel it's alien, and they feel the structure has nothing to do with their village, they will very often let neither boys nor girls go to it.

With the feeling of ownership over the process and outcomes of education, parents' beliefs around education, and particularly girls' education, change. The result seen by EGG to date is that it fosters an increase in girls' enrollment.

EGG uses two strategies for promoting parental involvement without stirring opposition from teachers' unions or government bureaucracy. One is to recruit the

bureaucracy itself to understand and value the importance of parental participation in school functioning, and to further engage parents in this. The second strategy is to work slightly under the radar of the government and unions, and to instead go actively into the villages to encourage parents to take ownership of the schools.

In addition to this, EGG's approach also demonstrates the impact on girls' education beyond the local sphere, encouraging municipal and national governments to take this on. With increased parental involvement, municipal governments tend to become interested to support and leverage this in-kind local support. Chickering (2002) explains:

If you don't get the government bureaucracies to do this, you have no hope really of having any major impact on the educational culture of these countries, or of extending educational opportunities to really large numbers of girls.²⁸

Recently, EGG entered into partnership with the government education agencies in Rajasthan. This partnership will reach out to include 50,000 schools serving 10 million children. This is the cutting edge of EGG work to date, and where it shall go from here will be fascinating to track over the next five years (of which I discuss further below).

EGG takes their work into international spheres of policy and discourse around girls' education, to garner interest and financial support for replication in other countries. This has enabled the expansion of their approach to parts of Latin America, and now Africa.

2) All Quadrant Focus

The challenge before many development practitioners in the area of girls' education is in identifying what aspects of the change process need to be engaged for real shifts toward more girls' enrollment; as well as planning the consequent response. Chickering explains:

I believe that when you are talking about an issue like education, the temptation is to talk only about objective things—about how many people are in school, or how many people are graduating, or what their jobs are, their income levels and so on. But I believe that the world substantially runs in response to the power of social myths—myths not in the sense that things are true or false but in the sense that they are believed.²⁹

With this, he points out how the issue of girls' education has roots in both the exterior realities (i.e. economic poverty, family

income requirements, job availability, etc.) but also the interior realities (i.e. social myths, shared beliefs, self-concept, etc.) that relate to the issues of girls' education.

As one of the Founding Members of Integral Institute, prior to founding EGG, Chickering discussed with other integrally-informed colleagues about the Integral Framework and global issues like girls' education. This has, to a certain degree, implicitly influenced the guiding principles of EGG. Today, the EGG approach considers and works with variables relating to girls education in an all quadrants of the Integral Framework.

Its efforts in the Upper Right quadrant (of individual, exterior behaviours and actions) include getting more girls into school and encouraging parents to get involved in the school system. This is directly related with EGG's efforts in the Lower Right (of exterior, collective systems) with its emphasis on reforming schools and regional education systems and fostering inter-community and inter-school networking. EGG engages the dynamics of the Lower Left quadrant (of collective, interior culture) with its orientation towards assisting local communities to value and legitimize girls' education. In the Upper Left quadrant (of individual, interior experience), EGG focuses on empowering girls, parents, teachers, and communities, and sensitizing them to the interior realities of girls who are not allowed to go to school, or encouraged to drop out.

This focus on the UL quadrant, particularly, is the central pillar around which the work revolves—namely, to encourage a shift from dependency and disempowerment towards one of independency and empowerment (which I discuss in further detail below). However, any shifts in this quadrant manifest through changed behaviours, cultural norms, and social systems in the other quadrants. In this way, the EGG approach seeks to foster not only shifts in behaviors and educational systems, but also to create pathways of interior change for social norms and mindsets to support and value girls' education.

The all-quadrant focus is evidenced in the objectives of the program, implementation, and advocacy (figures 2, 3 and 4 respectively).

While interiority is included, it is not at the expense of exterior, practical and systemic issues regarding girls' education. For example, EGG keeps in focus the economics of girls' education, as that will be an important driver, or limitation, of success. Reports from DFID (2005) suggest that “global support for development, while on the rise, remains well below what is needed to make achieving the MDGs a reality, particularly in countries that are unable to work towards poverty reduction.”³⁰ Currently, international bilateral support for education amounts to about \$4 billion a year. Of this, only \$1 billion a year goes toward basic education. Whereas conventional strategies for promoting girls' education usually cost between \$60-90/child, EGG has identified the education costs per child using their approach is a one-time

cost of \$2.25/child, which is far lower than what the MDG efforts suggest we will need or what current strategies require.

EGG's integration of interior and exterior is quite possibly is one of the essential components for effectiveness. By acknowledging the interior realities relating to girls' education, the approach enables people to show up as who they are, in their own culture and worldviews. The community's identity and culture are not replaced with external interventions, but rather become the foundation for, and driver of, girls' education. Catalyzing this community-ownership helps to foster commitment to supporting and nurturing girls education and over-all school management. The approach as a whole helps to cultivate empathy in villagers, and to enable that empathetic response to manifest in actions on behalf of girls.

3) Communicating to Different Worldviews

Peoples' values and perspectives underpin most development issues, including the issue of girls' education, and influence one's support for that issue. Development donors and practitioners hold their own set of values about development in general, such as pacifism, egalitarianism, communalism, secularism and rationalism, which in turn influence considerations on girls' education and gender equality. Often, in practice, the question is not whether to work to promote such values, but rather how to do so in ways that honour local worldviews. Civil society organizations are most effective when they

Figure 2: Objectives of Educate Girls' Globally

Source: EGG documents and key informant interview with L. Chickering (July, 2005)

<p>UPPER LEFT—experience</p> <p>To encourage in the schools and villages a sense of responsibility toward the importance of education for girls and toward the larger possibilities for the contributions that educated women and girls can make to the life of the community.</p> <p>To empower adult women. Although its primary goal is the improvement of girls' educational opportunities, EGG's process is also a powerful instrument for empowering adult women.</p>	<p>UPPER RIGHT—behaviours</p> <p>The program imparts political skills to three or four adult women in each community that has a school reform (demonstration) project. The skills are transferred both by training and by experience.</p> <p>To improve student performance.</p>
<p>LOWER LEFT—culture</p> <p>To foster understanding (and buy-in) about the importance of the issue of educating girls by governments, donors, and NGOs. At the present time, the great challenge is to persuade these audiences that it is possible to achieve large gains in girls' education at reasonable costs and to accomplish large-scale impacts even in large countries.</p> <p>To develop a political constituency supporting primary schools. EGGs' program does this by recruiting parents and villages to take over the schools.</p>	<p>LOWER RIGHT—systems</p> <p>To identify the current structure of government institutions and policies that obstructs girls' education and to reform that structure.</p> <p>To provide inputs and facilitate trainings in the government run bridge schools, which provide literacy training, life skills training, and vocational training to older girls.</p> <p>To achieve large gains in girls' education at reasonable costs and to accomplish large-scale impacts even in large countries.</p>

values, respect cultural diversity and engage with development processes in ways that are appropriate for the local customs.

Daniel Buckles, Senior Program Officer at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), explains in *Cultivating Peace: Conflict and Collaboration in Natural Resource Management* that many donor

their principles to be universal, and then work to promote these principles in other countries with often very different cultural realities.³¹ He notes that these principles are actually culturally based values, and questions the ethics of assuming that they should be taken up by other countries.

Figure 3: Examples of Implementation Activities by Educate Girls Globally program.
 Source: EGG documents and key informant interview with L. Chickering (July, 2005)

<p>UPPER LEFT—experience</p> <p><i>Empowerment of Adult Women.</i> With the requirement that 30% of the action committees to be women, EGG has found that empowerment of adult women is a powerful by-product of the process.</p>	<p>UPPER RIGHT—behaviours</p> <p><i>Enrollment and Attendance of Girls.</i> Girls must get in school and stay in school. EGG is finding that enrollment of girls increases about 20% almost immediately, following the initial village meeting and subsequent activities aimed at bringing other girls back into school.</p> <p><i>Skill-building.</i> To help older girls learn skills for engaging in community economic processes.</p>
<p>LOWER LEFT—culture</p> <p><i>Cultural Engagement.</i> By reforming school systems, the EGG model also encourages changes in how girls are viewed and valued in society. This helps to unfold understanding of girls as potential and valuable contributors to society via education and empowerment (levels).</p> <p><i>Cultivating a Culture of Partnership.</i></p> <p>EGG tries to create a partnership between three stakeholders- community, Government and NGO, each having a distinct role to play and a responsible accountability. Categorically the partnerships are between the village community and the school community; the community and the Government; the village community and the NGO; and the Government and the NGO. The purpose of these partnerships is to build ownership and accountability at each level and to foster a culture of independent functioning within a dependent system. (Tyagi, 2005, per comm.)</p>	<p>LOWER RIGHT—systems</p> <p><i>Demonstration Sites.</i> This is the first objective: to establish an ability to implement projects at the very high scales achieved by MAYA in Karnataka and to accomplish significant reform activity.</p> <p><i>School Reforms.</i> This will focus on specific impacts of the program on each school, especially in relation to the "action plans" for each school: physical improvements, improved teacher attendance, availability of teaching materials—whatever priorities are adopted by each community at the first village meeting.</p> <p><i>Program Implementation.</i> EGG assesses political environments, finds and enters into agreements with local partners, oversees project implementation, monitors progress, sponsors evaluations, and markets the program to NGOs, donors, and other international organizations that may be interested in exporting the process to other countries.</p>

Figure 4: Examples of EGG’s Efforts in Advocacy and Awareness-Raising
 Source: EGG documents and key informant interview with L. Chickering (July, 2005)

<p>UPPER LEFT—experience</p> <p>With parents and teachers, fostering a sense of responsibility and commitment for schools and for girls.</p>	<p>UPPER RIGHT—behaviours</p> <p>From the first meeting, enrolling individuals, especially women (30%) to participate in education and schools.</p> <p>Creating incentives for teachers to strengthen their commitment to education and to the schools where they teach.</p>
<p>LOWER LEFT—culture</p> <p>Encouraging parents and teachers to work together in common concern for children, especially girls.</p>	<p>LOWER RIGHT—systems</p> <p>Fostering increased interest on behalf of government to leverage this effort with greater investments in these schools.</p>

Many development practitioners grapple with this question of how to promote certain rights, such as girls’ education, in culturally ethical ways that acknowledge local customs and context, while also respecting and fostering local ownership of the development process. We simply cannot assume that particular countries will take on the values of gender equality easily, immediately and in the forms in which Northern societies did, as this does not take into account the evolution of these values through history. While this may seem obvious, it is remarkably overlooked in the field of international development.

For example, it took close to a century in North America for the concept of “gender equality” to enter mainstream dialogue, under specific historical influences and experiences, and it is still not completely stabilized as a norm

in society. This emergent concept of gender equality points to new epistemologies and worldviews, at particular levels of cognitive and moral development, which correspond to changed life conditions. Disregarding this, externally-driven implementation of gender equality programming runs the risk of creating more strife and social dysfunction.³²

Clearly, the values and worldviews of local beneficiaries and development practitioners weave together in a complex tapestry. EGG has found ways to communicate the concept of girls’ education, with its associated issues such as gender equality, to a variety of worldviews that may not be consonant with this. From local villages with often traditional worldviews, to national governments often with conventional worldviews, to international institutions and nongovernmental organizations with often

postmodern worldviews, EGG is able to communicate to, not only different strata of power but also different spheres of awareness on the issue.

One of the possible reasons for EGG's ability to do this is that the approach does not intend to change local customs per se, but rather "encourages active, non-passive post-traditional behaviors."³³ The guiding philosophy is to create an enabling environment for shifts from dependency to empowerment, whether in governments or villages, with whatever worldviews are present.

4) From Dependency to Empowerment

The layers of intended impacts in the EGG approach can be peeled away, unveiling what at first glance appears to be the sole motivation for the work (namely more girls' enrolled in school). This, of course, is a necessary and primary objective. However, a deeper intention of the EGG approach is to create conditions for empowerment, from passive dependency to a realization of action; a shift in community people toward taking control over their lives and realities. These deeper objectives help to ensure that girls' education is not just a short-lived initiative, but part of an emerging worldview and value system.

Many development practitioners grapple with how to actually give rise to such types of interior shifts in social norms and

consequent actions.³⁴ In particular, many development practitioners struggle with certain elements of traditional cultures, such as gender inequality and ageism. However, EGG contends that the traditional worldview is not the main barrier. Rather, a *habitual mindset* is a barrier, the kind of mindset that resigns itself to "that always been the way its done" thinking. Chickering explains how this is not necessarily a cultural attitude, nor part of a traditional worldview. It is about a shift from "dependency/passive" to "empowerment/active". Working with this in mind and at this deeper level of social change, Chickering comments on how it is striking to see what is possible to do for small amounts of money (2-3 dollars/child).

He explains how the mechanical mindset of the modern world dehumanizes spaces for engagement. EGG upturns this, and seeks to humanize the spaces, to foster active engagement in one's life and community, and also in the girls' education process. This literally expands the sense of rational optimizing only as narrow self-seeking (as per the conventional economic framework) to optimizing in a much larger sense of human possibility and aspiration.

In this regard, EGG is unlike other aid-based or assistance-based approaches to girls' education. Programs that dole out aid and charity are certainly necessary in specific situations, but they can also give rise to an insidious cycle of dependency and reliance on outside support. Chickering (2002) explains:

I think that both ideologically and temperamentally many of the people in the aid business are much more interested in assistance than empowerment, and I think that is a tremendous obstruction to doing the things that really need to be done in many of these countries.³⁵

The tendency to cultivate dependency and reliance on “experts,” is aggravated by the sole use of technical, scientific and/or economic interventions (i.e. only the Right-hand quadrants).

By engaging the Left-hand quadrants, the EGG approach honors local ways of knowing, traditional knowledge, and cultural forms, and also catalyzes and builds off the desire of people to be self-governing and empowered. In this way, dependence is greatly reduced in place of empowerment. When the process provides opportunities to experience empowerment rather than complacency, Chickering (2005, pers comm.) explains, “it is like a switch being turned on—once the light is on, it is hard to go back to dependency. Such dependency is real and not imagined. It is just that once one has moved beyond it, there is little desire to go back as long as the empowerment is supported by community support.”

EGG’s results to date underline that. The 1,500 villages program is in place, with no resistance so far, neither in the Islamic states where one might expect resistance. The reason

that the schools in Upper Egypt and Pakistan worked, EGG research explains, is that the communities and parents started the schools. In this way, local ownership seems to be a precursor, or prerequisite for local people to “connect their interiors” to the initiative. In other words, it is not just some outside entity building or promoting something in their community, but it is *their* school, and it is something they believe in, are proud of, and will stand up for. It is not just an Upper-Right artifact—namely, a school—but rather, it is an all quadrant engagement in community wellbeing, via supporting girls to access and stay in school.

A Preliminary Note on Working with Government

The scope of this case study cannot do complete justice to the ways that EGG works with government. However, because it has been identified this as one of the very important and crucial aspects of EGG program, I simply mention it here and recommend that it be profiled in another piece of writing solely dedicated to this topic.³⁶ This is clearly an immense area of work for EGG (and for many civil society organizations), one that applies to most other development issues not only girls’ education.

Further Discussion

Methodologies for Accessing Human Potential

Fostering dependency and empowerment is truly the key part of EGG's philosophy and strategy. While many practitioners find traditional societies to be passive, EGG experience suggests this is not the case. In many traditional societies, self-identity is understood in groups and there is less individual assertion, particularly in contrast to modern individualist cultures. However, EGG has found that its approach is "somehow able to tap into a more individual impulse to self-improvement", without challenging or disregarding the existing traditional worldview (Chickering, 2005, pers comm.).

While the EGG approach can be termed "rights-based," in practice, Chickering (2005, pers comm.) explains, it does necessarily involve a cognitive or moral understanding of "rights." It is more about obligation and duty to the community wellbeing, in which rights are an effect, not a cause, of this process. He explains how the EGG approach aims to bring forth human potential and conscious commitment to improve girls' education, and possibly also the consequent understanding of education as a right. It does so (in part) by appealing to the community based on two emotional things: 1) Evoking empathy, and 2) Enabling independency and conscious action.

The village meetings provide opportunities to "try on" other's perspectives, through girls telling their personal stories of education. The EGG approach fosters in community people an empathic sense of connection to the girls when they speak about their feelings and dreams for education. He explains how this is the basis for the subsequent moral response. One feels empathically a spiritual connection with these girls, and has the sense that the villages will be better off, Chickering (2005, pers comm.) explains.

There is something that happens in that moment, in which they [the girls] engage spiritually with the village, and the village people feel a sense of modern, active responsibility... Hearing about drop-out stories, there is a modern sense of empathy, in relation to the girls.

Chickering (2005, pers comm.) explains how the orienting philosophy of EGG differs from the mechanical view (often embedded in "helping relationships") in which poor people are viewed as a "problem to be fixed" rather than seen as an asset and an offering to society. Rather than this victim mentality, the EGG approach aims to call for conscious self-understanding and action. This is woven into the stages of the methodology and approach. This philosophy also includes the education system itself. Schooling need not be engaged in as a mechanical thing in which knowledge is transferred from smart to dumb people. Rather it can be an active

participation in the learning process. The EGG approach aims to cultivate better, more empowering institutional roles in which people have authentic space to be involved in the education process.

‘[My education] taught me to be myself and to have power over my life.’

Yvonne Kapenzi, Zimbabwe (CAMFED) (DFID, p 18)

These two strategies of the EGG approach help to tap into the human potential latent in any community or institution. Once people have a sense of self-ownership over the initiative, they are also consciously committed to its implementation and success.

A Cross-cultural Approach

EGG approach can likely be used in a variety of cultural contexts. While some certain dialogues may be more culturally specific, or even specific to a given locality, the approach in a more general sense is cross-cultural. Chickering (2005, per comm.) explains:

The EGG approach embraces every village how it is, allows that village to work with what is meaningful to them. The focus on girls’ education is about engaging a conscious life with care for others, not an

unconscious, mechanical life. Its’ about who is hurting and who needs help.... This same model can be used to address any social need.

Chickering (2005, pers comm.) emphasizes that this work is “all about interiority:”

It is about fostering the empathy and connection to motivate people to make their lives better, to reach out to each other in common, and the result is a shift from passivity and dependence to empowered action and conscious living.

Many other groups focus on exteriors—for example, on building better infrastructure—which Chickering (2005, pers comm.) suggests may actually be the reason why they are running up against cultural resistance.

Results

Although this model has shown great potential and possibilities, the evaluation of its impacts to date has looked at the model in its early development. Explains the ICRW report (2005, p. 6):

To evaluate and appreciate the full potential of the model will require continuing, larger

experience with it—building on the lessons learned from this evaluation in improving the model, sustaining experiences with it over time to judge its sustainability and what is needed to sustain it, and implementing it at the very high scales that its developers claim it is capable of operating.

That said, the evaluation of results to date are incredible, some of which include:

- EGG approach is working in 1000 schools in India, serving 60,000 kids.
- Have negotiated a partnership with the World Economic Forum and have partnered with the Rajasthan Government since December 2005 and will continue till November 2007.
- EGG is taking the program into East Africa, Tanzania (with a projected 30 schools there in first year, 30,000 kids), and EGG is doing a site visit to Jordan and the Middle East to learn from other successful girls' education programming there, and particularly look at quality improvements for curriculum.
- Organized an exchange with 9-10th grade US school girls to visit India, The trip changed their lives, produced an Emmy award winning film about the exchange, and the participating school continues to do presentations on the exchange throughout the state of California.

Conclusion

Expanding educational opportunities for girls and empowering adult women hold the promise of transforming societies that are now the poorest and most underdeveloped in the world. Education and active participation in schools will enable women to become central agents of social change, changing the future for their children, who will be healthier, better educated and fewer in number. In the process of promoting the education of girls, EGG's program will educate societies about the role that educated women play in all regions of the world, thus contributing to the global transformation of cultural attitudes toward women. The great challenge, until now, has been to develop a strategy and mechanism that can actually educate girls and empower adult women at a reasonable cost in societies not traditionally sympathetic to women's rights. EGG has developed its model to meet this extraordinary challenge.

EGG is “not about doing things quickly – it is about changing perceptions of self.”³⁷ In this sense, the EGG approach seeks to transform systems (i.e. government policy and government schools; community governance and decision-making for rural education); transform cultures (i.e. values for girls education, collective shift to an empowered state of being) and transform mindsets (i.e. individuals with more confidence and personal power, tapping into human potentials, irregardless of “traditions” and other habitual frames). This is done through creating spaces that are more conscious and

human. And, in doing so, it is also changing the policies and systems in which schools are situated, to enliven school management and accommodate girls.

Chickering explains how this is very different from the conventional approaches to girls' education, and to problem-solving in general:

The western approach to intellectual problems and solutions is an approach that evaluates what is wrong and then makes it right. This has informed almost all the work done thus far in girls' education—to blind, and expensive alleys! The more powerful approach is to forget about what is wrong, and instead to focus on what is right, what is working, in face of the conditions present. I heard some people speak of school systems in most Fundamental Islamic sections of Egypt, in which every girl is in school—what was it about that school that shifted the attitudes of girls in that area? Parental ownership and real sense of connection to the program of girls' education did this. Traditional life is communal life, therefore when it is bureaucratic, it is considered alien, but if you

connect it to the family, if is thought of as family, and of course girls go to school.

One of the most profound aspects of this approach is how it has discovered a way to release the energies and realize the power in education using one of the largest unused resources, namely, people. Many development practitioners and donors involved in girls' education are worried about money and budgets, and yet ironically, one of the biggest resources is free, and is at least as valuable as all the other money spent. The EGG program sheds light on how to work with that resource so that it can help schools and societies, and the benefit of this cannot be understated.

Appendix 1: Key Informant Interviews

Lawrence Chickering, Executive Director

Anjula Tyagi, Project Coordinator

References

Banerjee, Upala and Anjula Tyagi (2005) *From Research to Action. Evaluating a rights-based, demand driven model for improving girls education in the Government Schools of Tehri Garhwal, Uttaranchal*. (New Delhi: International Center for Research on Women (ICRW))

Buckles, D. (ed.) (1999) *Cultivating Peace: Conflict and Collaboration in Natural Resource Management*. IDRC/World Bank. Available on-line at http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-9398-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html.

Children in the Developing World Face Major Hurdles in School Attendance and Access to a Good Education UN Task Force outlines strategies to improve access to quality education in developing countries. 17 January 2005, New York; see <http://www.undp.org/dpa/pressrelease/releases/2005/january/2-TF3a-education-E.pdf> (February 21, 2006)

Girls Education: Toward a Better Future for all. Published by the Department for International Development (DFID) January 2005

Perspectives on Globalization: Women, Families and Social Change -- A Discussion on Girls' Literacy and Sustainable Development, Remarks to the Open Forum, Washington, DC, March 25, 2002

UNESCO. 2003a. Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2003/4. Paris: UNESCO.

Wilber, Ken (2000) *Integral Psychology. Consciousness, Spirit, Psychology, Therapy*. (Boston: Shambhala).

Wilber, Ken (1999) "An Approach to Integral Psychology". *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, 1999, vol. 31, no. 2: 109 – 136.

Wilber, Ken (2000, 1996). *A brief history of everything* (2nd ed.). Boston: Shambhala.

Wilber, Ken (2000, 1995) *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality. The Spirit of Evolution*. (Boston and London: Shambhala)

Endnotes

1 Reported on: http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/index_24942.html

2 Reported in Herz, B. and G.B. Sperling (2004) "What Works in Girls' Education. Evidence and Policies from the Developing World." *Council on Foreign Relations*. (New York: Council on Foreign Relations), based on research by UNESCO (2003a)

3 Based on recent research by the UN departments, international development agencies, and civil society groups (see References for compilation of sources)

4 Reported on: http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/index_bigpicture.html

5 The links between educated mothers and their children's survival and development have been clearly established. An educated mother is more likely to protect her child from avoidable illness and disease with routine health check-ups, growth monitoring and a nutritious diet. She knows that her child can be safe from such preventable diseases as polio, measles and diarrhoea through immunization. How a child is nurtured and cared for from birth onwards has a profound bearing on that child's ability to learn and develop. And there is incontrovertible evidence suggesting that women who are educated tend to have healthier and better-educated children see: http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/index_barriers.html); see also: *Girls Education: Toward a Better Future for all*. Published by the Department for International Development (DFID) January 2005

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/education/girls-education-full-final.pdf>

6 The report emphasizes, “[girls education] underpins the achievement of all the other MDGs.”

7 Harvard's Lawrence Summers talks about girls (posted Jan. 24, 2006, The New York Times and the International Herald Tribune: http://blogs.iht.com/tribtalk/business/2006/01/harvards_lawrence_summers_talk_1.php)

8 Women with at least a basic education are much less likely to be poor. Providing girls with one extra year of schooling beyond the average can boost their eventual wages by 10 to 20 per cent. (Source Psacharopoulos, G.; Patrinos, H. A. 2002. *Returns to Investment in Education: A Further Update*. Washington, DC, World Bank, Education Sector Unit, Latin America and the Caribbean Region. (Policy Research Working Paper No. 2881)

9 An infant born to an educated woman is much more likely to survive until adulthood. In Africa, children of mothers who receive five years of primary education are 40 per cent more

likely to live beyond age five. (source: Summers, L. 1994. “Investing in All the People: Educating Women in Developing Countries”. *EDI Seminar Paper*, No. 45. Washington DC: World Bank.) An educated woman is 50 per cent more likely to have her children immunised against childhood diseases. (source: Gage, A.; Sommerfelt, E.; Piani, A. 1997. “Household Structure and Childhood Immunization in Niger and Nigeria”. *Demography*, 34 (2).) For every boy newly infected with HIV in Africa, there are between three and six girls newly infected. Yet, in high-prevalence areas such as Swaziland, two-thirds of teenage girls in school are free from HIV, while two-thirds of out-of-school girls are HIV positive. In Uganda, children who have been to secondary school are four times less likely to become HIV positive. (source: United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and World Health Organisation. 2003. *AIDS Epidemic Update*.)

10 Which is one of the 10 Task Forces commissioned by the UN Secretary-General in 2002 to develop a practical plan of action for enabling developing countries to meet the Millennium Development Goals and reverse the grinding poverty, hunger and disease affecting billions of people in the world, largely in developing countries. The 10 task forces together comprise some 265 experts from around the world, including members of parliament; researchers and scientists; policymakers; representatives of civil society; UN agencies; the World Bank; International Monetary Fund; and the private sector. The UN Millennium Project task force teams were challenged to diagnose the key constraints to meeting the Millennium Development Goals and present recommendations for overcoming the obstacles to get nations on track to achieving them by 2015.

11 Source: Children in the Developing World Face Major Hurdles in School Attendance and Access to a Good Education UN Task Force outlines strategies to improve access to quality education in developing countries. 17 January 2005, New York; see <http://www.undp.org/dpa/pressrelease/releases/2005/january/2-TF3a-education-E.pdf> (February 21, 2006)

12 Source: http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/index_barriers.html (February 28, 2006)

13 *Girls Education: Toward a Better Future for all*. Published by the Department for International Development (DFID) (January 2005, p. 6) identifies five main challenges that make it difficult for girls to access education, including:

- the cost of education – ensuring that communities, parents and children can afford schooling;
- poor school environments – ensuring that girls have access to a safe school environment;
- the weak position of women in society – ensuring that society and parents value the education of girls;
- conflict – ensuring that children who are excluded due to conflict have access to schooling; and
- social exclusion – ensuring girls are not disadvantaged on the basis of caste, ethnicity, religion or disability.

(<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/education/girls-education-full-final.pdf>)

UNICEFs key barriers to girls' education include:

- Family poverty is also a barrier to education.
- The legal frameworks around education can be weak, and many put girls at a particular disadvantage.
- The playing field is uneven

from infancy.

- Issues of safety and security in and around school particularly affect girls.
- Children are more likely to drop out of school if it is irrelevant to their realities.

(http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/index_barriers.html)

14 *Girls Education: Toward a Better Future for all*. Published by the Department for International Development (DFID) (January 2005, p. 6)

15 http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/index_barriers.html)

16 Anjula Tyagi explains from the Indian context: “The actual reason for families investing more in boys is the social fabric of most communities. Parents see boys as an old age security because old parents staying with their sons is still a common practice within the traditional communities. Once a girl gets married she is believed to be ‘other man’s property’ and is not expected to support her parental family. However, parents expect care and support from their sons. So investing in boys is also considered as ‘investing for future security’”

17 http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/index_barriers.html

18 Maureen Quinn, Ambassador to Qatar (in Doha, Ghana), excerpt from: speech at Perspectives on Globalization: Women, Families and Social Change -- A Discussion on Girls' Literacy and Sustainable Development, Remarks to the Open Forum, Washington, DC, March 25, 2002

19 Banerjee, Upala and Anjula Tyagi (2005) *From Research to Action. Evaluating a rights-based, demand driven model for improving girls education in the Government Schools of Tehri Garhwal, Uttaranchal.* (New Delhi: International Center for Research on Women (ICRW))

20 For example, MAYA has been responsible for training local partner (NGO) staff. Staff members from local partners travel to Bangalore for initial training, and then after about five months selected MAYA staff travel to project sites to review progress. Finally, during the first year the local partner sends its staff back to MAYA for advanced training. EGG has designed a six-step process to introduce this method, as modified to help girls, into other states. Working through its local partner SBMA in the north, EGG continues to modify the program to focus specifically on girls, it will take increasing responsibility for training.

21 Banerjee, Upala and Anjula Tyagi (2005) *From Research to Action. Evaluating a rights-based, demand driven model for improving girls education in the Government Schools of Tehri Garhwal, Uttaranchal.* (New Delhi: International Center for Research on Women (ICRW))

22 Tyagi explained, “this questionnaire was originally designed by MAYA and later it was modified by the local partner in Uttaranchal – SBMA, who were actually the implementers.”

23 A *Gram Sabha* is a constitutionally recognized cluster of more than one village; sometimes between 2 to 7 villages.

24 All the above groups were also trained in campaigns, people-centred advocacy and lobbying to raise awareness on the right to education and in lobbying the relevant Government officials to meet their obligations in realising this right.

25 Such infrastructure development focused on constructing the school boundary wall or

toilets for the girls, repairing the school roof/floor/building, providing health education to the girls in the schools, providing vocational education in the secondary schools, and creating employment opportunities for the girls and the women in the village.

26 Chickering, personal communication, July 2005.

27 This Open Forum can be read on: <http://www.state.gov/s/p/of/proc/tr/9746.htm> (March 7, 2006)

28 Excerpt from: Chickering, L. speech at Perspectives on Globalization: Women, Families and Social Change -- A Discussion on Girls' Literacy and Sustainable Development, Remarks to the Open Forum, Washington, DC, March 25, 2002

29 Excerpt from: Chickering, L. speech at Perspectives on Globalization: Women, Families and Social Change -- A Discussion on Girls' Literacy and Sustainable Development, Remarks to the Open Forum, Washington, DC, March 25, 2002 (panel presenters included: Paula Dobriansky, Undersecretary of State for Global Affairs; Nancy Powell, Ambassador to Ghana (in Accra, Ghana), Maureen Quinn, Ambassador to Qatar (in Doha, Ghana), April Palmerlee, Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issues, A. Lawrence Chickering, President, Educate Girls Globally (EGG).)

30 *Girls Education: Toward a Better Future for all.* Published by the Department for International Development (DFID) January 2005, p. 5 (see: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/education/girls-education-full-final.pdf>)

31 Buckles, D. (ed.) (1999) *Cultivating Peace: Conflict and Collaboration in Natural Resource Management.* IDRC/World Bank. Available online at http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-9398-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html.

32 Buckles, D. (ed.) (1999) *Cultivating Peace: Conflict and Collaboration in Natural Resource Management*, [Chapter 1](#): “Conflict Management: A heterocultural perspective.”

33 Chickering, L. (2005) personal communication.

34 Understanding the nature of values development, it is indeed a complicated journey (i.e. one that is highly personal, context specific, and that cannot necessarily be nudged forward by a third party). Please see Introduction to Case Studies for an overview of developmental stages.

35 Chickering, L. speech at Perspectives on Globalization: Women, Families and Social Change -- A Discussion on Girls' Literacy and Sustainable Development, Remarks to the Open Forum, Washington, DC, March 25, 2002, at ICRW

36 Tyagi's (2006, pers comm.) brief explanation: “Working with the rigid mechanical government culture is like dashing your head on a dead wall. Sometimes it would be too depressing, so much so that you literally feel like running away. Its like trying to melt a huge, tough age old ice-berg with the little warmth of humanity...but with unbeatable patience. The more human you become, the more you melt the ice....and then the system flows....but to hold there, to maintain the sustainability of this smooth flow requires that this behavior is institutionalized. EGG starts this by establishing the “line of trust ” from local bodies to the state control and later by harnessing this behavioral change through transfer of ownership of the entire process to the Government.”

37 Chickering, 2005. Personal communication.

About the Author

Gail Hochachka, BSc, MA has worked in the area of sustainability and community development in several countries in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa since 1998. Her first book was released in 2005 entitled *Developing Sustainability, Developing the Self. An Integral Approach to International and Community Development*. She is currently researching, writing, and building capacity on integral praxis for global wellbeing as Program Director of the Canadian non-profit organization Drishti - Centre for Integral Action. She is also Co-Director of Integral International Development Center of Integral University, and recently joined the core faculty of John F. Kennedy University's *School for Holistic Studies*.

www.drishti.ca

www.integralinstitute.org

www.jfku.edu

