



**U.N. General Assembly
TEMPLATE**

POSITION PAPER

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Students' School: N/A

U.N. Committee (either 1 or 2): N/A

Topic: Protecting Women and Girls' Access to Education

Sponsor (country delegation): The Republic of Botswana

The Republic of Botswana, a country in Southern Africa, has a deep and prominently negative history in respect to the topic of girls' rights and access to education. While the statistics comparing girls' rights and the rights of men are now virtually equal, women in the past have faced mass discrimination and prejudice. Some of these discriminatory actions include mass violence and daughter-run households due to the humongous percentage of the population that is HIV positive. Historically, action taken by the United Nations has been fairly consistent, until 2005 upon the launch of Girls'/Boys' Education Movement as a participant in the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative. However, previous actions have been taken in the past to help girls obtain a superior access to education. This is necessary because of the many issues plaguing the women of the country. The UN has previously taken actions to protect girls' access to education. Such actions include the "Telling the Story" project, a project devoted to giving girls a chance to express their challenges and with the help of older mentors, find a solution to these barriers. The UN also advises the government of Botswana on proceedings and how to improve statistics for girl's education. Botswana has supported the "Telling the Story" project and continues to comply with the suggestions of the United Nations. Botswana as a nation is in full support of increasing resources making education more accessible to women and girls.

Statistics display a trend of girls not being able to stay in school. In 2014, the Education Policy Data Center showed that 331,000 children attend primary school, which occurs from ages six to twelve. However, this number severely declines during ages 13-15, as only 120,000 children attend lower secondary school. This small number halves to become 61,000 children during upper secondary school. Another model shows that in primary school, an estimated 10% of girls do not attend, but during secondary school, this number increases by 180%. In the male's case, the number of boys out of school actually goes down during secondary school.

The Republic of Botswana believes that education should be accessible to all, with former vice president Dr. Ponatshego Kedikilwe calling on delegates to ensure that ECD is put at the forefront of the national agenda. Concerns have been expressed that a mere 22% of Botswana children have access to early childhood programs, adding that this situation is only counterproductive, as children who do not access ECD miss out on the many benefits of the program. The Republic of Botswana believes that ECD should be expanded into more rural areas to ensure access to all children, regardless of their geographic location. The Republic of Botswana has been applauded for its efforts and willingness to support ECD, with UNICEF representative Ms. Vidhya Ganesh saying that ECD is “one of the most cost effective ways to improve long life, health, education and productivity.” Efforts must be continued into the future in order to increase availability for women and girls in areas far from current schools, these including diverting military and municipal spending towards increased places of education in secluded or otherwise obscure areas of the country. The Republic of Botswana intends to continue current efforts towards the increase of ECD in compliance with the suggestions of the United Nations.

In conclusion, we believe that education for our women and girls *must* be increased and made more easily accessible. We recognize the significance of the issue and vow to comply with all suggestions of the United Nations. Not only will an increase in ECD directly affect the citizens of the Republic of Botswana, it will inevitably have a plentiful effect on the economy of the country. We fully support any actions that reap benefits on the people of our nation, and we agree to see this through with utmost certainty. Finally, the Republic of Botswana, as called upon by the United Nations and the people of the world, agrees to take any measures possible to increase ECD among the citizen of our nation.

Works Cited

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