

2. Why I believe in educating girls

Kakenya Ntaiya is a youth advisor to the United Nations Population Fund. Here is her story. Choose the word that best fits the context.

I grew up in a Maasai village in western Kenya. I never had as many 1 as the boys did. Like every other girl, I was 2 to help my mother raise my younger siblings and prepare to be 3 young wife. This left me with 4 time to study, but I wanted very much to be more than someone's wife. I got up early in the morning to milk the cows and do my household 5, but I was still usually late 6 school, and every time the teacher would cane me very hard on my hand.

I have two younger brothers, and they 7 not assigned any duties at home during school days. Generally, Maasai boys were taught to never be around the kitchen because the kitchen belongs to women. Boys only had to check in the morning if all the cows were there, and if 8 of them had been stolen, they took breakfast and off to school they went. This was meant to instil in them the idea of protecting their 9. Maasai men own everything, including their wives. The belief among the Maasai elders is that girls belong to the family into 10 they will marry, so a girl's education is believed to benefit her husband and not her family. This idea prevents Maasai families 11 investing in a girl. 12, a girl will generally get married at an early age, sometimes 12, 13 a man her parents and the village elders choose for her. Some girls become the second, third or fourth wife, and sometimes the men are three times 14 age.

1. a. charges
b. changes
c. chances
d. chases
2. a. supposed
b. opposed
c. posed
d. suppose
3. a. the
b. an
c. a
d. -
4. a. little
b. a little
c. some
d. few
5. a. cares
b. chores
c. works
d. cores
6. a. from
b. to
c. for
d. at
7. a. had
b. were
c. was
d. did
8. a. any
b. no one
c. few
d. none
9. a. health
b. healthy
c. wealth
d. wealthy
10. a. which
b. what
c. that
d. -
11. a. into
b. out of
c. from
d. for
12. a. As a result
b. On the contrary
c. Nevertheless
d. At least
13. a. by
b. -
c. to
d. for
14. a. his
b. hers
c. its
d. their

I was very lucky. I negotiated with my father to let me 15 school, and then I negotiated with the elders in my village to help me get into an American college. I promised I would return to help build a school and a maternity hospital so 16 in my village can be educated and stay well. I believe girls' education is very important because women play a central 17 in all essential aspects of society, from food production to health care to childbearing.

Early in primary school, a home science class introduces basic hygiene. I remember 18 that if you boil or filter the water you fetch from the river, it will kill bad bacteria. I also learned that if you drink unboiled cold milk, you risk 19 tapeworm. I learned that if I did not wash my hands before eating, I could get other kinds of worms and diseases. These are basic health issues that people in America take 20, but where I come from, if girls are not educated about this, 21 whole community suffers.

Girls' education is especially important in developing countries that depend 22 agriculture. Where I come from, as in much of Africa, women do most of the farming work. When women learn better agricultural methods, productivity 23. Traditions in some societies define the roles of women as collecting and fetching the natural resources for family use, 24 water and fuel wood. Therefore educating women about how to maintain and improve 25 environment around them is important for everyone in the world.

By Kakenya Ntaiya (abridged)



15. a. to end
b. stop
c. to complete
d. finish
16. a. the other
b. another
c. others
d. other peoples
17. a. goal
b. piece
c. roll
d. role
18. a. being taught
b. teaching
c. having taught
d. to teach
19. a. to get
b. getting
c. gotten
d. being got
20. a. out into the open
b. for example
c. for granted
d. into extremes
21. a. one
b. the
c. -
d. ours
22. a. from
b. in
c. of
d. on
23. a. decreases
b. increases
c. diminishes
d. reduces
24. a. such as
b. as well as
c. except for
d. besides
25. a. theirs
b. the
c. an
d. -