



Gates Archives

## The Exemplar

January 2024

Hi Friend,

Since its origins, education has played an essential role in society as a great equalizer, an agent of change, and a force for good.

Today, education remains a life-changing tool. Whether it's in its ability to incite peace, as is the theme for this year's International Day of Education, or as a promoter of equity and inclusivity, education is a vital instrument for the betterment of society. It's why at Exemplars in Global Health, we're fascinated by how education intersects with health outcomes, and how its close relationship can deliver positive outcomes across countries, cultures, and contexts.

Exemplars research shows education is an important driver of health, particularly as it relates to progress across family planning, women's health and wellbeing, stunting reduction, and under-five mortality.

Take Kenya and Malawi, for example. Both countries introduced policies that eliminated primary school fees, which resulted in near-universal enrollment and a significant narrowing of the education equity gap for boys and girls. These investments in education in both countries have been strongly associated with the increased use of modern contraceptives and decreased fertility rates, including for adolescents.


In Ethiopia, maternal education has clear, positive effects on women's wellbeing across the life course, as well as for the health of children, including lowering levels of under-five mortality and decreasing the likelihood of under-five stunting.

And in Senegal, strategies for delivering education on family planning, women's health, and gender equality are helping to increase contraceptive use and decrease maternal mortality.

These are just a few examples of why we are deeply appreciative of all educators – those in formal schooling as well as health care workers entrusted by their communities – who ensure children enroll and stay in school while their families have information on the health behaviors that improve, or even save, lives.

As we kick off the new year, let us prioritize, advocate for, and invest in education for the sake of learning, and also for the sake of ensuring health and wellbeing for all.

Best,  
Bose

 **Gates Ventures**  
Niranjan Bose, PhD  
Managing Director, Health and Life Sciences

See how improvements in access to and quality of education in Senegal contributed to a steep reduction in stunting.

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### EXEMPLARS STORIES

#### To prepare for climate change, we must invest more in areas that impact health: John-Arne Røttingen

In an exclusive interview, Exemplars News speaks with the new CEO of the Wellcome Trust, John-Arne Røttingen, about the organization's priorities, his lessons from the COVID pandemic, and the value of highlighting successes in global health.

#### Superhero against superbugs: Dr. Sanjeev Singh's 20-year battle against antimicrobial resistance

Antimicrobial resistance is a growing global threat – directly causing more than one million deaths around the world annually. Kerala, India's health leaders illustrate what it takes to address the challenge.

#### Extra credit: In Ghana, a project to get girls back to school also lowers teen pregnancy

The Strategic Approaches to Girls' Education program in Ghana is getting girls and young women back into school, and also helping teenage mothers manage their sexual health and family planning.

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