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 \* "Empowering women results in \*  
 \* greater progress in poverty \*  
 \* reduction." -- United Nations \*  
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Dear Friend,

Around the world, women and girls are being worn down by the cruelest forms of poverty -- and are often forbidden to improve their lives, or work to feed their children.

Of the one billion people on the planet who live on \$1 or less a day, 70% are women.

Many of these women are trapped in a cycle of illiteracy, hunger, grinding labor and abuse -- which means their children and their children's children could be trapped, too.

But in this despair, there is a glimmer of hope. This is a problem we can do something about -- right now!

The evidence is overwhelming: If you educate a girl, you change a family, a community and a nation. And in developing countries like Afghanistan, it costs a mere \$31 a year to educate a girl.

We have a chance to break the cycle of poverty for women before it destroys another generation. Will you help?

If you've seen the recent news coverage of Afghanistan, you've been given a rare glimpse of the harsh, oppressed lives of millions of women.

Under the Taliban, women were banned from working. Even if a woman's husband died, she could not work to feed her children! Tens of thousands of widows in the city of Kabul alone had no choice but to stand in the street in their tattered head-to-toe coverings begging for food and "baksheesh" -- charity for the poor.

The Taliban rule has ended, but their prohibition against educating girls has left a country where only 15% of the women are functionally literate. What a tragic situation!

What's more, this cycle of pain and poverty for women and their children is the norm in much of the world.

In Egypt, only 39% of women can read or write -- two out of five women cannot read the instructions on their children's medicine!

In Tajikistan, girls marry as young as 14. The babies follow quickly, year after year. With virtually no medical care, the number

(over, please)

of maternal deaths in Tajikistan alone rivals all of sub-Saharan Africa.

Can a few years of education really save these women? YES! United Nations studies show that when girls gain access to quality education, health care and economic opportunities, there is a 5 - 10% decline in infant mortality. And a 20% increase in wages.

Educating a woman raises the standard of living for her whole family.

CARE is at work right now, building schools, providing medical care, granting small business loans to women, and more.

Even while the Taliban was still in power, CARE managed to set up schools in more than 10 communities. To date, CARE has opened more than 300 community-based schools in Afghanistan and educated more than 21,000 children.

But we can't do it without the help of people like you.

Just \$31 can educate a girl for an entire year. Won't you send a gift today to help as many girls as possible break the cycle of poverty?

Mothers, daughters, aunts, young girls -- all deserve basic human rights and basic human dignity.

Women do so much for their families and communities -- from childcare to plowing fields. Yet in many countries, women lack property rights and cannot borrow funds. If their husbands die, they lose everything!

CARE's innovative programs hit poverty at its roots -- and give women the chance to lift their families out of poverty.

But all of these efforts take funding. And so many more women and their families need help. For just \$31 a year, we can have a direct, immediate impact on a girl. And affect a generation.

Poverty hits women the hardest. Please give women and girls in Afghanistan and around the world a chance to break free from the oppressive, destructive, unfair burden of poverty. Thank you for your response today.

Gratefully,



Peter D. Bell  
President

P.S. As you read this, more women and girls are being caught in the vicious cycle of poverty. But for just \$31, CARE can give a girl a year of schooling -- and help her and her family break free from poverty. Will you send a gift right now? Thank you.