



For Immediate Release: February 27, 2013

Contact: Jillian Holzer at (office) 202.999.4483, (cell) 202.264.0567, or jholzer@womenthrive.org

LESSONS NOT LEARNED: A CRISIS IN GIRLS' EDUCATION

***Capitol Hill Breakfast on Thursday, February 28 at 8:30 am;
additional Press Availability with speakers post-event at 10:00 am***

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Over the last two decades, millions of children in developing countries have entered school for the first time in their lives. But while more children than ever are in school, too many of them (mostly girls) drop out. Those who do stay in school fail to get even the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic—crucial skills they need for work and life. There is a global crisis in learning.

The event *Lessons Not Learned: A Crisis in Girls' Education*, which is organized by Women Thrive Worldwide, will commemorate International Women's Day by exploring how the U.S. Government, multilateral institutions, private sector actors, and the international development community can help boys and girls to learn, not just attend school. International Women's Day is marked annually on March 8 to celebrate women's many accomplishments as well as highlight where progress is still needed.

The breakfast is on Thursday, February 28 from 8:30-10:00 am at Charlie Palmer Restaurant (101 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington DC 20001).

Our high-level speaker line-up includes:

- **Gene Sperling:** Director, National Economic Council and Assistant to the President for Economic Policy
- **Richard Lui:** News Anchor, MSNBC and NBC News
- **Joe Keefe:** President and CEO, PAX World Mutual Funds
- **Ritu Sharma:** Co-founder and President of Women Thrive Worldwide
- **Subhadra Belbase:** Senior Policy and Advocacy Campaigns Director, Plan International USA
- **M. Charito Krivant:** President & CEO, Creative Associates International
- **Juhudi N. Mbwambo:** Founder and Executive Director of Elimu Community Light Tanzania

- **Salathiel Ntakirutimana:** Founder and CEO, Youth Globe; Member of the UN Secretary General's Global Education First Initiative Youth Advocacy Group
- **Dr. Sakena Yacoobi:** Founder, Afghan Institute of Learning, Afghanistan

The event is hosted by a strong bipartisan Congressional Host Committee that is co-chaired by Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Representative Nita M. Lowey (D-NY), and Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL).

“A quality education can mean the difference between living a lifetime in poverty or having the ability to change not just a family’s economic situation, but a whole community’s,” said Ritu Sharma, Co-founder and President, Women Thrive Worldwide and a featured event speaker. “But to make good on this enormous promise around the globe, we have to focus on ensuring that students get something out of being in the classroom.”

“We know that providing girls a quality education is the foundation for strong women, families, and communities,” said Congresswoman Nita M. Lowey (D-NY), the senior Democrat on the House Appropriations Committee. “That is why it is so important that Women Thrive Worldwide is bringing us together on International Women’s Day to focus on what we can do to improve girls’ access to education. As we renew our commitment to improving the lives of women and girls, I will continue to work to make sure that the United States is leading the fight to secure a quality education for girls around the world.”

“Women Thrive gives voice to voiceless millions, ensuring passage of laws to protect, educate, and empower women and girls worldwide. I am so proud to commemorate International Women’s Day 2013 with these champions for justice and equality,” said Congresswoman Frederica Wilson (D-FL).

Event sponsors include Plan International USA; Creative Associates International; RTI International | International Development Group; The Hill; Juárez & Associates, Inc.; Brightline Interactive; Avon Foundation for Women; Firelight Foundation; Tumbleweed Bead Co.; Open Society Foundations; Mary Kay Inc.; and United Methodist Women.

###

Women Thrive Worldwide is the leading nonprofit organization bringing the voice of women around the world directly to decision-makers in Washington, D.C. We believe that when women thrive, the whole world thrives. Find us online at www.womenthrive.org and follow us at www.twitter.com/womenthrive and www.facebook.com/womenthrive.

Follow the event on Twitter with #GlobalEdCrisis.