

**Researchers**

Nava Ashraf  
London School of Economics and Political Science

Kathleen McGinn  
Harvard University

## On the International Day of the Girl, Negotiating a Better Future

In celebration of the International Day of the Girl, we're highlighting a [new project](#) that explores if training Zambian girls in negotiation skills can positively impact their health and education. Zambian girls are three times as likely as boys to drop out of school by the time they reach eighth grade, and when young girls struggle to stay in school, they may turn to male partners for resources. Early pregnancy can lead to high rates of maternal mortality, and sex with older partners might leave girls with little bargaining power to protect themselves, resulting in young Zambian women becoming HIV infected at twice the rate of their male peers.

So the IPA team, led by researchers Nava Ashraf, Corinne Low, and Kathleen McGinn, designed an intervention to address these issues through teaching girls negotiation skills. The program measures the impact of a communication and negotiation skills curriculum that teaches girls how to leverage the resources around them to protect themselves and stay in school, potentially gaining greater investments from their parents while learning to walk away from older sex partners. If successful, the program can be scaled up around the country through our partnership with the Ministry of Education.

Check out the video below to see the program in action, and have a happy International Day of the Girl.

October 11, 2012