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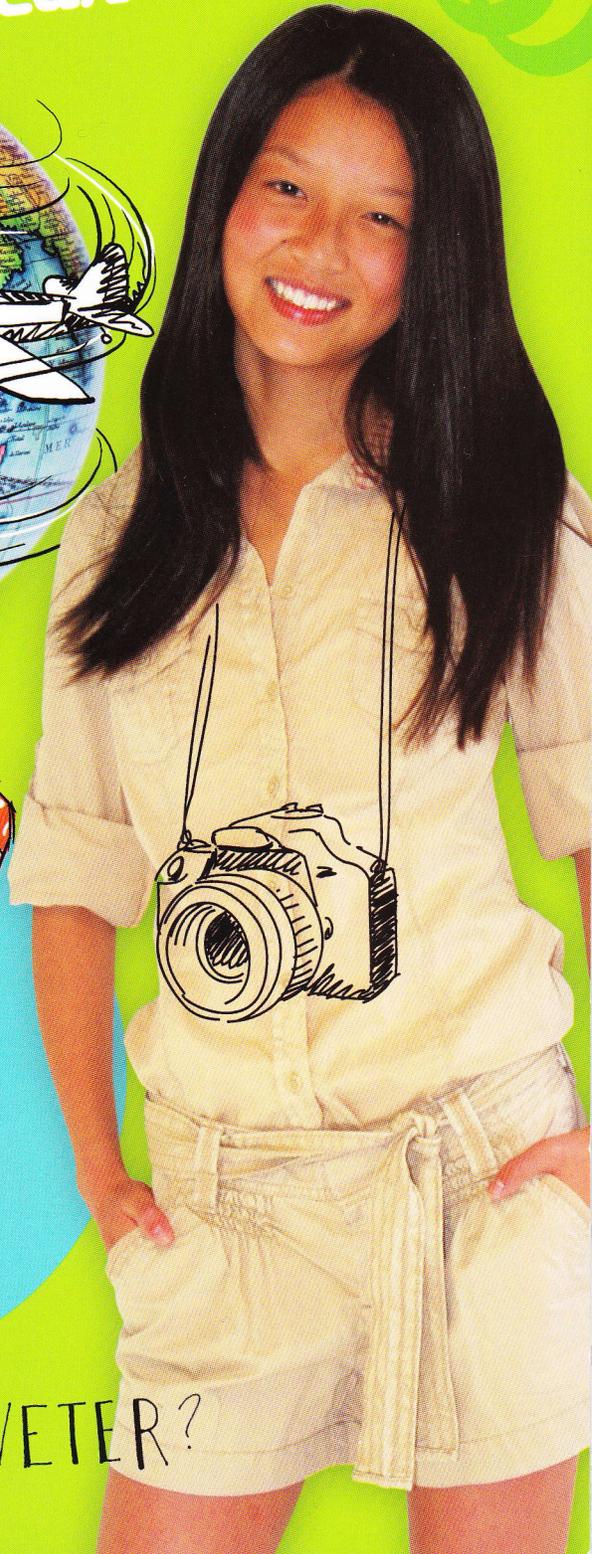
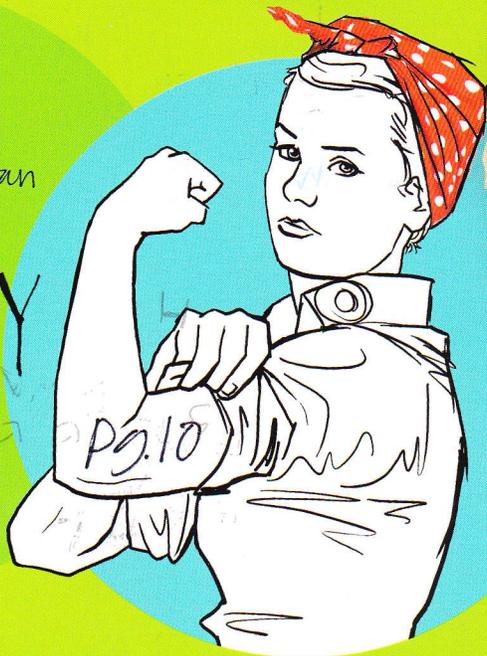
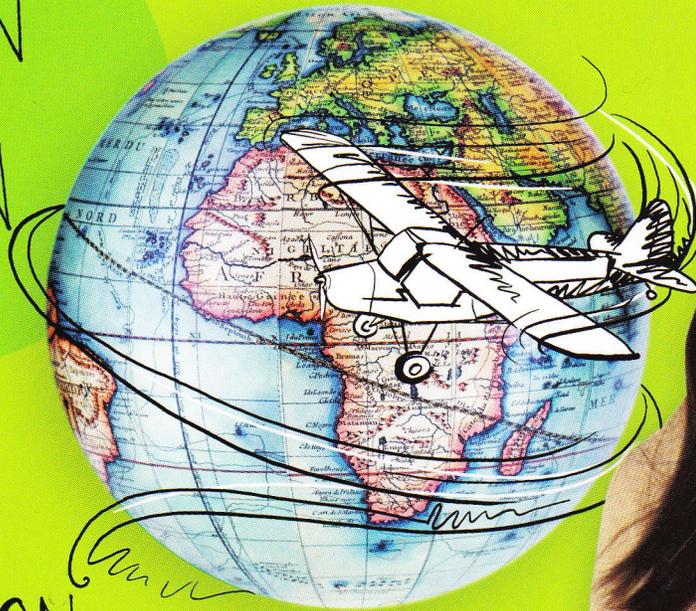
8 Elements of  
DESIGN

EDUCATION  
around the  
WORLD

India, Sudan, Cambodia, Pakistan

Tie-Dye D.I.Y.

D.Y.O BLOG



WHO IS ROSIE *the* RIVETER?

# THE World

# All Around

BY CYNTHIA DURCANIN



How long does it take you to clean your room?

Now imagine:

- ✓ **cleaning up** after 12 siblings
- ✓ **hauling** the family laundry to a nearby river
- ✓ **gathering** wood for cooking
- ✓ **grinding** grain by hand
- ✓ **baking** bread for dinner.

Who could possibly have time for school, let alone homework???

**A**cross the globe a staggering 100 million children do not attend school, two-thirds of whom are girls.

Almost 80 percent of those girls live in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

So why are 67 million girls around the world not in school? In some countries, war and political conflicts have kept entire villages out of school, but in many parts of the world the reason is surprisingly simple—housework.

Cultural attitudes driven by poverty are often a reason that cultures adhere to rigid gender roles. In many cultures, boys “can’t do housework”, so they go to

school while the girls stay home to do chores. Parents do not see the benefits of educating daughters who are destined to become housewives and mothers. There are, however, many groups working to educate both girls and their parents in these cultures. Organizations like Door Step School and Lotus Pedals recognize that adolescent girls and young women are the keys to breaking the cycle of poverty. As the saying goes, “educate a girl, educate a nation.”

In India many poor families do not see the point of educating girls who will eventually marry. Until then, their time is better spent at home doing chores. Neela, who lives in a sprawling slum community of

# India



Mumbai, was lucky enough to attend nine years of school.

But at age 17, she was forced to drop out of school and marry a man she did not know. Her marriage ended poorly, and very soon Neela moved back home and joined her mother working at the docks, packing seafood for export.

Then one day she was approached by the Door Step School, a non-profit group that educates working and forgotten children living on the streets. Since 1989, its School on Wheels program has brought books, computers, and teachers to more than 25,000 children living in the slums of Mumbai and Pune, according to Rajani Paranjpe, founder and president of the Door Step School.

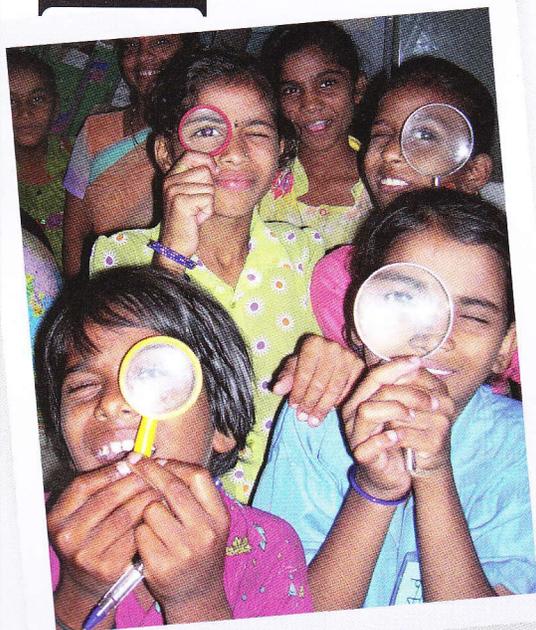
Paranjpe believes education is as much about today as tomorrow. "What kind of development would we be looking at if half the population does not have access to or receive education?" she asks.

Neela is a case in point. Today she is a teacher and a role model in her community. "She carries a stylish little handbag, albeit a cheap one," says Paranjpe, "But it is a such a contrast to the trademark plastic tub women in her community carry home at the end of a day's work."

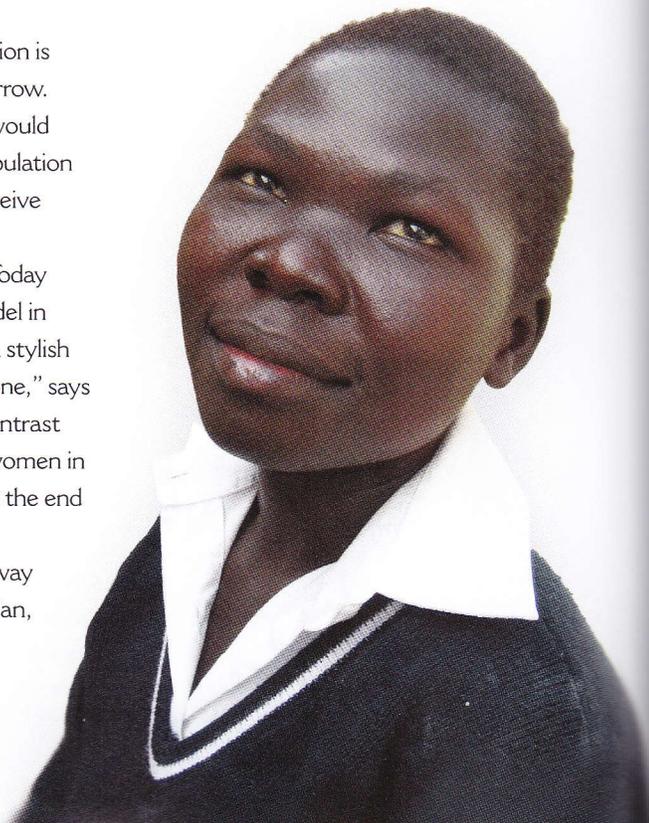
More than 2,500 miles away is Africa's largest country, Sudan, where only 10% of girls ages

7-14 go to school. Illiteracy among women and girls hovers around 93%. Less than 2% of girls are enrolled in high school. These shocking numbers are due largely to two decades of civil war that left 4.5 million people dead and created nine million refugees. Cultural attitudes toward women are also a huge factor.

Patience Gladys, 17, lives in Morobo south Sudan. When her father died she was forced to quit school. Initially her uncle agreed to pay her tuition, but then he stopped, telling her it was a waste of his money. "He told me if I were educated, then I would 'know the politics of the boys.' It was better to just get married," Patience told *Kiki* magazine.



# Sudan



# Cambodia

Today Patience is back in school thanks to the New Sudan Education Initiative (NESEI). Executive Director Anita Ayers Henderight was part of a team last May that worked against malaria, bad roads, and technological breakdowns to help build a school for 500 girls in southern Sudan. So far 97% of the students stay at the school year after year; very few students drop out. "This is a phenomenal result," she said. "Hopefully it reflects an evolving and changing attitude."

Having cast aside her uncle's words, Patience, who hopes to be a lawyer, knows her education is not a waste. "I know that because of my education, my future children will not suffer."

In Cambodia, nearly 40% of all children are working to help their families put food on the table. This is one reason why only 11% of Cambodian girls attend high school. And when young girls are not in school they are especially vulnerable, warns Thida Khus, an advocate on women's issues for the non-profit, Silaka. "You notice how these girls are dropping out just after elementary school, just as they're beginning puberty," she told *The Phnom Penh Post*.

Lotus Outreach, a non-profit agency working to keep at-risk girls in school, saw the connection between girls not in school and a livelihood dependent on rice. To offset parents' concerns about lost income, the group created a monthly rice stipend for families who kept their girls in school. Then they launched Lotus Pedals, a program that provides 150 heavy-terrain bicycles to girls who would not otherwise be able to get to the nearest school. In many villages girls must traverse muddy, pot-holed roads

passing fields that were only recently cleared of land mines from the Vietnam War.

"Here are girls who were living in shacks and didn't even own a pair of shoes," said Erika Keaveney, the program's executive director. "Today they talk about becoming doctors or lawyers or teachers. They love school, and they don't take their education for granted."

### Want more info?

Go to [kikimag.com](http://kikimag.com) to find out about schools for girls in Pakistan!

