

2017 Make the Case for Caring Third Place Essay

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From Mali to Cali

Here in the United States, we are untouchable. Burrowed in our safe suburban bubbles, we are blissfully oblivious to the hardships other countries' children face. While we get quality education for free, only 34% of children in Mali are enrolled in secondary education.¹ They lack the resources —

that's where we can help. But what does donating to Mali education do for us? Of course, it soothes your conscience and makes you feel benevolent, but there is a much more tactile benefit: helping Mali's children receive a quality education improves Mali's economy, and helping Mali's economy improves the global economy, coming back to affect us.

Improving one country's economy can indirectly affect the global economy. Economic growth can be explained using the Diamond Model, proposed by Michael Porter. The model says that economic growth within regions is affected by four factors: demand conditions, input conditions, rivalry between companies, and supporting industries.²

Let's start with the first factor: demand conditions. With each year of quality education one receives, his income increases by 10 percent.³ As one's income increases, so does his ability to buy products, increasing the demand for that product. First factor: check.

The second factor is input conditions, like labor, capital, and resources. As more children get education, skilled labor becomes abundant. Education also increases the wealth of the entrepreneurs receiving that education. Resources are a little bit more complicated. As a country receives more education, it is more in control of its resources. This can be explained using Wallerstein's World Systems Theory, which divides countries into three categories: Core (developed), Periphery (developing), and Semi-Periphery.⁴ Periphery countries sell raw materials and labor for cheap to core countries, which then make goods with those materials and sell them back to the periphery for higher prices. As a country gets more education and develops, however, the economy becomes more self-sufficient and the country is more in control of their resources. Labor, capital, resources: check, check and check. Second factor: check.



The third factor of rivalry between companies and the fourth factor of supporting industries can both be gratified by one simple fact. After children get quality education, they will have the knowledge to start their own companies. The more education, the more companies there are. As a result, naturally, there will be competition between similar industries. Third factor: check. There will also be a variety of industries rising, and all the new companies will support each other, providing each other materials and goods. Fourth factor: check.

All the four factors of the Diamond Model are fulfilled with the education of children. As more countries develop, competition will increase between these countries, resulting in new companies and products. As the global economy flourishes, we in Suburbia are provided with jobs, giving us wealth. So by donating that money you were going to buy a new pair of shoes with, you can actually help yourself — in a roundabout way. From Mali to Cali: check.

Sources:

- 1 *Why Middle School?" Mali Rising Foundation. Square Space, n.d. Web. 30 Mar. 2017.*
2. "Institute For Strategy & Competitiveness." *The Diamond Model - Institute For Strategy And Competitiveness - Harvard Business School.* Harvard Business School, n.d. Web. 30 Mar. 2017.
3. "Education." *U.S. Agency for International Development.* US AID From the American People, 28 Mar. 2017. Web. 30 Mar. 2017.
4. Elwell, Frank W. 2013. "Wallerstein's World-Systems Theory," Retrieved March 30, 2017 <http://www.faculty.rsu.edu/~felwell/Theorists/Essays/Wallerstein1.htm>

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