

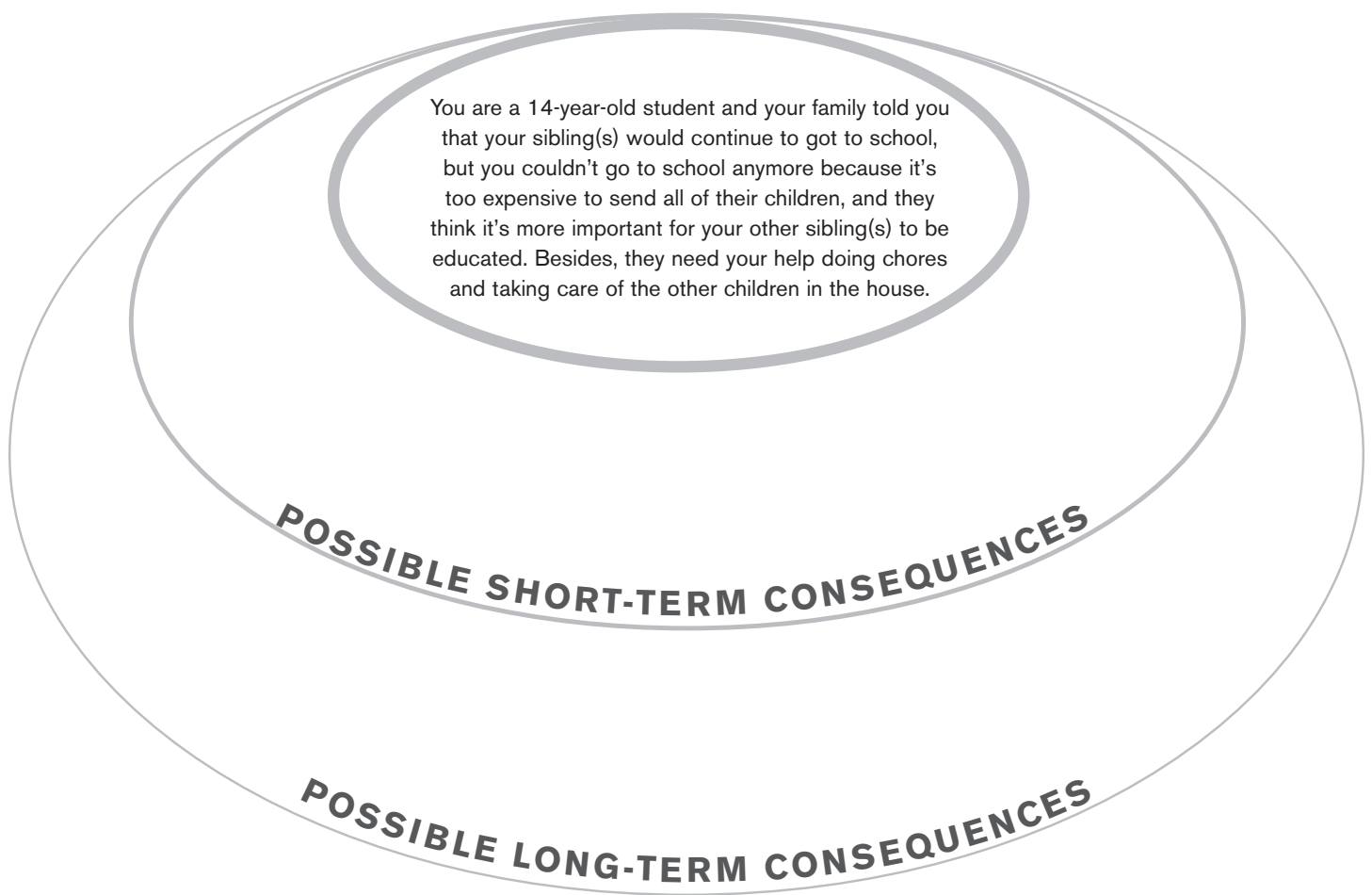
Student Handout A:

# Life Map

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Work with your partners to brainstorm some possible consequences that the student in this scenario might face as a result of being denied access to an education.



Student Handout B:

## The Education Ripple Effect

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**Group Names:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Read and discuss the following statement and work as a group to answer the discussion questions:

*Access to education is recognized as a basic human right as well as a significant factor in breaking the cycle of poverty and improving quality of life for children, communities, and countries. Despite this, millions of girls and women around the world are denied the opportunity to attend school and pursue education and training outside the home.*

*Of the approximately 75 million children who are currently not in school, the majority are girls. Worldwide, for every 100 boys out of school, there are approximately 122 girls who are unable to attend school. In developing countries and countries with strict cultural and religious codes regarding gender roles, this gap is much wider: for every 100 boys out of school in Yemen, there are 270 girls who are not in school, in Iraq it is 316 girls, and in India it is 426 girls out of school for every 100 boys out of school.*

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### Discussion Questions:

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- How do you feel about this information? Did it surprise you? If so, what surprised you most?
- Why do you think girls are less likely than boys to have access to education? What factors might influence girls' access to education?
- In some communities the majority of girls in a village or town may be uneducated. What impact do you think this might have on the community?
- In nations where girls are four times less likely to get an education, how do you think the country might be affected?

Student Handout C:

## Vietnam in Context

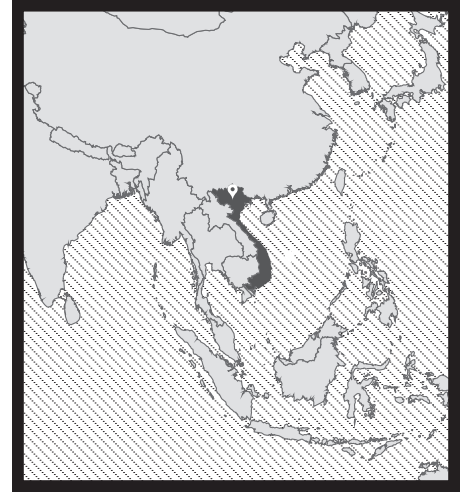
### Vietnam: Country History

Ancient Vietnam was home to some of the world's earliest civilizations, with a cultural history of over twenty thousand years—putting its citizens among the first humans to practice farming and agriculture.

Vietnam has spent much of its history repelling or being ruled by invaders. For over a thousand years Vietnam was governed by powers foreign to its region. In the late 19th century, the country was colonized by France, which ruled Vietnam until 1954, when France was defeated by communist forces.

The population of Vietnam was politically divided following the overthrow of French rule and an agreement was made to divide the country into North Vietnam (which was predominantly Communist) and South Vietnam (which opposed Communist rule), with the plan of reunifying the country through democratic, countrywide elections. This division eventually led to the Vietnam War.

After millions of Vietnamese deaths and the American withdrawal from Vietnam in 1973, the war ended with the fall of Saigon to the Northern armies in 1975. For almost 20 years, a reunified Vietnam suffered regional conflict and reconstruction and experienced international isolation and limited economic growth.



### Girls' Education in Vietnam

#### **The Doi Moi (The Renovation)**

In the 1980s, Vietnam's government introduced a series of reforms aimed at improving the country's living standards and economy. Since then, the *Doi Moi* (the renovation), as it's called, has made great advances—especially in the areas of private business, foreign investment, and transforming the country into an industrialized nation. But efforts to improve education have been met with many challenges, especially in rural areas.

Although Vietnam has made significant progress in achieving universal primary education and improving girls' access to schooling, the overall quality of education is poor by international standards and teachers are in short supply. Children in rural areas are forced to travel miles alone to reach the nearest school, and family responsibilities often outweigh students' hopes for education, with girls in particular dropping out so they can contribute to the household income.

#### **Flying Ducks**

In Vietnam, girls are referred to as “flying ducks,” a saying that has its roots in Chinese tradition and refers to the belief that a girl's value is lost to the family after her marriage. For parents who have limited resources, choosing to invest in their sons' education over their daughters' seems like a better bet, since tradition dictates that boys are responsible for taking care of parents in their old age, while a girl's skills and talents will benefit her husband's family.

Son preference is deeply rooted in many Asian countries, and daughters may be seen as a liability, especially where dowries must be paid. In *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*, Bich Vu Thi, a program officer for Room to Read's Girls' Education program, talks about her own struggles achieving access to education in a poor family where girls were not valued. She says, “One boy is one child, but 10 girls are not equivalent to one child.” In a country like Vietnam, where the average person earns just one dollar a day, the preference for boys, coupled with other factors—such as the need for daughters to help at home, the cost of schooling, and the long distances students often have to travel to attend school—puts education out of reach for thousands of girls whose families are living on the economic margins.

Student Handout D:

## Film Module Screening Guide

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**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Take notes while watching the *Education in Vietnam* film module, using the following list of questions as a guide:

- Why is education important to each of the students in the film?  
What are their goals?
- What challenges do they face?
- What are their families' attitudes toward education?
- What are they each doing to overcome the barriers?
- Write down two or three quotes from the film that stand out most for you and illustrate the value and role of education in the lives of the students featured in the film.