

October 15, 2015



EDUCATION - At the end of September 2015, world leaders will come together to ratify the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which, over the last 15 years, have focused global development activities and led to significant improvements in alleviating poverty, improving access to education, improving maternal health and infant mortality rates, and promoting environmental sustainability. Poverty has fallen by almost half, and the illiteracy gap between men and women has narrowed, however, there is still much work to do as more than 60 million girls are still missing out.

Many factors contribute to making education difficult for girls – conflict, war and displacement; child marriage; child labour; poverty, religious and cultural factors. But the evidence is clear: completing primary and secondary education is transformative. It offers girls an opportunity to become literate; to improve their health; to delay marriage; to delay their first pregnancy; and to increase the opportunity to find decent employment.

Over the years, ensuring girls have a safe place to learn, access to clean drinking water, access to books, and access to decent toilet facilities have been some of the most vital projects for the Lasallian Foundation. This has led to positive changes in girls' education in many communities, particularly in Pakistan.

Enrolments of girls in Lasallian schools (where permitted) in Pakistan have increased along with the number of girls graduating from secondary school. This is due to the hard work and dedication of the De La Salle Brothers and teachers who have nurtured the joy of learning in the students.

Since 2007 we have been developing a small school in one of our poorest communities called La Salle School Gokkuwal. Relocated to the outskirts of Faisalabad due to Government land redevelopment plans, this community was moved to an area with no running water, no access to electricity, no sealed roads, and poor access to public transport. Most of the parents are illiterate and work as domesticworkers, road workers or as daily labourers earning less than A\$2 a day. This year the school had its first female graduates accepted into tertiary education – three young women into medical, and one young woman into IT. This is an exceptional achievement and one we hope is only the beginning of a larger change in their small community.

A change that sees education as equally important for both girls and boys. A change that sees the value of children completing not only primary but also secondary education. A change that builds resilience.

A change that restores dignity and confidence. A change that empowers the poor to break the cycle.

Thank you for making these changes possible.

Miranda Chow,

CEO Lasallian Foundation

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