

# Educate A Child: Educate Girls

The number of out-of-school children in India without access to primary education is estimated at almost 1.7 million, and poverty is identified as a fundamental challenge to enrolment. However, gender discrimination is a significant contributor to the growing number of out-of-school children. To many poor families, educating a girl means losing her as an income provider for the family.

Educate A Child (EAC) partners with a local NGO in India with an impressive track record of enrolling young girls into schools in areas with the worst gender indicators. After successful completion of the test phase, 'Educate Girls' was independently registered in 2007 and won government approval to start a pilot project in 500 schools in 2008, working with 70,000 children in the Bali, Sumenput, and Rani blocks of the Pali district.

Educate Girls runs a comprehensive model of reforms for government schools through community ownership, with the aim to secure 100% enrolment, higher attendance, and improved learning outcomes for all girls. The organisation engages girl students, teachers, schools,

communities, and government officials within existing frameworks to create a sustainable, scalable, and holistic platform in each village.

The programme recruits youth advocates, known as Team Balika, who tackle the issue of gender inequality. These youth leaders work as champions for girls' education and catalysts for school reform. Team Balika work in the schools as well as village communities spreading awareness about girls' education – often visiting homes to highlight the benefits of education to reluctant parents. This approach has boosted enrolment, retention, and learning outcomes for all girls.

Seema is an example of someone the initiative has helped. She lost her father at the age of 11, and to make things worse the villagers blamed her for his death. Adding to Seema's despair was her marriage to an abusive alcoholic who was twice her age. Soon after her marriage, she conceived a baby. Instead of being happy, her husband threw her out of the house. She lived on the streets for several days without proper care and nutrition, which resulted in a miscarriage.

A few days later Sharda, a Team Balika member, found Seema and counselled her to forget her past and face her struggles with confidence. She re-enrolled Seema in school, where she studied for two years and



later cleared her 10<sup>th</sup> grade exam with flying colours. Today, Seema is a proud member of Team Balika. She works with Sharda to enrol out-of-school girls, supports the schoolteachers, and conducts life-skills education sessions for adolescent girls.

By 2016, Educate Girls will expand its programme to the nine districts in Rajasthan with the worst gender indicators to improve education opportunities for children, especially girls. Beyond that time, it will establish partnerships with other state governments to allow them to replicate its model across India and around the world.

EAC is supporting Educate Girls during three stages of its expansion, the first two of which are an immediate priority. These are to directly enrol and retain 64,000 out-of-school children by 2018, and to ensure that 6,600 schools have teachers trained to implement creative teaching and learning techniques. [educateachild.org.qa](http://educateachild.org.qa)

## Educate A Child

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## EDUCATE GIRLS

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