



SAFEENA HUSAIN
Founder and Executive Director, Educate Girls



Safeena Husain is the Founder and Executive Director at Educate Girls – a non-profit organisation that partners with the Government and with communities to improve access and quality of education for all children, especially young girls.

After graduating from the London School of Economics, Safeena spent over a decade working with grassroots projects in Latin America, Africa & Asia. In India, Safeena chose the agenda closest to her heart – that of girls' education. To commence work, Safeena together with a local team, conducted a 50-school test project in Rajasthan and its success led to the initiation of Educate Girls in 2007. This was followed by a 500-school pilot project in Pali district and since then Educate Girls has scaled operations to 16 districts in the states of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, having over 6.7 million total beneficiaries of its programmatic interventions.

Under Safeena's leadership, Educate Girls initiated the world's first Development Impact Bond (DIB) in education, a proof of concept that ties funding to outcomes. In 2018, on its completion, the Educate Girls' DIB surpassed both its target outcomes by achieving 160% of its learning target and 116% of its enrolment target. It aims to become a proof of concept for replication and scale-up in education sector and beyond.

Safeena's efforts to bridge the gender gap in education in India have been widely recognized. She has been conferred with the 2017 NITI Aayog's Women Transforming India Award and has in the past received the British Asian Trust's Special Recognition Award from HRH Prince Charles for outstanding contribution in education. Moreover, Educate Girls has received the prestigious 2015 Skoll Award, 2014 WISE Award, the 2014 USAID Millennium Alliance Award, the 2014 Stars Impact Award and the India Development Marketplace Award in 2011 from the World Bank.