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Improving access to education for girls is an important step towards gender equality
Photograph: Educate Girls

Empowering girls through education

Like millions of other girls in rural India, 12-year-old Manju* found herself tasked with domestic chores in her small Rajasthan village. Her parents said they could not even think of sending her to school as she was responsible for cooking, fetching water and taking the goats for grazing.

While education is free and compulsory in India, access remains limited by social, economic and cultural obstacles, especially for girls. With support from donors such as Deutsche Bank, non-profit organisation Educate Girls works to tackle some of the root causes of gender inequality in India's education system and improve girls' access to quality education.

As well as encouraging parents to allow girls to enrol in school and supporting their retention in classes, Educate Girls' initiatives aim to improve the learning outcomes of girls and boys in grades 3-5, impart life skills to marginalised girls, and improve school governance and infrastructure.

Educate Girls took up Manju's case, eventually persuading her parents that empowering girls through education can give them valuable tools to gain employment. As a result, Manju's parents gave their permission for her to enrol in a local school, where she has made friends and relishes the opportunity to learn.

*Name changed to protect privacy. There is no correlation between the child featured in this article and the photograph.



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