

## Why has Malala been nominated?

Child Rights Hero Nominee • Pages 27–47

# Malala Yousafzai

**Malala Yousafzai has been nominated for the 2014 World's Children's Prize for her courageous and dangerous fight for girls' right to education.**

Malala started to speak out for girls' rights at the age of 11, when the Taliban banned girls from going to school in the Swat Valley in Pakistan. Malala defied the rules and kept going to school. Her life was under threat and at times she had to go into hiding. Finally, at the age of 15 Malala was shot and almost killed by the Taliban on her way home from school. But Malala survived. The Taliban thought they could silence Malala by killing her. Instead they gave her an even stronger voice, which can now be heard all over the world. Malala is determined to continue her struggle for every child's right to an education. She believes that education is the future, and that one child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world. She has her own fund, the Malala Fund, which was created to help girls get to school.



One month after Malala was shot, children hold up pictures of her at a ceremony in the city of Karachi in Pakistan.

PHOTO: MASROOR/CORBIS/TT

**It is 9 October 2012.**

**"Which one of you is Malala?" asks the man dressed in white. He hides his face with a bandana.**

**None of the girls on their way home from school in the back of the minibus say a word. But their faces reveal who Malala is.**

**The man raises his pistol and fires three rapid shots. The first bullet hits Malala in the head.**

**Malala has fought long and hard against the Taliban in the Swat Valley in Pakistan, for girls' right to go to school. Now, at the age of 15, she is close to death.**

**But when Malala regains consciousness, she has become a symbol for girls' right to education throughout the world.**

**W**hen Malala is born, her arrival is not celebrated as much as it would have been if she had been a boy. Many Pashtun people, as people from the Swat Valley are known, believe boys are more important than girls. But Malala's father Ziauddin is different. Right from the start, Malala is the apple of his eye.

In her book about her life, Malala says that she was born in the most beautiful place in the world:

"The Swat Valley is a heavenly place full of mountains, flowing waterfalls and clear lakes. The sign at the entrance to the valley reads 'Welcome to Paradise'."

In this 'paradise', Malala is set to experience earthquakes, and severe flooding that kills many people. But the worst

PHOTO: ELYSE MARKS

Malala.



thing of all is when the Taliban come to the Swat Valley. They threaten and kill people, forcing women to cover their faces and girls to quit school. They will bomb over 400 girls' schools in Swat.

**Girls hit hard**

Malala spends a lot of time at her father's school in the biggest city in Swat, Mingora. She learns early on how different boys' and girls' lives are, and how men are in charge. But Malala also learns from her father that things don't have to be like that. He fights for everyone's right to go to school – even poor people and girls.

When her family go to visit relatives in a mountain village, Malala notices that her cousin Shahida is missing. She is only ten years old, but her father has sold her to an older man who already has a wife.

Malala complains to her father about how girls are being hit hard in Swat. He replies that things are even



PHOTO: ANJA NIEDRINGHAUS/AP

worse in the neighbouring country of Afghanistan, just 150 km away. The Taliban there are forcing women to wear burkas to hide their faces, burning girls' schools and abusing women who wear nail polish. Many of the Taliban are Pashtun people.

**Arrival of the Taliban**

Malala is ten years old when the Taliban come to the Swat

Valley. They gather people's CDs, DVDs and televisions and burn them in huge piles on the street. The Taliban also stop young children from being vaccinated against polio. They shut down cable TV channels and ban a board game that children love to play.

Then the Taliban set their sights on girls' schools. When Malala's family return from a

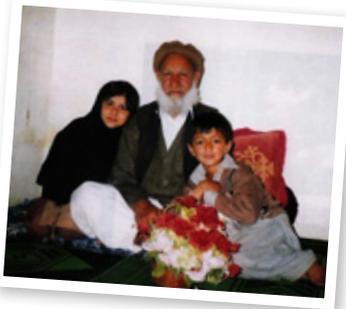


PHOTO: ANJA NIEDRINGHAUS/AP

On the way home from school Malala travelled by minibus with several school friends, which the Taliban discovered.

In the year before she was shot, Malala always travelled to school by rickshaw. Before that she used to walk, but after the family started receiving threats her mother was worried.

visit to relatives in a rural area, there is a letter pinned to the school gate. It is a warning to Malala's father not to allow the girls to continue wearing normal school uniform. Instead, they must wear burkas and cover their faces. After that, the girls always cover their heads when entering or leaving school.



**From the family's photo album**

Malala with her little brother Khushal and their grandfather, who they call Baba.

Malala has started to read, and her little brother Khushal copies her.

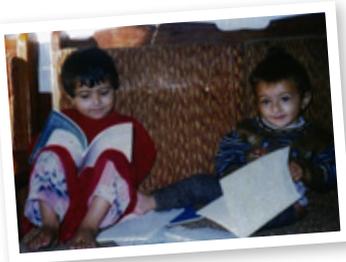


PHOTO: ANJA NIEDRINGHAUS/AP

Malala went to Khushal Girls' High School, which was founded by her father. You can't tell from the street that it is a school.





PHOTO: ANJA NIEDRINCHAUSS/AP

Every morning at Malala's school, Khushal Girls' High School, the girls gather under the flag of Pakistan. This picture was taken one month after Malala was shot. Her school friends were very worried about her, and about their own safety.

### No girls in school

It is now 2008 and the Taliban begin blowing up schools – mostly girls' schools – almost every day. Malala is eleven and is interviewed on several TV channels. She speaks out for girls' right to go to school. In a BBC interview in Urdu, the national language of Pakistan, she says:

“How dare the Taliban take away my right to education?”

Things go from bad to worse. The Taliban announce that all schools for girls are to be closed. From 15 January 2009 no girl in the Swat

Valley will be permitted to attend school.

At first Malala thinks it can't be possible. How could the Taliban stop her and her friends from going to school? But her friends ask who could stop the Taliban from doing it – after all, they have already got away with blowing up hundreds of schools.

Malala starts to write a diary about life in Swat under the Taliban. When it is read out on BBC radio it is under a made up name, Gul Makai, which means cornflower. Her school friends talk about the diary at school, but they don't

know it is Malala who is writing it. She talks about how it feels to be afraid, about the ban on girls going to school, and about being forced to wear a burka and hide her face.

When she is filmed for a documentary, Malala says, “They cannot stop me... our challenge to the world around us is: Save our school, save our Pakistan, save our Swat.” But soon the Taliban close down their school.

Widespread protests cause the Taliban to change their minds and allow girls up to the age of ten to attend

school. Malala and her friends, who are too old to be allowed, go to school in their normal clothes, hiding their school books under their shawls. The girls' headteacher calls it ‘the secret school’.

Then one day the army of Pakistan orders the inhabitants of the Swat Valley to leave their homes. The army are planning an offensive against the Taliban. Over a million people become refugees in their own country. Malala's family leave the valley and are only able to return home three months later. The army say that the Taliban have been defeated, but soon the Taliban start to blow up schools again.

### Serious threats

In January 2012 Malala travels to the big city of Karachi with her family. The provincial authorities have decided



## School for girls under threat

The girls in the picture are on their way home from school in Malala's hometown of Mingora. They are wearing burkas. The Taliban demand that they observe Purdah, which means that women and girls are not allowed to show their faces to men. The Taliban want to stop girls from going to school and they have bombed over 400 girls' schools in the Swat area, where Malala comes from.

With 185 million inhabitants, Pakistan has the world's seventh-largest population. Three out of four women in Pakistan can't read. In rural areas, there are places where only three in a hundred women can read. 5 million girls who should attend school get no education whatsoever, and Pakistan is one of the few countries in the world where illiteracy is rising. Many families give their sons an education, but not their daughters, since they leave the family when they are married off. Less than 2 percent of Pakistan's budget goes towards education, while over 25 percent is spent on defence.

PHOTO: VERONIQUE DE VIGUERIE/GETTY IMAGES





PHOTO: ANJA NIEDRINGHAUS/AP

Malala's school is not visible from the street. The girls quickly enter through the iron gates, and they usually check the street before leaving.

always afraid of the Taliban when she walks up the steps. Once the rest of her family have fallen asleep, she goes round checking that all the doors and windows are properly closed and locked. She prays to Allah for protection for her family.

### Which one of you is Malala?

It's exam time. On the night of 8 October, Malala sits up late studying for an exam in Pakistani history. Her whole family eat breakfast together. Today, Malala's mother is going to start learning to read and write.

The school bus does two runs after school every day. Malala and her friends are chatting after the exam, so they take the second run, at twelve noon.

Suddenly two men dressed in white step out onto the road, forcing the minibus to make an emergency stop. One of them, wearing a hat and a bandana covering his eyes, climbs onto the back of the bus and bends to look in

to name a school after Malala. She holds a speech for all the politicians, saying: "We must work together for girls' rights."

In her book, Malala talks about sitting on the beach in Karachi and thinking about what life is like for girls and women in her country:

"We want to be able to make our own decisions and be free to go to school or work. Nowhere in the Koran does it say that a woman should be dependent on a man or have to listen to a man," she thinks to herself.

While they are still in Karachi, Malala's father sees on the internet that the Taliban have issued threats against two women, and one of them is Malala. "These two women should be killed," he reads.

Malala's parents tell her about the threat and her father says that she should stop speaking out about girls' education and against the Taliban, just for a while.

"How could we possibly do

that? I have been invited to speak at lots of events, and I can't just pull out," says Malala.

When the family return to Swat, the police show them the document about Malala. It says that because she has become well-known both in Pakistan and around the world for opposing the Taliban, a death threat has been issued against her.

The provincial government want Malala to become an ambassador for peace, but her family say it is too dangerous. Malala starts locking the gate to their family home every evening. Her father explains that the Taliban have started coming after anyone who speaks out against what the Taliban stand for.

### School bus stopped

Malala and her father are planning to travel to the villages in the Swat mountains during the next school holidays, to talk to parents and children about how important it is to learn to read and write.

"We'll be like education missionaries," says Malala to her father.

Malala's mother will not allow her to walk to school any more. Instead, she always travels by rickshaw. She travels home with twenty school friends, on the back of a truck with a canvas roof. In the back of the truck there are three long benches.

The school bus stops at the steps leading up to Malala's street. These days she is



PHOTO: AP

After being flown by helicopter from her hometown of Mingora on the day she was shot, Malala was taken to a military hospital in the city of Peshawar.



PHOTO: SHEHIN ZADAI/AP

Malala is unconscious after being shot with three bullets. One of them hit her head.



PHOTO: FAREED KHAN/AP

On 14 October 2012, five days after Malala was shot, children demonstrated against the Taliban's attack on her on the streets of the city of Karachi.

of the UN: "Today is the day of every woman, boy and girl who has raised their voice for their rights. Let us wage a global struggle against illiteracy, poverty and terrorism. Let us pick up our books and pens, they are our most powerful weapons. Education is the only solution. Education first."

under the roof, near where Malala and her best friend are sitting.

"Which one of you is Malala?" he asks.

Some of the girls shout for help, but the man forces them to be quiet. Malala is the only girl who doesn't have her face covered. Nobody says which one she is, but several of them glance at her. When the man raises his black pistol, Malala squeezes her best friend's hand. The man fires three rapid shots. The first hits Malala in the head.

### Awards and UN

Malala is flown first by helicopter to a military hospital, and then on to a hospital in the UK. That's where she is when she regains consciousness a week later. One half of her face has been paralysed. But after an eight-hour operation the doctors manage to restore her facial nerves.

Malala receives several awards and even becomes the youngest ever nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize. In newspapers she is included in lists of the most influential people in the world.

On 12 July 2013, the day that Malala turns 16, she is invited to the UN. 100 young people from 80 countries have come to listen to Malala and the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, calls the day 'Malala Day'. In his speech to Malala he says:

"I urge you to keep speaking out. Keep raising the pressure. Keep making a difference. And together let us follow the lead of this brave girl. Let us put education first. Let us make this world better for all."

Malala replies to the head

### Malala's voice strengthened

The Taliban thought they could silence Malala by killing her. Instead, they gave her an even stronger voice, which can now be heard all over the world. Malala is determined to continue fighting for girls' rights.

A fund called the Malala Fund has been set up in order to promote girls' right to education all over the world.

"I don't want to be famous for being the girl who was shot by the Taliban. I want to be the girl who fights for education," says Malala. 🌍



PHOTO: QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL/GETTY IMAGES

Malala with her father Ziauddin and her younger brothers Khushal and Atal at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, UK.



PHOTO: SKINDER DEBERE/UN

On 12 July 2013 Malala's 16th birthday was celebrated at the UN, in the presence of one hundred young people from eighty countries. The UN Secretary General called it 'Malala Day' and gave Malala a leather-bound copy of the Charter of the United Nations. This is usually only given to heads of state.

Malala is not alone. The girls on these pages all come from areas where there are Taliban. Just like Malala, they fight for girls' right to go to school. It can be dangerous for them to do that. That's why their faces are covered. There are frequent bombings, and if that happens they have to stay off school.

# More brave

## Bombs stop school

"Education is so important. It changes our lives. Everyone has a right to go to school. When I dream about the future, I dream that I am a teacher, just like my teacher. I live in an area where there is unrest. I feel afraid when there are lots of bombs exploding. On those days I can't go to school. Once things calm down and I can go back I am happy. I don't want to be away from school.

"Malala is so good. She fights against the Taliban in our area. She is a role model for us. Everyone knows what she thinks and who she is fighting against."

*Mariam, 12*



## Education is everything

"Education is everything. It affects your whole life, and without education we can't do much. The right education can mean a lot. In my country, all jobs that boys can train for can be done by girls too. If I want to I could become a police officer, soldier, pilot or anything else. Boys and girls can have the same jobs.

"Politics is important too. Without politics, we cannot develop our country. Everyone has a right to get involved in politics. I want to do that too, and when I gain power I will work to make sure everyone in our country gets an education. A good education. Right now most schools don't have a very good system. Many people just learn to recite by rote, and poor parents think it's better for their children to get a job and an income.

"Sometimes we have problems with bombs and there is unrest in our area. At those times I have to stay home from school and that makes me sad. I know that I'm missing out on something important.

"I am grateful that Malala has expressed all girls' right to go to school so clearly. Lots of parents in our area make their girls stay at home because they want full control over them. My friends and I talk to children that we meet and encourage them to start school. We talk to their parents too. Sometimes they listen to us and allow their children to go to school.

I am happy that Malala is able to continue studying. When I found out that she writes a diary I got myself a diary too and now I write in it every day."

*Asma, 14*

## Education gives more people jobs

"It's good to have an education. Then you can choose between different jobs. I like natural history and I want to be a doctor. Everyone has a right to go to school.

"Malala comes from Swat. She wants to get an education and she believes that all girls have a right to it. She got shot for that. She is important, and clever. Things can be hard in our area sometimes, just like in Swat. We want an education too, even though it's dangerous here. Sometimes I have to stay home from school although I don't want to."

*Sheila, 11*



# girls



## Fighting for others

"Those of us who are able to go to school know that we have responsibility for others too. In the area where I live there are lots of girls who come from poor families, and nobody has bothered to send them to school. Sometimes it is enough for me just to talk to the girls, and other times I have to go to the parents and discuss it with them. Because of this, many of them now go to school.

"We have many problems in our area – the Taliban, bombs, and horrible boys who shout stupid things at girls who are walking to school. I have decided that I want an education, so I have to go to school even when the road to school is hard. Education is light – and light spreads. We want that light to shine on the whole area where I live, and all over our country.

"Malala is so brave. I agree with her completely, and I want everyone to get an education. All girls have a right to an education. I am glad that I go to a school where we learn how to fight for others. We can't talk about Malala everywhere, because a lot of people are against her and against education for girls, but there are many of us fighting just as she does."

*Sofia, 15*

## Education develops our country

"Everyone has a right to get an education, just as I have. Our country can only develop when everyone gets education. Not everyone knows that, so we have to tell people and remind them. I talk to our neighbours and other people in our area, and several of them have let their children start school. It's so important to me that everyone gets an education, and I try to encourage anyone who has started to continue, and to work hard on their education. The awful thing is that so many girls aren't even allowed to leave their homes, let alone go to school. That makes me so sad. Education for everyone is our goal, so even though we are sometimes scared and we know a lot of people are angry with us, we have decided to fight for education and we won't give up! Malala is one of us, and a role model for us."

*Rainaz, 14*

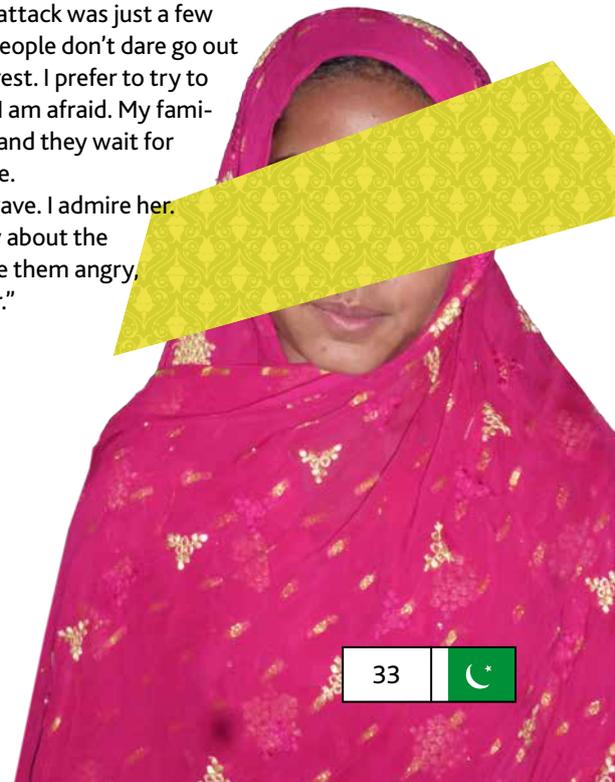


## Parents have responsibility

"For our country to develop, we need education. Parents have responsibility to make sure all children go to school. Where I live, everyone is afraid of the Taliban and of being hurt by bombs. The most recent attack was just a few days ago. Many people don't dare go out when there is unrest. I prefer to try to go out, although I am afraid. My family are scared too and they wait for me to come home.

"Malala is so brave. I admire her. She wrote a diary about the Taliban that made them angry, and they shot her."

*Manoor, 14*



## Parents say no

"We work together in our family. Just after sunrise we walk to the brick kiln. Afsana mixes clay and water to get the right consistency and brings the mixture to the rest of us in a wheelbarrow. I make the bricks and lay them in long, long rows. The bricks are then counted and we get paid depending on how many thousand bricks we have made. If I don't get an education I'll end up working at the brick kiln my whole life. That would be terrible.

"I want to go to school too. Our father says no. I asked our mother too, but she says no as well. Our parents don't care about education. But I know we do have to work. Unless everyone in our family works we don't have enough money. If someone in our family falls ill our income decreases and we need to buy food one day at a time."

*Samina, 13, and Afsana, 12*



Samina



Afsana



## Always thinking about school

"I work at the brick kiln and that is definitely not what I would choose if it was up to me. It's really heavy work. Every day when I get home I'm so tired. My whole body aches. At home my sister and I are responsible for the housework.

"I've asked my dad to let me start school, but he says no. I dream of being able to read, write and count. Every day I think about how I can find a way to get an education.

"I like watching TV, especially Indian love films. Right now there's one about a woman who dies, but her soul doesn't go to heaven, it stays on earth and annoys her husband."

*Rubina, 12*



# Girls who dream of a dif Thousands of

For thousands of years bricks have been made by hand. These days, in many parts of the world, bricks are made by machines. But in Pakistan many families still face slave-like conditions making bricks by hand. Families remain in debt to the brick kiln owners and forced labour is passed from parent to child. Slavery is against the law in Pakistan. Still, many debt slave children who should really be at school spend their days in the clay pit.

## Want to start my own school

"We work together, my whole family, all my five sisters and even my little brother who is five. We walk to the brick kiln early in the morning. Around one o'clock we girls head home to take care of the housework. We usually play in the afternoons too, often hide and seek.

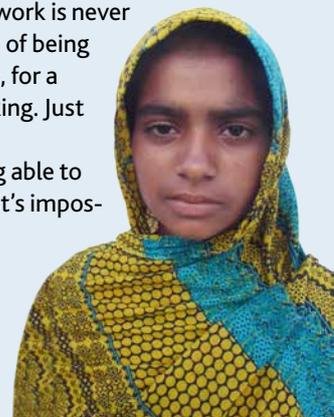
"My dream is to go to school every day. When I've learnt a lot I'm going to have a school of my own where I can teach other children and earn an income. But that's probably just a dream. So I also think that I'd like to be at home and not have a job, never go back to the brick kiln, and just do housework. But we need money. Sometimes my parents can't afford to buy flour for chapati bread."

*Nosheen, 11*

## Just want to sit down

"We leave home early and it takes an hour to walk to the brick kiln. I move the heavy clay and then shape it into lumps that will fit into the moulds. Every brick has to be exactly the same, with no cracks or dents. In the evening we have the same long walk to get home, and then there's all the housework to do. Laundry, cleaning, dusting, dishes, cooking. My work is never over. Sometimes I dream of being able to sit down at home, for a whole day, without working. Just sit there.

"I often dream of being able to go to school, but I know it's impos-



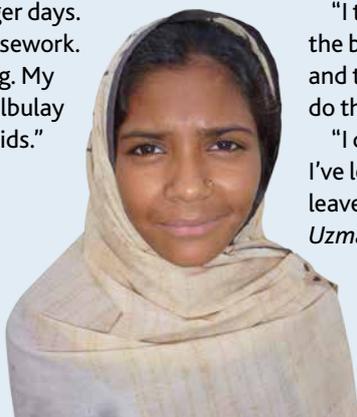
# different life bricks but no school



sible. If I had gone to school everything would have been different. Then I would have escaped the brick kiln, I would have been able to read and write, and then taught other people in our area. I and my whole family would have had a different life.

"Boys and girls do the same work at the brick kiln, although the boys work longer days. We girls go home and do the housework. We often watch TV in the evening. My favourite programme is called Bulbulay and is about adults who act like kids."

*Samina, 14*



## Could my life get better?

"I have always dreamt of being able to go to school, but always been forced to work. I work from early in the morning until late at night. Everything at the brick kiln is so heavy. I feel hot and tired all the time. My legs swell up and I get covered in dust. When I get home I'm exhausted and I have to start cleaning, washing dishes and making chapati bread. When I think about my life it makes me sad. I wonder why my life is so hard, and whether it could get better.

"I think boys' and girls' lives seem quite similar when we're working at the brick kiln. But only there. At home, boys don't have to do housework and they don't have to ask permission to go out. We girls always have to do those things.

"I dream of a different life. I got myself a book so I can learn to count. I've learnt to count money. One day I want to be a businesswoman and leave this heavy labour behind."

*Uzma, 15*



# School dreams at the weaving loom



## Never truly happy

"There are no jobs for our parents here in the desert. So I have to help my family. My four brothers all go to school. I weave carpets with my sisters. I started when I was four years old. After breakfast, early in the morning I start weaving. I weave and weave until I cook lunch and eat it with my family. Then I carry on weaving until the evening.

"I have always dreamed of going to school. I have begged and pleaded with my parents, but they just reply: 'You have to weave carpets. That is our income.' I don't know much about school, I don't know what kind of difference it would make to my life, but I would like to at least find out. I really want to go to school. I don't like carpet weaving at all. I don't think I am ever truly happy. My work at the loom just goes on and on.

"My brothers get to go to school. In their free time they can play. We sisters work at the loom and in the household. My brothers never do anything. Boys and girls are treated so differently here.

"A few months ago there was a fire in our village. It was the worst thing that's ever happened to me. Many houses were destroyed, including ours, and our wonderful solar panel was damaged and broken. We couldn't stop the fire. We have so little water. There is a fire service, but they arrived after two and a half hours and couldn't do anything. Everything had burnt to the ground by then."

*Roshni, 14*

The desert sand works its way into the girls' scalps and inside their clothes. The heat and wool dust makes the air heavy to breathe. A monotonous, chanting voice describes the carpet patterns. Children's deft fingers find the right colour and tie quick knots according to the instructions. Knot after knot after knot.

It's usually girls who sit at the carpet looms. When girls who live in the desert get married, they move to live with their husbands' families in other villages. The boys stay at home. They are responsible for their parents when they get old. So many parents think it's a better idea to invest in education for boys. The girls weave carpets and make a contribution to their dowries and the family's income.



While the children weave, a chanting voice describes the pattern of the carpet. The children quickly find the right colour and tie a knot according to the instructions.

## Weaving every day of the week

"I've been weaving carpets since I was very young, for at least eight years. I was able to go to school for a few years, but in my village there was no school after Year 5. I don't like weaving carpets. It's boring, and my whole body aches after a day at the loom. I sit weaving from morning till evening, usually every day of the week. I wish so much that I had been able to continue my education. I have started learning but I want to learn more. Usually we girls have to work, and the boys are free to play."

*Lathmi, 14*



## Nothing makes me happy any more

"I went to school for two years, but then I had to stop because there was no female teacher. I loved going to school and it made me so sad when I was forced to quit. I really wanted to continue, but it wasn't up to me. I was forced to work. My education isn't good enough for any other kind of work, so I can't even dream of a better job."

"My brother goes to school and I sit here weaving carpets. We don't have the same

rights. What rights do I have? Weaving carpets is not a good job, but there is nothing else that I can do here. I don't know if anything makes me happy any more. I'm probably at my happiest when I'm eating. I eat three times a day. At least at those times I can get away from the loom!"

*Roshni, 15*

## Don't want to think about work

"I have been weaving carpets since I was very young. I don't like it and I don't want to think about having to keep doing it in the future. I dream of being able to go to school. Then I could get a real job. There is a school here in the village. My brothers attend, so I should be allowed to go too. The boys' teacher comes every day. There is a female teacher for the girls, but when she doesn't come the girls are not allowed to attend. Life is easier for the boys. They can go to any teacher who comes."

*Seeta, 15*



### Boys free to play

"Usually we girls have to work, and the boys are free to play," says Lathmi.



## Malala is right

"It's important for girls to get an education. When I want to get a job it will be better for me if I have an education, that way I can get a better job. Once I can read books, I'll be able to learn new things all the time. I am happy that I can go to school."

"Malala fought for girls to be able to go to school. She is right. All girls should get an education. It's important for everyone to know that."

*Sadia, 12*



## Knowledge is a light in life

"Knowledge is like a light in life. When I have an education there will be more jobs to choose from. My dream is to become the kind of teacher my own teacher is. She is so good at helping us learn. My parents never got an education. I am so happy to have the opportunity."

"Malala did the right thing by continuing to go to school even though she was threatened. She is extremely brave."

*Amina, 15*

We Like Malala  
"Let's educate"

## Education for life

"Education is good. I learn a lot in school, both about good things and bad things. Education is about life."

"Malala is so special. I don't know anyone else who is brave enough to do what she does."

*Fauzia, 13*



## Malala is so strong

"My education helps me understand much more about life. Boys and girls have different lives. My brothers can play at home and in school. I can only play at school. My mother says that I can play in the street just like my brothers, but I don't want to. No other girls do."

"Malala wanted to go to school but not everyone liked that. She was threatened, but she still went. So they shot her. She is so strong, and she didn't lose the fight."

She wants all girls in Pakistan to go to school. She is right."

*Amna, 12*

## Pray for Malala

"Education is important for girls. I have a great teacher. I like my school so much. I have learned to read so well now that I can even read at home."

"Malala is a really good person because she campaigns for girls to get an education. She was shot by terrorists, but God gave her a new life. I pray for her every day, that she will be able to continue."

*Zeenat, 12*



## Meaningless without education

"I'm in Year 5 now, but I want to continue studying. I want to become a teacher, but sometimes I think I would like to become a healthcare worker. If I don't get an education I won't be able to do anything with my life. It would be meaningless."

"Malala is so brave, daring to go to school despite being threatened."

*Razia, 15*





## Want to be educated

"I like going to school, and I want to be educated. My dream is to become a teacher. My teacher is so clever and beautiful. I want to be like her."

"Malala wrote about girls' studies and said that they should study. That's why she was shot by people who think women should stay at home. She is so brave!"  
*Amna, 15*

## Want to learn more

"I dream of being able to study more. I had to quit school after Year 5, but I want to go back. I see other children around me continuing with their education. I want to learn more. There is so much I don't know. I want to become a teacher."

"I like Malala. She fights for education for girls."  
*Shamim, 16*



our whole country!"



## Educated women develop society

"It is extremely important that women get an education. Educated women are crucial to the development of society. Women who are educated also know that they have rights. They will claim their rights, and spread them to others."

"Malala knows that all girls have a right to education. People who don't like that tried to kill her. But Allah saved her and she has been restored to health."

*Warda, 15*

## Can help parents

"My parents can't read or write. If I get an education I'll be able to help them. I dream of becoming a police officer. I have seen female police officers on TV and they were good people."

"I have seen Malala on TV, she was standing in her classroom talking about education. I like her so much."  
*Asma, 13*



## Let's educate our whole country

"It's important for girls to get an education. I am learning to read and write, and lots of other things that I would never have known without school."

"Malala wants an education for herself, but she also wants all girls in Pakistan to get an education, and for our whole country to be educated. She wrote a diary about the Taliban and what life is like for girls. She was shot by terrorists. She is so brave, a real role model for us all."

*Aisha, 12*



# Housework all day long

Girls in Pakistan are expected to be able to look after a home. Sweeping, cleaning, caring for younger siblings, washing dishes, laundry, making tea and cooking. Girls who work at brick kilns, on farms, weaving carpets, and gathering and sorting rubbish have long, tough working days. But they also have to do housework when they get home. Many girls work in other people's homes. These girls are poorly paid and are usually left alone with their employers and don't dare complain if they are treated badly.



## Housework home and away

"I have worked in people's homes for as long as I can remember. I used to go to school but I had to quit. It was so fun and exciting to learn new things. I want so badly to continue my education, but I'm not allowed to. Now I do housework all day, at home and in other people's homes. Every day of the week."

*Rafia, 10*

## Would study all day long

"I work in other people's homes. I want to go to school more than anything but my father says it is not proper for me to leave our home and go to school. I often dream of being able to start school, but the traditions in our village in Baluchistan don't allow it. If it was up to me, I would choose a life that gave me the freedom to go to school. I wouldn't work in people's homes for one more day – I would go to school and study all day long!"

*Fareeda, 14*



None of the girls in Fareeda's village are allowed to be in photographs.



## Father says no to school

### Want to be a doctor

"I attended school for three years. Then I was forced to start working. I help out with everything I am asked to do. I would be so happy if I got to start school again. Now it seems like I'm going to work in people's houses my whole life. Most of all I want to become a doctor or healthcare worker, but often we don't even have enough money for food at home. That's why I have to work."

*Shumaila, 13*

"I get up at five o'clock, sweep the floor, tidy the house and make breakfast for the family. Then I go to the home of the family I work for. I sweep, make breakfast, wash dishes, mop the floors, wash clothes, look after the kids, wash and bath them. Then it's time to prepare the next meal, tidy up and wash the dishes. When I get home in the evening, I carry on with the housework."

"My greatest dream is to get an education. I have asked my father lots of times to let me go to school, but he just says that this is how things are in our

family, it's our tradition and not up for discussion. My three brothers all get to go to school and have fun and play cricket in the afternoons."

"I am so sad about my work, and I often think about what my life and my family's life would be like if I could get an education. I want to be able to read books and

find out what the newspapers say. Most of all I dream of becoming a teacher."

*Sapna 12*



The heat of summer makes the air quiver. It's almost 50 degrees Celsius. Children and adults return to their little village dragging huge plastic sacks. They have walked block after block in their search for trash to sell. The low buildings with cane walls and plastic sheeting and tin roofs are well-swept, clean and tidy. Huge piles of unsorted trash are marked off around the village. Each family has their own pile to take care of.



# No school in trash village



## School is not for me

"I am the only girl in my family and I am responsible for the housework along with my mother. I also gather trash – I can gather as much as four kilos in one day. Sometimes I hurt myself. There are often sharp bits of metal, broken glass, syringes and nails among the trash. I just clean the sore and put on a band-age."

"I have asked my father to let me start school. He said that it's not possible because he lost his ID card in the most recent flooding. I know that I have to work really. School is not for me. But I dream of becoming a doctor or a healthcare worker."

*Asma, 10*



A salesman with a truck lashes down big sacks of trash that have been sorted, and the sellers count their money.



## ➔ I have to beg

"My mother died seven months ago. She was giving birth and something went wrong. They took her to hospital, but she died when she got there. My grandmother gathers trash, and so does my father. They work all day. I beg. I don't want to, but I ended up having to do it when my mother died. I say, 'For God's sake, give me some bread.' Sometimes I get a few coins, but most people walk past without noticing.

"Of course I want to go to school, but that isn't possible. I have to look after my younger siblings. There's no point in even asking."

*Seema, 11*



## School just a hope

"I got married to my cousin last year and moved in with him. The wedding was really special. I wore beautiful red clothes with a big red shawl, and lots of people came. We had a party and ate delicious food. Some people gave presents of fabric or clothes.

"I have a wonderful husband. He doesn't beat me, but he does get angry if dinner isn't ready when he gets home. My husband gathers trash. Since I am married, I don't go out onto the streets. When he gets home, I sort the trash. My mother-in-law gathers trash too, and my father-in-law is a beggar.

"When I lived with my parents, a neighbour gave me a religious education. I can recite half of the Koran. I wish so much that I could go to school too. When I asked my father he said it was impossible. If I got an education I think I would have a better life. That is just a hope. I don't know how it could happen. My future looks just the same as my life right now.

"I am happy when I am with my husband and we sit and talk. We don't have a TV, but there is one in the village and sometimes I watch it."

*Razia Bibi, 15*



# Weeding more than school



All year round, the girls weed the long rows of wheat, cotton and chilli plants.

"By the time we reach the end the weeds have started growing at the beginning of the rows again, and we have to start again," sighs Chanda.

When they're not working in the fields, the girls fetch water, do housework and repair the clay houses. There is no time for school.

## Everyone on TV is educated

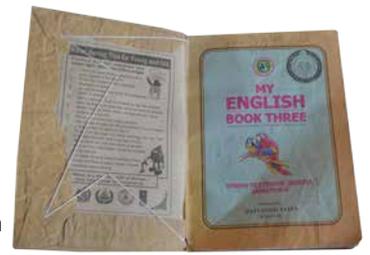
"When I'm not working in the fields I'm fixing our house or doing housework. I dream of being able to go to school. If I can afford it I plan to go to Kunri to study. My greatest dream is to get an education. Everyone on TV is so well educated, even whole families. There is a TV in our village. Not everyone is allowed to go and watch it, but I am. I want to be like Sania. She is married to Sutley, the hero of my favourite TV drama series."

*Mumal, 13*



# important

## The only girl in my school



"I go to a school in the nearest town to here. This year I have passed the Year 2 exam and got my books for Year 3. It's too far away to walk, so I have to travel to school by bus. Some days the bus doesn't come. I feel so disappointed when I'm standing there waiting and it doesn't come. I want to learn more, but on those days I can't. Every day I wait for the bus and it makes me so happy when it actually comes."

Mavi, 10



Mavi is the only girl in her village who goes to school. She travels there with her brother and his friends. Here she is, proudly showing off her Year 3 book, which has had a paper cover sewn on to it to protect it for the year to come.

## A woman's work is never done

A farm labourer girl's long working day:

- Make breakfast
- Wash the dishes
- Sweep the floor
- Muck out the animals
- Work in the fields
- Fetch feed for the animals
- Fetch water
- Make lunch
- Wash the dishes
- Work in the fields
- Make dinner
- Give the animals water
- Eat dinner
- Wash the dishes
- Make up the beds for the night

## My greatest dream

"I have never been to school. There is no school here, but if there was I would attend. I don't really know what happens there, but if I went I would learn to understand newspapers. My greatest dream is really to be able to go to school, but I guess I'm too old."

Chanda, 12



## Dreaming of school

"I dream of one day being able to go to school, but I always have so much to do at home and in the fields. Still, I dream of what life would be like if I could go. Girls don't have the same rights as boys in our village. Parents like boys better, because they stay with them their whole lives. We girls move to other homes when we get married."

Dema, 13



# Zahida was sold

"I was only fourteen when I was married off. My parents are extremely poor, and when they were offered 100,000 rupees (950 USD) for my hand in marriage, they quickly decided to accept.



**N**obody asked me. I was devastated. I cried and cried. I ran away from home and hid at my uncle's house. They had always been kind to me. But my parents guessed that I might be hiding there, and they came after me straight away. They were so angry with me, they beat me and said that this wasn't my decision.

"My husband and my in-laws are not happy with

me. They complain all the time and my husband beats me if I do anything wrong.

"In the beginning I was so angry with my parents, but they are poor and needed the money. I have forgiven them and now I am so happy when they come to visit. I am allowed to see my parents, although my husband gets angry when they come, or when I go to their house. I'm not allowed to see my

friends any more, and they are not allowed to visit me. I miss them.

"There is no way for me to get an education. I feel as though my life is over. No parents should do this to their daughters. Girls shouldn't get married until they are adults. It's their parents' responsibility to make sure their daughters have a dignified life."

# You m

**"You're getting married too, Perveen! It would be ideal for you and Yasmeen to get married at the same time. We have found a man who will suit you. Weddings are expensive, so it would be cheaper if you both got married at the same time."**

**Perveen is shocked when her mother says she has to get married at the same time as her big sister.**

**I** was only eleven. I didn't want to get married and I hadn't even met my husband-to-be. I felt confused. Two days before the wedding, an older female relative told me about my responsibility. To live with the man, day and night. I was terrified, and tried to tell my mother that I didn't want to get married. She just replied, 'You must obey, all girls get married and it's your turn now!'"

**In despair**  
"I couldn't protest. Girls have to be obedient to older family

# Teachers didn't care

"I got to go to school, but I never learned to read, write or count. They just kept moving me up to the next year group, again and again. I can write my name, but no more than that. When my mother fell ill and needed help at home I had to quit school. Once she got better I had to start sewing footballs with her.

"The teachers didn't care about me. They didn't notice me. I want to have an education. My parents have never been to school, so they can't help. Now, through my work sewing footballs, I am going to be able to learn to read and write. Every day I will take a few hours off to learn.

"Malala wants all girls to have the right to an education. It's good that she fights for education for girls. We need more people to do that."

*Fatima, 16*



Fatima sews footballs, but now she is also going to get an education.



# ust get married!

members. Nobody asked me what I wanted.

“My older sister Yasmeen, who was thirteen at the time, knew her husband-to-be. They had talked and they liked each other. She was happy.

“The wedding preparations went on for days. The girls in our area, our friends and neighbours, sang for us and gave us henna. I was so afraid and I just wanted to run away, but I had nowhere to go. We girls are supposed to look sad when we get married. Otherwise people say that we’re not satisfied with our homes and our parents – all that we leave behind when we get married. Nobody cared that I was distraught, and nobody realised that my tears were for real.”

## Never good enough

“On our wedding day, we had a bath in the morning and made a traditional desert called kir, made from rice,



The wedding procession is on its way to the groom’s family home, with drummers and wind players.

sugar, milk and almonds. Then we put on our new red clothes and new silver jewellery, which we had received from our parents-in-law. Finally, we put on our new red shoes. Our friends painted beautiful designs on our hands in henna.

“The wedding was in our home, and in the evening our relatives walked with us to our in-laws’ house, which was to be our new home. I was scared and tearful – I just wanted to stay with my mother.

“Now I had to do housework with my mother-in-law. I felt like I was being watched all the time. I did my best, but my mother-in-law and my husband’s sisters were never

satisfied. They complained about me, made faces, and moaned about everything I tried to do.”

## School of life

“After a few months, my parents-in-law suddenly dumped me back at my mother’s house and then moved, with the rest of the family including my husband, to the big city of Karachi. My husband had a drug problem. A year ago, he came back to me. He doesn’t use drugs any more. We both live with my mother now. I still work with my mother in different people’s homes. My husband sometimes works.

“We have never been to school. I used to watch other children walking to school. I wished I could go too, but we had to help our mother to earn money because our father died of tuberculosis. If I had been allowed to go to school, we would have learned more about life, and perhaps our lives would have been different.”



Perveen was married off when she was eleven years old, and she has never been able to go to school.

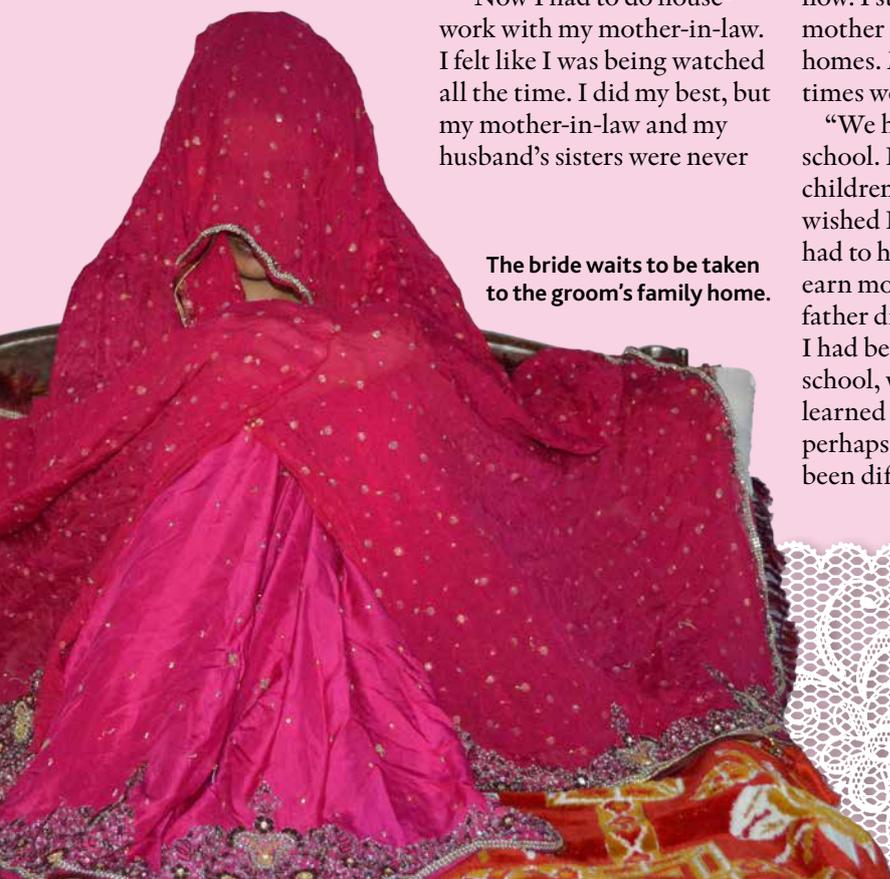


A tray of everything that is needed for the henna ceremony on the wedding day.



When the henna painting is finished, the henna is washed off and the colour changes.

The bride waits to be taken to the groom’s family home.



## Vote for equal rights for girls

"Boys and girls have different lives in Pakistan. I think we should have the same rights. That's not how things are right now, and it may be very hard to change that. To change the injustices in our society we have to talk about it and then we can vote on it. We have to vote for good leaders who work to stop injustice in our society."

*Baber, 12*



## Start talking about it in school

"Everyone should have the same rights – like the right to go to school and the right to play. That's not how things are. It's particularly unfair for girls. They are not allowed to play outdoors in our society. It's hard to change that. Parents are not always well-educated, and their parents have taught them that girls should not go out. That means there is not much protection for girls in our society. Girls who go out are treated badly on the street. I think that is wrong. We must have the same respect for everyone. Society can change that. It's important to start talking about it in school. We don't do that at the moment."

*Nazar Abbas, 15*



## Better as equals

"Boys and girls don't have the same rights here. Boys are allowed to go out and do different things. Girls are not. I think teachers and parents should think about that. It would be better if we were equals."

*Haseeb, 12*



## Parents think in an old-fashioned way

"Girls aren't given the same rights as boys. Parents don't treat boys and girls equally. Our parents think in an old-fashioned way and we have to obey them. Boys can't do housework, girl can't go out when and how they want to. I know that Pakistan has a female cricket team, but my sister could never join it because my family wouldn't approve."

*Umer Altaf, 15*



## Work together for girls' rights

"Girls should have the same rights as boys, but they don't. A good government could probably change that. The most important thing is for everyone to be allowed to go to school, girls and boys alike. They should have the same rights at home as well, but for that to happen schools and homes would have to cooperate more."

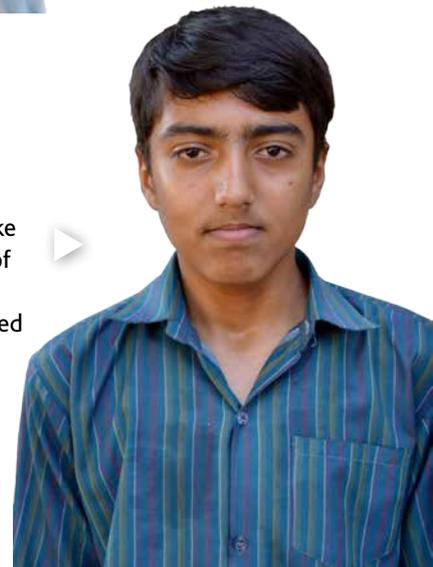
*Ali Usama, 15*



## Many must cooperate

"Boys and girls should have the same right to education. We shouldn't go to the same schools, but our schools should be of the same quality. The government must take responsibility and invest extra resources. We need lots of cooperation – one person alone can't make a difference. Girls are better at housework. Girls should also be allowed to play cricket. I would let my sister do that."

*Said-ur-Rehman, 14*



## Hard to change

“There should be no difference between boys’ and girls’ rights. The difference is purda, which means that girls have to cover themselves. If a girl cannot openly get an education, she could cover herself when she is out and that way she can study and go wherever she wants. Girls should be with other girls. We have different rules in our society. If a brother decides that his sister should stay at home and not go out, she has to stay at home. It’s hard to change that.”  
*Wahab Gul, 16*

## Should be equal, but ...

“In my area we have the same rights. We have the same education system and we get the same education. We should be equal, but sometimes we are not. We have to obey our parents. Our parents don’t treat us equally. We have different rules. I think that is good, because in our culture, women run into problems when they are out.”  
*Sajjad, 10*

# rights in Pakistan

## Things should stay as they always have been

“Both boys and girls should work and have responsibility in our society. In my village, girls work more at home and boys work more at the brick kiln. They do different things. Maybe that should change, but I think things should stay as they always have been. I think that is for the best.”

*Waksa, 11*

## Should have the same rules and rights

“Girls and boys should have the same right to education and the same rules at home and in school. If all girls are to get an education we need more female teachers. They cannot have male teachers. Where we live, girls can’t go out if they are not covered. Otherwise they will be mistreated on the street. If I had power I would give girls special areas where they are protected. I think girls should have the same rights, but my parents do not permit that.”

*Shakeel, 17*

## Must have equal rights

“Boys and girls have the same rights. That applies to education, and it applies to inheritance. If girls’ rights are not respected, people who live in their area should talk to the parents. Young people and older people can share that responsibility. Girls’ can’t go out like boys do, or they may be ill-treated. We have to find opportunities for them to do what boys are able to do, like playing cricket. They could play at school. They must have equal rights.”  
*Qadeer, 14*

## We young people must talk to families

“Boys and girls have the same right to education, that is their parents’ responsibility. We young people must also take responsibility, we must talk to families who do not agree with that. We must set a good example, so that parents who refuse to respect their daughters’ rights, particularly their right to education, feel ashamed. Girls can do everything boys can do, like play cricket, but they can’t do it openly on the street, because then they will be mistreated.”  
*Ubaid Ullah, 13*