

# THE Globe

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VOTE! RÖSTA!  
¡VOTA! मत  
वाक्कளிப்பீர் رای دھید  
ဆန္ဒမဲထည့်ခြင်း!  
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வாக்களெ! !:ووت  
!صوَّت! ووٹ!  
HÃY BẦU!



PEACE KEEPING  
FORCE

WORLD'S CHILDREN'S  
PRIZE FOR THE RIGHTS  
OF THE CHILD

PRIX DES ENFANTS  
DU MONDE POUR LES  
DROITS DE L'ENFANT

PREMIO DE LOS NIÑOS  
DEL MUNDO POR LOS  
DERECHOS DEL NIÑO

PRÊMIO DAS CRIANÇAS DO  
MUNDO PELOS DIREITOS  
DA CRIANÇA

बाल अधिकारों हेतु  
विश्व बाल पुरस्कार



Hi! The Globe magazine is for you and all other young people who participate in the World's Children's Prize Program. Here you can meet friends from all over the world, learn about your rights, and get tips on how to make the world a better place!

# World's Children's for the Rights of the Child



Thanks! Tack! Merci! ¡Gracias! Obrigado!  
धन्यवाद நன்றி سپاس! شكراً ឧបត្ថម្ភ CẢM ƠN

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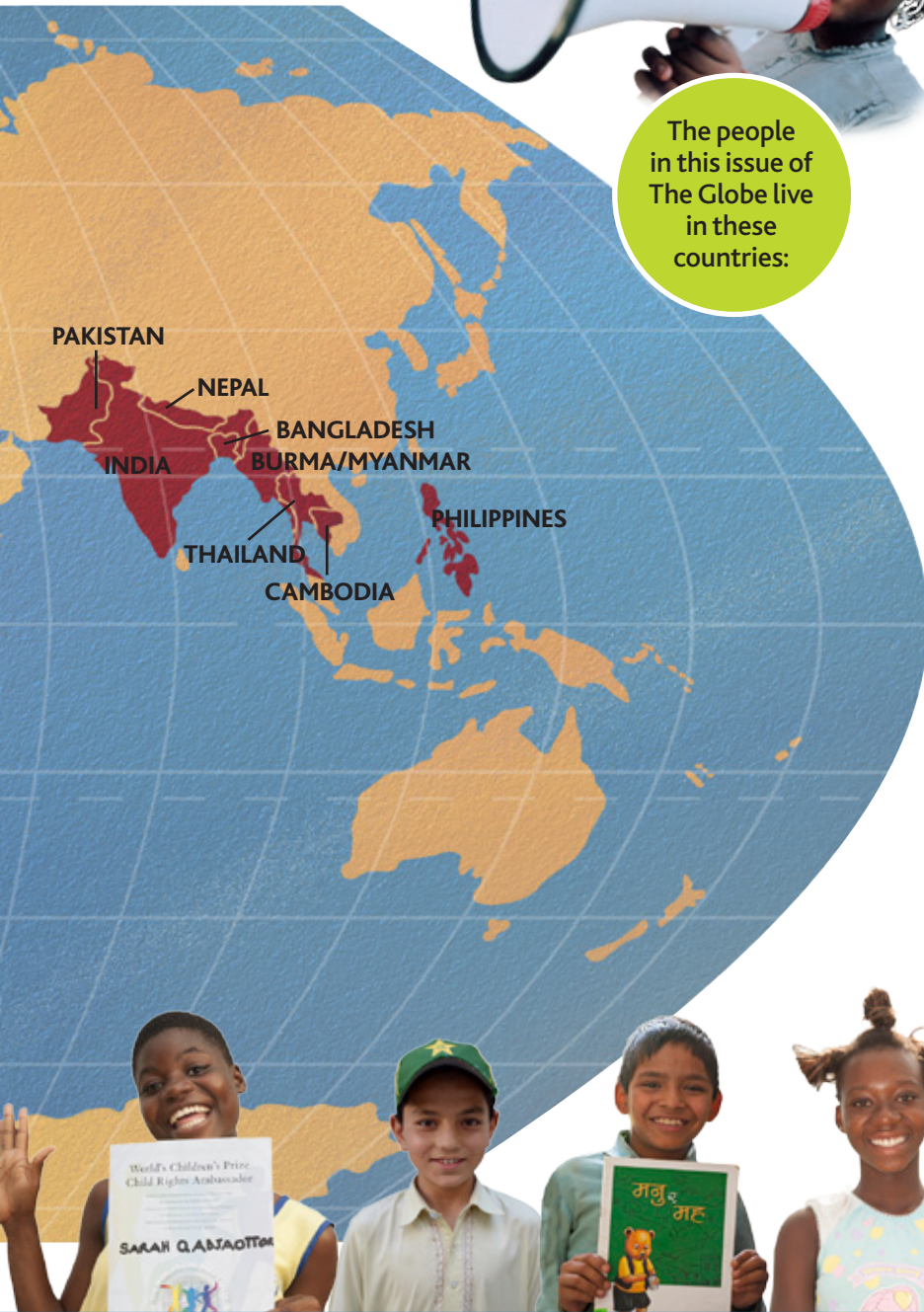
The lottery for a better world



# Prize



The people in this issue of The Globe live in these countries:



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مهرباني! :القرآن شكرية!

## Thanks also to:

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PHOTO: LOUISE GUBB

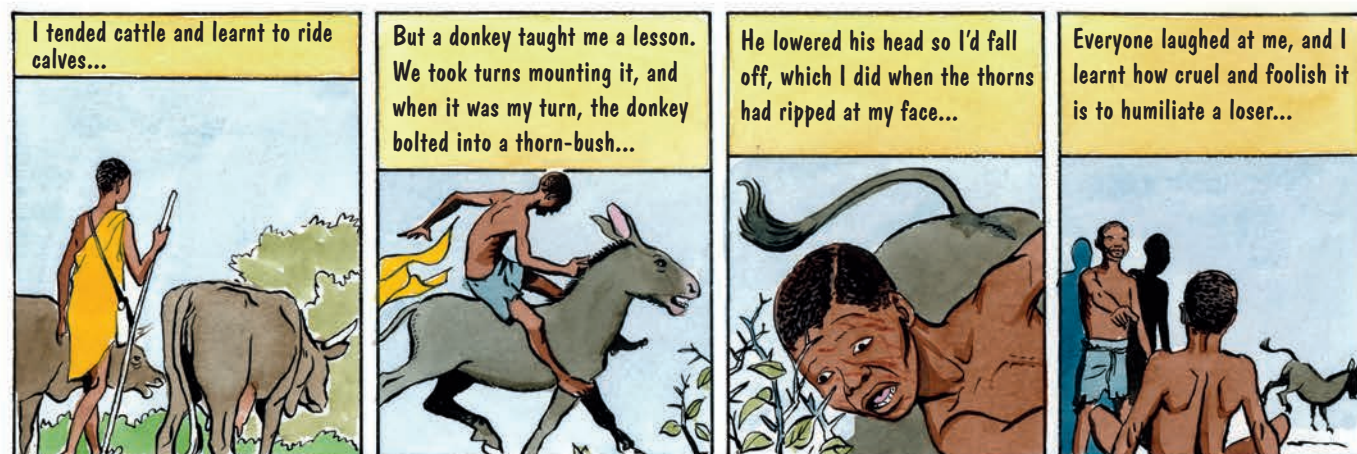
# We pay tribute to childr

When Nelson Mandela, or Madiba as all the children of South Africa know him, became a patron of the World's Children's Prize, he said:

*"This is good. You have our support whether we are alive or in the grave."*

In 2010, 7.1 million children voting in the World's Children's Prize Global Vote chose Nelson Mandela and his wife Graça Machel as their Decade Child Rights Heroes. Mandela for his long struggle for equal rights for all South Africa's children,

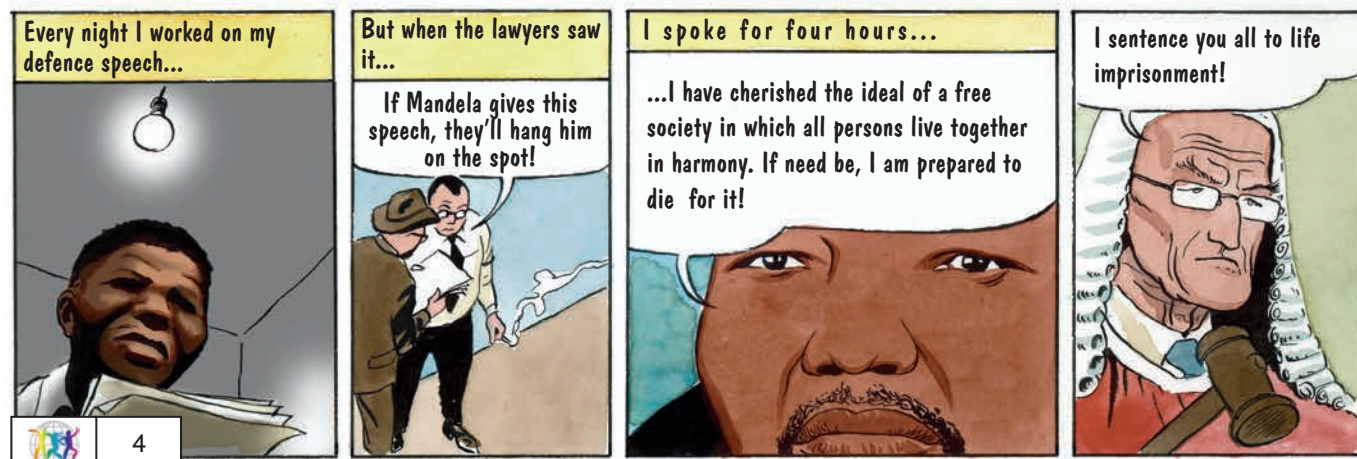
When Nelson Mandela was born in 1918 in the village of Mvezo, he was named Rolihlahla. It was his teacher who added the name Nelson.



In South Africa at that time there was a system of apartheid – segregation of races. Black people were discriminated against and white people had all the power. Mandela was a lawyer and became an activist, fighting for a free South Africa.



Mandela was arrested several times. Once when he managed to evade the police for a long time, the newspapers started to call him The Black Pimpernel. Finally, however, he was imprisoned.





# en's hero Nelson Mandela

and Machel for her work for the children of Mozambique. They were also both known for standing up for the rights of the child wherever those rights were violated in the world.

When Nelson Mandela died on 5 December 2013 at

the age of 95, a whole world mourned and paid tribute to him.

"Madiba has a good heart. He was in prison for 27 years, but he didn't want revenge. He wanted peace, and to show that black and white people could live side by side.

That is fantastic," said Phumeza, 14, when the children chose Mandela as the recipient of the World's Children's Prize.

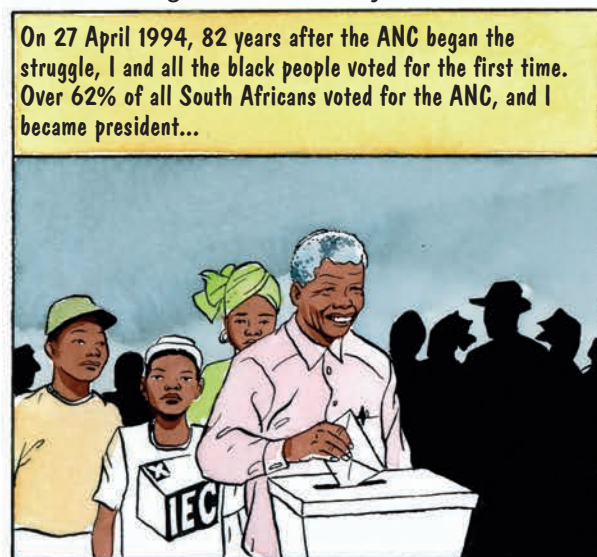
"Madiba fought for our rights and saved our country. If I met him I would say: 'Nice to meet you – and thank

you for our freedom!'" said Zanele, 12.

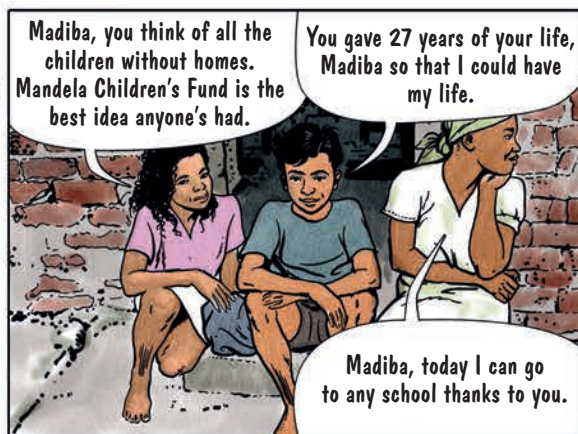
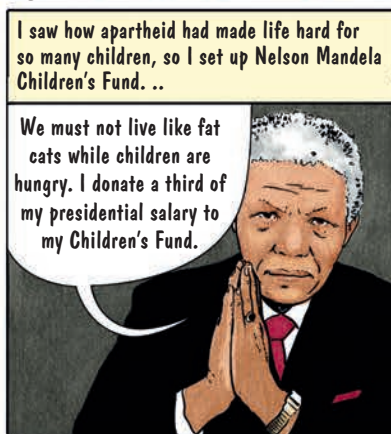
You can read the whole comic strip about Mandela called *The Black Pimpernel* (13 pages) at:

[worldschildrensprize.org/mandela-nelson](http://worldschildrensprize.org/mandela-nelson)

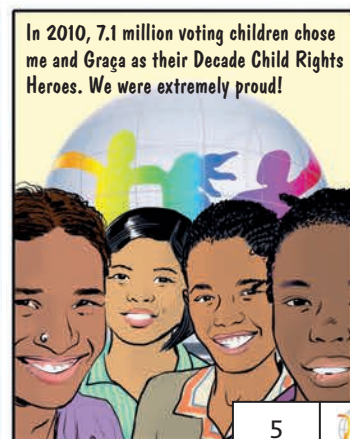
Nelson Mandela ended up spending 27 years of his life in prison, many of them in Robben Island prison. In 1990, at the age of 72, he was finally set free.



Mandela never stopped fighting for the rights of the child.



Both Nelson Mandela and Graça Machel are patrons of the World's Children's Prize. Millions of children chose them to be their *Decade Child Rights Heroes* and to receive the *World's Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child*.







# What is the W

Through the World's Children's Prize Program, you and other children all over the world can learn about your rights and fight for a more humane world, where children's rights are respected by all.

Every year, three Child Rights Heroes are nominated by the World's Children's Prize Child Jury for the *World's Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child*. By the time the awards are presented, you and millions of other children have learned about the rights of the child and democracy, and about the nominees' work to make the world a better place for children. The program ends with children all over the world voting for their Child Rights Hero in a Global Vote. Up to 7.1 million children have voted in previous years. Do you want to join them?

Children in Nepal invited the media to their World's Children's Press Conference.



Children in Benin launch the World's Children's Prize Program.

## 1 This is how it works:

### The 2014 World's Children's Prize is launched

The program kicks off with children all over the world presenting the year's Child Rights Heroes – the nominees for the prize – as well as talking about whether the rights of the child are respected where they live, and in their country as a whole. Why not invite people to an opening ceremony at your school on a day of your choice? Remember, only children should lead any events or ceremonies. Adults are there to listen!

download fact sheets on lots of countries at [worldschildrengprize.org](http://worldschildrengprize.org). Discuss how things could be better for children and prepare a presentation for parents, teachers, politicians, other adults and the media. How about starting a WCP Child Rights Club at your school?

### The rights of the child in the world (Read pages 8–11, 14–15, 27–113)

The rights of the child apply to all children, everywhere. Learn more through meeting the Child Jury, the Child Rights Heroes, the Child Rights Ambassadors for girls' rights, and the children they fight for. Find out what life is really like for the world's children.

### The rights of the child in your life (Read the fact sheet and pages 12–13)

Are the rights of the child respected in your life and the lives of your friends? At home, at school and in your country? You can





# World's Children's Prize?



Children in Sweden read about their rights in *The Globe*.

## 4 Prepare your Global Vote (Read pages 16–26)

Set a date for your Global Vote and prepare everything you need for a democratic election, with inspiration from other children who have voted. Invite the media, parents, politicians – anyone who wants to experience your Global Vote Day!

## 5 Global Vote Day

Vote first and then celebrate with a party and some performances! Don't forget to report the result of your vote, either to the WCP Focal Point in your country, or if you don't have one, via the ballot box at [worldschildrensprize.org](http://worldschildrensprize.org).

## 6 The big announcement! (Read page 114)

On the same day all over the world, children reveal who has been chosen through the Global Vote to receive the World's Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child. Invite the media in your area to a World's Children's Press Conference, or gather your whole school to announce the results. You can also talk about improvements in respect for the rights of the child that you would like to see.

So far 35 million children all over the world have learned about the rights of the child and democracy through the World's Children's Prize Program. Around 60,000 schools with 29.3 million students in 108 countries have registered as Global Friend schools that support the World's Children's Prize.

The 2014 World's Children's Prize Program begins on 5 February and ends on 22 October.

## 7 The grand finale! (Read page 115)

The program concludes with an Award Ceremony led by the Child Jury at Gripsholm Castle in Mariefred, Sweden. All three Child Rights Heroes are honoured and receive prize money towards their work with children. H.M. Queen Silvia of Sweden helps the children of the Jury to present the awards. Many schools organise their own closing ceremony at a later date, where they celebrate the Child Rights Heroes and the rights of the child. It's a good idea to show the video from the Award Ceremony and to invite parents, politicians and the media.

Check these out, and share your story!  
[www.worldschildrensprize.org](http://www.worldschildrensprize.org)  
[youtube.com/worldschildrensprize](https://youtube.com/worldschildrensprize)  
[facebook.com/worldschildrensprizefoundation](https://facebook.com/worldschildrensprizefoundation)  
[twitter.com/wcpfoundation](https://twitter.com/wcpfoundation)

I demand respect for the rights of the child!



## Age limit for the World's Children's Prize

The World's Children's Prize exists for anyone aged from ten to 18. The upper age limit is because the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child says that you are a child until you turn 18. The lower age limit is there for several reasons. In order to be able to participate in the Global Vote, you must first learn all about the nominees and the children they fight for. These children have often experienced severe violations of their rights. Sometimes their stories are horrible to read, and could be frightening for younger children. Unfortunately, we do not yet have the capacity to make resources for children under ten. Even older children may find it hard to read harrowing life stories. That's why it is important to have an adult to talk to afterwards. This is particularly important after reading the section about girls' rights on pages 88–111 in this issue of *The Globe*.





The Child Jury gathered in Mariefred in 2013.

# Meet the Child Jury

**The members of the World's Children's Prize Child Jury are experts on the rights of the child through their own life experiences. Every Jury child primarily represents all the children in the world who share the same experiences. However, they also represent children of their own country and continent. Whenever possible, the Jury includes children from all continents and all major religions. They can be members of the Jury until they turn 18.**

- ♥ The Jury members share their life stories and which violations of the rights of the child they have experienced themselves or they fight against. In this way, they teach millions of children around the world about the rights of the child.
- ♥ Every year, the Child Jury selects the three final candidates for the World's Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child from all those who have been nominated.
- ♥ The Jury members are ambassadors for the World's Children's Prize in their home countries and throughout the world.

- ♥ The Child Jury leads the annual grand finale of the World's Children's Prize Program, the Award Ceremony. During that week the jury children visit schools in Sweden and talk about their lives and about the rights of the child.

At [www.worldschildrensprize.org](http://www.worldschildrensprize.org) you can find longer stories about several of the jury members. Five new members will be appointed in 2014.





## ♥ HANNAH TAYLOR, 18 Canada

**Represents children who fight for the rights of the child, especially for homeless children's rights.**

When Hannah was five, she saw a homeless man eating out of a garbage can. Since then, she has been speaking to school children, politicians, executives and the Prime Minister of Canada, to tell them that no-one should have to be homeless. She founded a charity that has raised over US\$1 million for projects for the homeless, and she has started an educational programme for schools.

"We want to show that everyone can get involved and make a difference for homeless people and the rights of the child. We all need to share what we have and care about each other. When I visited a home for homeless teenagers, I gave all the children a hug. One of the quiet ones said: 'Until today I thought no-one liked me, but now I know that you like me.'"

## ♥ NDALE NYENGELA, 16 D.R. Congo

**Represents child soldiers and children in armed conflict.**

When Ndale was 11 years old and on his way to school he was kidnapped by an armed group and forced to become a child soldier.

"We walked for three days without eating or sleeping. When we walked too slowly they kicked us and shouted at us. Once we knew how to handle our weapons, they said now it was time to learn to kill people. One day we hid in the forest, near a road. Someone began to shoot. People were falling down dead beside me. I was totally overwhelmed by terror.

When I tried to hide, the other soldiers shoved me forward and said: 'If your friend dies, it doesn't matter. Just step over him! It's your duty!'"

After three years Ndale managed to flee. BVES helped him to process his experiences and start going to school.

"I was so happy, I had a new start in life. After my studies I want to make music about life in the army and about the rights of the child. I want to make sure that children are not made into soldiers. All adults have to remember that they were children once too."

## ♥ BRIANNA AUDINETT, 17 USA

**Represents children who are homeless and children who fight for the rights of the child.**

When Brianna was eleven, her mother left her violent father. Brianna and her three brothers became homeless in Los Angeles. Eventually they found a place in a shelter. They lived here for many months, sleeping with other homeless people in bunk beds in a dormitory. They always had to be quiet, and could hardly ever play. But opposite the shelter there was an organisation that gave Brianna and her brothers somewhere to

play, school materials and help with their homework.

"When I grow up I want to be a doctor, and help homeless people in particular. They don't have any money, but I'll help them anyway," says Brianna, whose family now have a home of their own at long last.

## ♥ MAE SEGOVIA, 15 Philippines

**Represents children who have been exploited by the child sex trade and children who fight for the rights of the child.**

When Mae was nine years old, she had to leave school and start working to help support her family. She was forced to dance and undress in front of a camera in an internet café. The images were sent all over the world via the internet. It took two years before the owner who exploited Mae was caught by the police. He is now in prison, as are many of those who viewed the images. But Mae was unable to stay with her family. There was a risk that she would suffer again as a result of poverty. Now she lives at a safe house for vulnerable girls. She goes to school and fights for the rights of other girls who have suffered abuse.

"I miss my family, but I love going to school and my life is better here," she says.







Liv



Nuzhat



Netta



David

## ♥ LIV KJELLBERG, 15

Sweden

**Represents children who are bullied and children who fight against bullying.**

“It starts with being teased for something, like wearing the wrong clothes, being shy or looking different,” says Liv. “Then it continues with pushing and shoving, and it just gets worse and worse.”

Liv found herself excluded by the other girls right from the first year of school. She had to sit on her own in the school canteen, and she was subjected to shoving and taunting.

“The teachers aren’t always aware of what happens between pupils, and when children are bullied they might not say anything. They think that tomorrow will be better, that they might be able to hang out with the others.”

Liv took matters into her own hands and raised money to start an anti-bullying initiative in her school.

“Now things are better in class and no-one bullies other people. And I have lots of close friends at school.”

## ♥ NUZHAT TABASSUM

PROMI, 16

Bangladesh

**Represents children who have their rights violated through natural disasters and environmental degradation, as well as children who demand respect for girls’ rights.**

“If the sea level rises by one metre, the southern part of Bangladesh, where I live, will be underwater. I think about that often. Global warming is causing the ice at the North and South Poles and in the Himalayas to melt. As a result we are hit harder by cyclones and flooding. When I was on my way to school the day

after the mega-cyclone, there were dead and injured people all over the place,” says Nuzhat. She lives in a small town in southern Bangladesh. Every morning she puts on her school uniform, hails a cycle rickshaw and gets a lift to school.

“Cyclones are very severe storms that affect Bangladesh every year. But the country is well-prepared, and has a good cyclone warning system. The absolute worst thing that has happened to me in my life was when I thought our school had been destroyed by the mega-cyclone.”

## ♥ NETTA ALEXANDRI, 14

Israel

**Represents children in conflict areas and children who want to have a dialogue for peace.**

“When I was small I remember there was a war. My parents got really worried so they sent me and my sister to live with our aunts. I didn’t get to see my parents for a long time. It was frightening, I didn’t know what was going on, so I was worried and very scared. I didn’t understand much of what was going on but I was thinking: I don’t want to die, I don’t want to leave my home!”

Netta thinks that dialogue – talking to one another – is the best way to achieve peace.

“It’s important to talk to each other, because there is no other way. And it is important that we children know our rights, so that no one can take them away from us.”

## ♥ DAVID PULLIN, 17

United Kingdom

**Represents children who have been separated from their parents and are cared for by society, as well as children who fight for the rights of the child.**

David’s mother and father were alcoholics. When he was young he was often left alone in their flat all day long while they went out drinking.

“Because I was locked in, I couldn’t go anywhere.”

David grew up with a foster family and is an active member of a project where children in care meet up to support one another.

“I have had a fantastic new family and everything is going well for me. But I know that not all children in care have been as lucky as me, and I want to fight for their rights.”

David is also a member of a children’s council where he lives.

“Along with adult members of our city

Hanna Taylor at the lectern during the 2013 Award Ceremony at Gripsholm Castle in Mariefred, Sweden, where the children were joined by Crown Princess Victoria. The Jury children always lead the ceremony.



The Jury children lead the World’s Children’s Press Conference at the Eric Ericson Hall in Stockholm, Sweden.







council, we visit children's homes to make sure that the children living there are well cared for. My dream is for all children in care to have good lives. For us to be respected and have a voice."

## ♥ HAMOODI MOHAMAD ELSALAMEEN, 16

**Palestine**

**Represents children in conflict areas and children living under occupation.**

Hamoodi lives in a poor village south of Hebron on the West Bank, an area that is occupied by Israel.

"One night, Israeli soldiers came to our village in tanks. They gave orders through a loudspeaker, telling everyone to switch their lights on. They shot in all directions, and three people were killed."

When he was five and heard that a little boy had been killed, Hamoodi said, "I want a gun!" But now he takes part in negotiations for peace. He has Jewish friends, and plays football with them several times a month in Israel.

"I like playing football, but we don't have a pitch in our village. We usually play on a field further away, but when the Israeli soldiers come to arrest someone, they drive us away. They take away all the fun things," says Hamoodi.

## ♥ EMELDA ZAMAMBO, 15

**Mozambique**

**Represents orphans and children who fight for the rights of the child.**

When Emelda was six years old, her father was shot dead by thieves, and just a few months later her mother died of malaria.

"Everything fell apart. I didn't think anything could ever be good again. I was

terrified that I would be left alone and end up on the street. But in spite of all the bad things that happened, I was so lucky."

Emelda's grandmother and her uncle's family welcomed her with open arms. She got a place to live, food, clothes and the chance to go to school.

"More than anything else, I got a family who love me."

Now Emelda runs her own school at home, for children who would not otherwise have the chance to go to school. She teaches them to read, write and count.

## ♥ KEWAL RAM, 16

**Pakistan**

**Represents child labourers, debt slave children and children who 'don't exist' because nobody has registered their births.**

When Kewal was eight, his mother fell seriously ill. Kewal's father borrowed money for medicine from a man who owned some carpet looms.

"The condition was that someone in my family had to work to repay the debt, and because I was the oldest I had to go and work in the carpet factory. It was a terrible time. They hardly gave us any food and the debt never decreased, however much I worked. After a year, my uncle took out another loan so that I could come back to our village and go to school in the mornings."

Still every day after school, Kewal would sit at the carpet loom until it was so dark he couldn't see, and all day on Sundays. He worked at least 40 hours a week, but he never received any money for his work. Half of his pay went to the man who owned the carpet looms, and the other half to pay off other debts with a trader in the next village. But Kewal

did well at school. When he was 14 he got to move to another town to study. Then his uncle took over the responsibility for weaving carpets and paying off the debt.

## ♥ MANCHALA, 15

**Nepal**

**Represents children who have been victims of trafficking and children who have been sexually abused.**

Manchala grew up with no mother, but was close to her grandmother, who loved her deeply.

"My grandmother died when I was 13. Soon after that I stopped going to school and started working, first in a tea factory and then at a quarry. I was always dreaming of a better life."

One day Manchala met two men who promised to get her a well-paid job in neighbouring India. But instead they sold her to a household as a maid. She worked hard but never got paid and was kept locked up. But the worst thing was that one of the men who had sold Manchala started to visit the house to abuse her. This happened several times, over a long period. Finally, Manchala couldn't take it any more. She managed to escape and the man was caught by the police. But then Manchala started getting death threats from his friends and relatives. Now Manchala lives at a home for vulnerable girls in Nepal, and she has started going to school again.





# Celebrate the child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child brings together a long series of rights that apply to all the children in the world. We have summarised a few of them here. Read the full text of the Convention at: [www.worldschildrensprize.org](http://www.worldschildrensprize.org)

## Basic principles of the Convention:

- All children are equal and have the same rights.
- Every child has the right to have his or her basic needs fulfilled.
- Every child has the right to protection from abuse and exploitation.
- Every child has the right to express his or her opinion and to be respected.

## What is a convention?

A *convention* is an international agreement, a contract between countries. The Convention on the Rights of the Child is one of the six UN conventions on human rights.

## The right to complain!

A brand new protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children whose rights have been violated can submit complaints directly to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, if they have not received help and rehabilitation from their own country. This increases the pressure on the countries of the world to take the rights of the child seriously. The protocol was written in 2011 but had to be approved (ratified) by at least ten countries in order to be valid. Now Costa Rica, Albania, Bolivia, Gabon, Germany, Montenegro, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain and Thailand have ratified the protocol on children's right to complain! Therefore you and all other children now have better chances of making your voices heard regarding your rights. This is a historic moment for children's rights!



The 20th of November is a day of celebration for all the children in the world. It was on that day in 1989 that the UN adopted the CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD. It applies to you and all other children under 18. This year, 2014, the rights of the child are 25 years old!

All the countries in the world except Somalia, the USA, and the new country of South Sudan have ratified (pledged to follow) the Convention. This means they are obliged to take children's rights into consideration and to listen to what children have to say.

# the rights of

## Article 1

These rights apply to all children under 18 in the world.

## Article 2

All children are equal.

All children have the same rights and should not be discriminated against.

Nobody should treat you badly because of your appearance, your skin colour, your gender, your language, your religion, or your opinions.

## Article 3

Those who make decisions affecting children must put the interests of the children first.

## Article 6

You have the right to life and the right to develop.

## Article 7

You have the right to a name and a nationality.

## Article 9

You have the right to live with your parents unless it's bad for you.

You have the right to be brought up by your parents, if possible.

## Articles 12–15

All children have the right to say what they think. You are to be consulted and your opinions respected in all matters concerning you – at home, at school and by the authorities and the courts.

## Article 18

Your parents are jointly responsible for your upbringing and development. They must always put your interests first.

## Article 19

You have the right to protection from all forms of violence, neglect, abuse and mistreatment. You should not be exploited by your parents or other guardians.

## Articles 20–21

You are entitled to receive care if you have lost your family.

## Article 22

If you have been forced to leave your country you have the same rights as all the other children in your new country. If you are alone you have the right to special protection and help. If possible you should be reunited with your family.

## Article 23

All children have the right to a good life. If you are disabled you have the right to extra support and help.

## Article 24

When you are sick you have the right to receive all the help and care you need.

## Articles 28–29

You have the right to go to school and to learn important things, such as respect for human rights and respect for other cultures.

## Article 30

The thoughts and beliefs of every child should be respected. If you belong to a minority you have the right to your own language, your own culture and your own religion.

## Article 31

You have the right to play, rest and free time, and the right to live in a healthy environment.

## Article 32

You should not be forced to do hazardous work that prevents your schooling and damages your health.

## Article 34

No one should subject you to abuse or force you into prostitution. If you are treated badly you are entitled to protection and help.

## Article 35

No one is allowed to kidnap or sell you.

## Article 37

No one should punish you in a cruel and harmful way.

## Article 38

You never have to be a soldier or take part in armed conflict.

## Article 42

All adults and children should know about this convention. You have the right to learn about your rights.







# How are the world's

## 2.2 BILLION CHILDREN UNDER 18 IN THE WORLD

Over 80 million of those children live in Somalia, the USA and South Sudan, the only three countries that have not ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. All other countries have promised to respect the rights of the child, but violations of those rights are common in all countries.

## NAME AND NATIONALITY

From the day you are born you have the right to have a name and to be registered as a citizen of your home country.

*Every year, 135 million children are born. 68 million of these children are never registered. There is no documented proof that they exist!*

## A HOME, CLOTHING, FOOD AND SECURITY

You have the right to a home, food, clothing, education, health care and security.

*More than half of the world's children live in poverty. Around 550 million children have less than US\$1.25 (£0.80) a day to live on.*

## SURVIVE AND GROW

You have the right to life. Every country that has promised to respect the rights of the child must do all it can to allow children to survive and develop.

*1 in 18 children (1 in 9 in the poorest countries) dies before reaching the age of five, usually due to causes that could have been prevented.*

## HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE

You have the right to food, clean water and medical care.

*Every day 19,000 children under the age of 5 die (6.9 million a year) of diseases caused by lack of food, clean water, hygiene and health care. Vaccinations against the most common childhood illnesses help save 2.5 million lives a year. But 1 in 5 children is never vaccinated. Every year, 2 million children die of diseases that can be prevented by vaccination. 4 out of 10 children in the 50 poorest countries do not have access to clean water. Every year 1 million people die of malaria, most of them children. Only 2 in 10 children with malaria receive treatment, and only 4 in 10 children in the poorest malarial countries sleep under a mosquito net.*

## CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability you have the same rights as everyone else. You have the right to receive support so that you can play an active role in society.

*Children with disabilities are among the most vulnerable in the world. In many countries they are not allowed to go to school. Many are treated like inferior beings and are kept hidden away. There are approximately 200 million children with disabilities in the world.*



# children?



## CHILDREN WHO LIVE ON THE STREET

You have the right to live in a safe environment. All children have the right to education, medical care and a decent standard of living.

*Around 100 million children live on the streets. For many, the streets are their only home. Others work and spend their days on the streets, but have families to return to at night.*

## HAZARDOUS CHILD LABOUR

You have the right to be protected from economic exploitation and work that is hazardous to your health or that prevents you from going to school. All work is prohibited for children under 12.

*Around 306 million children work, and for most of them, the work they do is directly harmful to their safety, health, morale and education. Some 10 million children are forced into the worst forms of child labour, as debt slaves, child soldiers or victims of the child sex trade. Every year, 1.2 million children are 'trafficked' in the modern day slave trade.*

## CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Children may only be imprisoned as a last resort and for the shortest possible time. No child may be subjected to torture or other cruel treatment. Children who have committed crimes should be given care and help. Children may not be sentenced to life imprisonment or receive the death penalty.

*At least 1 million children are being held in prison. Imprisoned children are often treated badly.*

## MINORITY CHILDREN

Children who belong to minority groups or indigenous peoples have the right to their language, culture and religion. Examples of indigenous peoples include Native Americans, Aboriginal Australians and the Sami people of Northern Europe.

*The rights of indigenous and minority children are often violated. Their languages are not respected and they are bullied or discriminated against. Many children do not have access to medical care.*

## PROTECTION IN WAR AND FLIGHT

You have the right to protection and care in times of war or if you are a refugee. Children affected by conflict and refugee children have the same rights as other children.

*Over the last 10 years at least 2 million children have been killed in war. 6 million have suffered serious physical injuries. 10 million have suffered serious psychological harm. 1 million have lost or become separated from their parents. Around 250,000 children have been used as soldiers, carriers or mine clearers (over 1000 children are killed or injured by mines every year). 18 million children have had to flee their homes or countries.*

## SCHOOL AND EDUCATION

You have the right to go to school. Primary and secondary schooling should be free for everyone.

*More than 9 out of 10 children in the world go to school, but there are still 57 million children who get no education whatsoever. 55 out of 100 children out of school are girls.*

## PROTECTION FROM VIOLENCE

You have the right to protection from all forms of violence, neglect, maltreatment and abuse.

*Every year 40 million children are beaten so badly that they need medical care. 34 countries have forbidden all forms of corporal punishment for children, so only 4 out of 100 children are fully protected from violence by law. Many countries still allow corporal punishment in schools.*

## YOUR VOICE MUST BE HEARD!

You have the right to say what you think about any issue that affects you. Adults should listen to the child's opinion before they make decisions, which must always be in the child's best interests.

Is this how things are in your country and in the world today? You and the rest of the world's children know best!



# Time for the Global Vote

If you are a student at a Global Friend school, you have the right to vote in the Global Vote until the year you turn 18. Through the Global Vote, you decide who will receive the 2014 World's Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child. You can visit Global Vote Day in different countries on pages 21-26, 92-93, 100-101 and 106-107.

**A**s soon as you start this year's World's Children's Prize Program, it's important to set a date for your Global Vote Day. In some places, several schools or even entire cities or school districts hold their Global Vote on the same day. It's important that you have plenty of time before your Global Vote Day, weeks or months, to learn about and discuss the rights of the child where you live and around the world. And to read all of The Globe magazine!!

## Invite the media

Remember to invite the local media to your Global Vote Day well in advance. You children should invite them, telling them all about your work for the rights of the child. You can also invite parents and local politicians.

## Secret ballot

A lot of preparation is needed to ensure your Global Vote is a democratic election, where you can be sure your vote will be kept secret. Nobody else should be able to influence your decision – not your friends, nor your teachers or parents. Nobody should be able to find out who you voted for, unless you tell them yourself. You need to prepare:

### • Electoral register

Everyone who has the right to vote should be included in a list of names. The names

should be carefully marked off when each person receives their ballot paper, or when they cast their vote in the ballot box.

### • Ballot papers

You can use the ones you receive from the World's Children's Prize, photocopy some more, or make your own.

### • Voting booths

It's great if you can make your own voting booths. Or you could borrow voting booths from adult elections. You enter the booth one at a time, so that nobody can see who you're voting for.

### • Ballot box

You will see various kinds of ballot boxes in The Globe. They could be made out of cardboard boxes, for example, or a large tin can, or woven palm leaves. If you can, send a photo of your ballot box to the World's Children's Prize.

### • Ink to prevent cheating

Ink on one thumb, a painted nail, a mark on the hand or face – there are lots of ways to mark everyone who has already voted.

### • Appoint presiding officers, election supervisors and vote counters

The presiding officers mark off the names on the electoral register and give out ballot papers. The election supervisors make sure that the voting, ink marking and vote counting is done correctly. The vote counters count the votes. Don't forget to send in your results for all three candidates!

Casting votes in the Global Vote ballot box, Ngisimani School, Limpopo, South Africa.



A globe-shaped ballot box in Nepal.



World's Children's Prize cake.

## Celebration time!

When the voting is over, many schools celebrate the rights of the child and their Global Vote Day with performances, tea, biscuits and cake, or in other ways. Others organise a demonstration for the rights of the child.

## Celebratory dance in Limpopo, South Africa.



Watch Global Vote videos at [worldschildrensprize.org](http://worldschildrensprize.org)





## Democratic elections in Burma

For several years, a translation of The Globe in Karen has been smuggled into Burma (Myanmar) to give children the chance to learn about the rights of the child and vote in a democratic election. The situation in Burma has improved and when the time comes for democratic elections in the country, the children of Saw Bwe Dern School in the Karen province will know exactly what to do.

## Burundi for children's rights

"In our Child Rights Club we have learned that children have a right to an education and should not have to work. But most maids here are girls, who have to work day and night for a month for a wage that is not even enough to buy a pair of socks," says Inés, 15. She is participating in the World's Children's Prize Program for the second time.



## Sierra Leone

More and more schools and children in Sierra Leone are getting on board with the World's Children's Prize Program. Not so long ago the country was a war zone, with many child soldiers. But now the children are demanding respect for their rights.



## Fun day for WCP in Nigeria

Ogoro-Magongo School in Nigeria launched this year's WCP Program with a fun day packed with performances and competitions.



## At the ballot box in Nepal

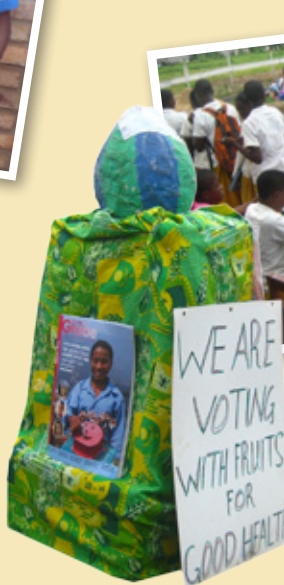
It's decision time at the ballot box at Shree Pashupati School in Hetauda in Nepal. The lower picture is from the Global Vote at Teresa Academy in Kathmandu.



## Fruity ballot box in Cameroon

Presiding Officer Wesley is wearing his WCP card around his neck. His school-mates are queuing up to cast their votes in the ballot box shaped like a piece of fruit.

"We want a world where the rights of the child are respected," says Wesley.



## Voting in Congo

"I love The Globe. The magazine has opened my eyes to the rights of the child," says 15-year-old Gloire in Brazzaville, the capital of Congo, who is about to vote in a Global Vote for the first time.





# The road to

Every year the World's Children's Prize Program concludes with a democratic Global Vote owned and organised by you, the children and young people of the world. Come on a journey through time, charting the rise of democracy in our world.

## What is democracy?

Maybe you and your friends have similar opinions on some issues. On other issues you might have completely different views. Perhaps you are able to listen to one another and discuss the issue until you reach a solution that everyone accepts. In this case, you are in agreement and have reached a *consensus*.

Sometimes you have to agree to disagree. In those cases, the majority – the biggest group – get to decide. This is called *democracy*.

In a democracy, all people should be equal and have equal rights. Everyone should be able to express their opinions and influence decisions. The opposite of a democracy is a *dictatorship*. That's when only one or a few people decide everything and nobody is allowed to protest.

In a democracy, everyone should be able to make their voices heard. People have to compromise, and decide things by voting. There is *direct democracy* and *representative democracy*. Direct democracy is when everyone is allowed to vote on a particular question, for example, your Global Vote, where you decide who should receive the World's Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child. Another example is when a country holds a referendum. Most democratic countries are governed by *representative democracy*. This is when the citizens choose people to be their *representatives* – politicians – to govern the country according to what the people want.



Throughout the ages

### Joint decisions

Throughout the ages people have gathered to make decisions together. Decisions are made in groups, tribes or villages, perhaps about hunting or agriculture. Some groups have rituals to help them discuss what is best for the group and make shared decisions. Sometimes an object, such as a feather, is passed round, and whoever is holding the feather is allowed to speak. *Why not try it out in your classroom?*

### The birth of the word 508 BCE democracy

In 508 BCE the word democracy is born, from the Greek words *demos* (people) and *kratein* (power or rule). The citizens of Greece have to climb a stair and give their opinion on important issues. If they can't reach an agreement, the people vote on the issue by a show of hands. But only men have the right to vote at this time. Women, slaves and foreigners are not considered citizens and are not allowed to vote.



In the 1700s

### Autocratic rulers

In the 1700s most of the countries in Europe, for example, are ruled by autocratic kings and emperors, who ignore the will of the people. But some thinkers begin to take an interest in ancient ideas that all people are born free and equal, with equal rights. Why should some groups in society have more power and wealth than others? Others criticise the rulers' oppression and believe that if people have more knowledge they will recognise the injustice in society and protest against it.



# democracy



1789

## Voice of the rich

1789 is also the year the French Revolution begins. The ideas and demands behind it spread across Europe and influence the development of society. Still, only men are considered citizens. What's more, often the only men who are allowed to vote and become politicians are rich ones who own land and buildings.

## No women or slaves

In 1789 the first constitution of the United States of America is written. This is an important step in the history of democracy. It states that people should have power over the decisions in society, and that people should have the right to write and think whatever they want. However, the constitution does not apply to women or slaves.

## First secret ballot

In 1856 the first secret ballot was held in Tasmania, Australia, using ballot papers with the candidates' names printed on them.



1856



1906  
1921  
1945

## Women demand voting rights

In the late 1800s, more and more women begin to demand the right to vote in political elections. In 1906, Finland is the first country in Europe to give women the vote. Sweden and the UK follow suit in 1921. In most of the other countries in Europe, Africa and Asia women are not allowed to vote until after the end of the Second World War, in 1945, or even later.

1947



## World's biggest democracy

In 1947 India liberates itself from the British empire and becomes the biggest democracy in the world. The fight for freedom is led by Mahatma Gandhi, who believes in resisting oppression without violence – *non-violence*.

## First democracy in Africa

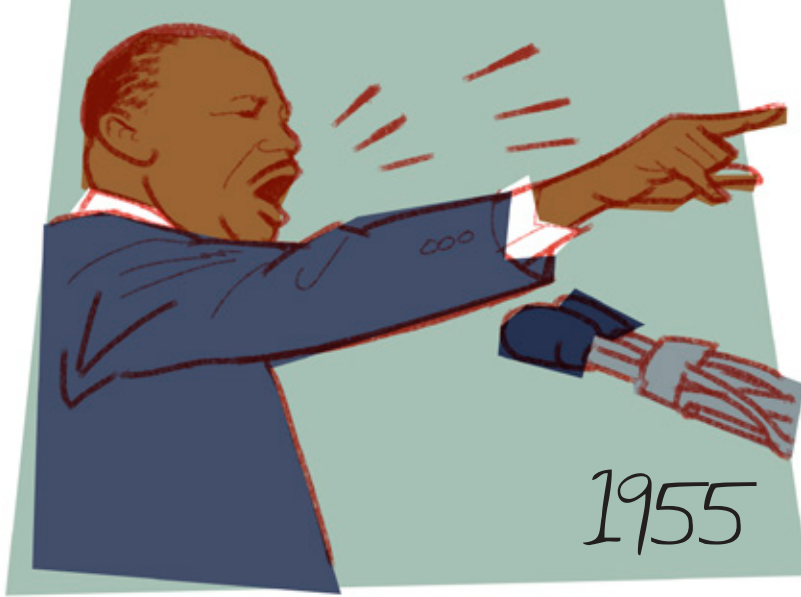
In 1957 Ghana in West Africa becomes independent from its colonial ruler, Great Britain. Kwame Nkrumah becomes the first leader of

the country. The colonisation of Africa, Asia and Latin America began hundreds of years previously. The great powers of Europe sent out soldiers and explorers, to occupy land, steal natural resources, and turn people into slaves.

1957







## Equal rights in the USA

In 1955 a woman called Rosa Parks, who is black, refuses to give up her seat on the bus for a white man. Rosa is fined, because in the American South black people do not have the same rights as white people. They are not allowed to go to the same schools as white children, and sometimes they are not allowed to vote. Civil rights champion Martin Luther King starts a boycott of the bus company. This marks the beginning of a major protest movement across the USA, against racism and for freedom and equal rights.



## The Arab spring

In 2010 a poor young man in Tunisia has his vegetable cart confiscated by the police. He sets himself on fire in protest, and when news of his death spreads, hundreds of thousands of people go out on the streets to demonstrate. They manage to topple the dictator who rules the country, Ben Ali. People in neighbouring countries are inspired, and the dictatorships in Egypt and Libya are overthrown by mass protests too. The movement for democracy in the Middle East is called *the Arab Spring*.

## Dictatorships remain

In 2014 some countries in the world are still ruled by dictators, but even in many democracies human rights continue to be violated. The rights of the child are violated in all countries. In dictatorships people are denied the right to vote and the right to express their views – freedom of opinion. The rulers decide everything, and often seize money and property for themselves and their families.

2014



1994



## Voting rights for everyone in South Africa

In 1994 Nelson Mandela becomes South Africa's first democratically elected president. He has been in prison for 27 years for his fight against the country's racist apartheid system, which separated people according to skin colour. The election of Mandela is the first time that all South Africans are able to participate in an election on equal terms.

## Towards democracy in Burma

In 2010 Aung San Suu Kyi is released from house arrest by the Burmese dictatorship, after having spent fifteen of the previous 23 years under house arrest because of her brave struggle for democracy in Burma. In 2011 she becomes a patron of the World's Children's Prize Foundation.

2010



## The children's democratic Global Vote

In 2014 the World's Children's Prize Program will take place for the fourteenth time. So far, almost 35 million children have learned about their rights and democracy through the program. It's important that every new generation gains that knowledge. It helps you and your friends to go through life making your country a better place, where democracy is strengthened and children's rights and human rights are respected.

When you have learned all about the rights of the child, and about the prize candidates' work, you are ready to prepare your democratic Global Vote. Your vote is your decision. No-one, neither friends nor teachers, should tell you who to vote for. The person who receives the votes of the majority – the biggest group of people – will receive the 2014 World's Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child!





# Olivia and Benin for the rights of the child



Jumelé School votes for the rights of the child.



Painting banners.



Stamp to prevent cheating.



L'Horizon School's election officials.



"Our school is in". Global Vote at Lycée des Jeunes Filles Toffa.



A vote for children's rights in the ballot box.



Counting votes.

"When I see my friends' rights being violated, that motivates me to take responsibility for the WCP Child Rights Club. Many people don't live with their parents and their guardians treat them badly. They don't agree that girls should go to school. And

I am a girl.  
I know my rights.  
Do you?



when girls come home from school they have to sell goods on the street.

"The World's Children's Prize Program is a great tool for me when I am fighting for the rights of the child, and against how the weakest children are treated, here in Benin. Tens of thousands of children in Benin are affected by trafficking every year – two thirds of them girls.

"Girls must be given the chance to go to school and build themselves a future. They should not be forced to marry – they should be able to choose for themselves. Girls can become leaders, and that is more valuable for our country than the money the parents get for marrying a girl off. In order to

achieve this, we need to raise awareness among parents and wider society, in the same way that the stories in The Globe help to raise these issues. The Globe educates teachers too.

"In future years we are going to use the WCP Program and the things we have learned in the WCP Club. I'm going to teach the rights of the child and start different weekly events in the Child Right Clubs and Global Friend schools in my city. During the Global Vote part of the program I teach people about the democratic process. Knowing about that strengthens you as a person, and your rights."

Olivia, 16, Lycée des Jeunes Filles Toffa, Benin



The voting queue stretches far into the refugee camp.

The election police show voters where to go in the polling station.



# Refugee Global



Am I on the electoral register?

"The adults started a war when they had an election. When it was the children's turn to vote, we had a big party instead!" says refugee Estelle, 12, shaking her head at how adults behave.

In Estelle's homeland, the Ivory Coast, the 2010 presidential election sparked off a brutal civil war. Three thousand people were killed and hundreds of thousands fled their homes. Many of the refugees travelled to neighbouring Ghana. Today, the children in Ampain refugee camp are holding their Global Vote.



Here's your ballot paper. Put a cross next to the person you're voting for.



Estelle

## Children's vote is a party!

"OUR GLOBAL VOTE here in the refugee camp today has been a calm, fair and democratic vote. Everything went perfectly. And everyone was happy. At home in the Ivory Coast, when the adults voted, things were different. The president and his political opponent went to war with one another instead, because they couldn't agree about the election results. Soldiers went from door to door asking people who they voted for. And they killed people. The noise of guns was everywhere.

"When people tried to pass

through the checkpoints in the roads and escape, lots of girls were ordered to get out of the cars. The soldiers took advantage of them and then they were thrown back in their cars. Some girls were forced to stay with the soldiers while everyone else in their car was allowed to drive on. That's what happened to a girl in our car. I haven't seen her since then. I was terrified that the soldiers were going to take me too.

"The adults started a war when they had an election. When it was the children's turn to vote we had a big party

instead. And all of us participants in the Global Vote now know what a fair, peaceful, democratic election looks like. And we also know about children's and girls' rights. If we ever get to go home again, we have to use what we have learned. That would make my country, the Ivory Coast, a better place in the future.

"When I grow up I want to be an air hostess and see the world!"

*Estelle, 12, WCP Child Rights Club, Ampain refugee camp.*





In the refugee camp the voting booth is behind the three yellow balloons to the left, in the centre of the picture.



A vote for a Child Rights Hero.

# Vote

## President should be like WCP candidates

**"THE WAR WAS** horrendous. It's impossible to describe how scared I was. I saw soldiers killing women and children with my own eyes. Along with my mother and my little sister I managed to escape the conflict and cross the border into Ghana in the middle of the night. It was a huge relief to reach the refugee camp. Amidst all the horrors of war, I somehow felt secure. As though I had reached a safe place and nothing bad could happen to me any more.

"But that's not how it turned out. My mother started working in the village beside the camp and I started washing dishes at a restaurant here in the camp in the evenings. Usually my only payment was a small portion of food. One evening I was walking on the sand path between the refugee tents towards the restaurant, when a man grabbed me. He put his hand over my

mouth and nose. He had some kind of strong chemical on his hand that made me dizzy. Then he quickly dragged me into his tent.

"I fainted, and when I woke up I saw that my dress was torn and covered in blood. I was in so much pain I could hardly walk. My mother and I reported the man, but when the police came he had fled from the camp. Nobody has seen him since."

### Child Rights Club at camp

"I am a member of the WCP Child Rights Club at the camp. We read *The Globe* magazine and learn about our rights. Before I knew nothing about my rights. Thanks to *The Globe*, we get lots of good tips on how to fight for our rights. It's good to have lots of girls in a group because then we can support one another. That way we are stronger than when we are alone.

"If the leaders and presidents of this world were like the WCP candidates, the world would be a safer place for us girls."

*Grace, 12, WCP Child Rights Club, Ampain refugee camp.*



You can't cheat in the elections once your finger has been marked with ink.







## Deaf and female – doubly disadvantaged

**"BOYS ARE ALWAYS** treated better than girls here in Ghana. Girls have to do everything at home and work much harder than boys. We wash dishes, cook, clean... everything! Boys hardly do anything. If a family is poor they always choose to send their son to school and not their daughter.

"Deaf children don't count in a family. If a family's first child is deaf, usually that child doesn't get to go to school, regardless of whether they are a boy or a girl. Any siblings born later who are able to hear can go to school but not the deaf child.

"If the family is poor, the parents often force any children with disabilities to go begging. Children who are not disabled are loved by their parents. Deaf children, or children with any other disability, often get beaten. Since most people don't learn sign language, we can't make ourselves understood. We are excluded.

"As a deaf girl, things are extra tough. We are definitely last in line for school. Since deaf children are often not permitted to go to school, we are left alone at home while our parents work and siblings

who can hear go to school. That is much more dangerous for us girls than for boys. Since we can't hear, men can come into our homes and take advantage of us."

### **The Globe teaches me about the world**

"I would rather be living at home in my village with my mother than at this boarding school. But I come from a little village four hours' drive from here. I am a member of the WCP Child Rights Club at school, and by reading The Globe magazine I have learned that every child has a right to go to school – even those with hearing impairments or other disabilities. I didn't know that before.

"The Globe is fantastic! I learn about the world and about my rights, and reading about brave people who fight for our rights makes me happy. We had our Global Vote today, and it felt great to show my support for someone who fights for our rights!"

*Bernice, 15, member of the WCP Child Rights Club at Sekondi School for the Deaf.*

# Global Vote in

Bernice



**There are 200 million children with disabilities in the world. Many of them are among the most vulnerable. They are treated as though they are not as good as other children and their families often try to hide them away. Things are worst for girls with disabilities.**

**"I know it's wrong because I belong to a World's Children's Prize Child Right Club for girls. We read The Globe together and now I know that we have the same rights as everyone else," says Matilda, 14. She is one of 300 students who hold their Global Vote at the school for deaf and hearing impaired children in the city of Sekondi in Ghana.**

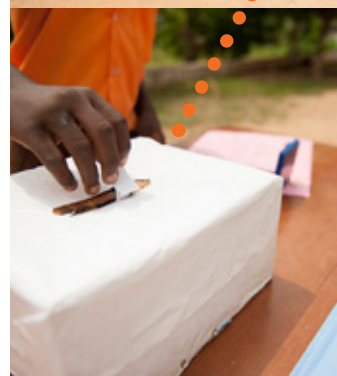
# GLOBAL







Duncan



A vote for equal rights for all children.

## Deafness = disability?

In several countries, many deaf people who speak sign language are fighting to be seen as a minority language group, and not a group with a disability.

# Duncan was a domestic slave

**"CHILDREN WITH** disabilities have the same rights as all other children. I learned that when we read *The Globe* magazine at school, and it made me so happy. I'm going to tell my family about that, because that's not how I was treated as a child.

"I have three brothers who can hear and they were treated completely differently. They were given food, clothes, shoes... everything. I got those things too, of course, but my brothers always got more, newer, nicer

things. Our parents showed them more love too. Gave them more hugs. I wasn't treated anything like that. Nobody bothered to try to communicate with me properly. It was the same with the other boys in my area. They never let me join in and play games or football with them. They thought I must be stupid just because I couldn't hear."

### No school

"I wasn't allowed to go to school either. When my brot-

hers went to school I had to stay at home and fetch water, cook food, and work in the fields. It was so sad to watch my brothers leave for school in their smart uniforms. I felt like a slave. Now I know that that was wrong. I have the same right to go to school as everyone else!

"Finally, several years too late, I got to start attending a boarding school for deaf children. Here everyone can join in, and I have lots of friends. I hope that society will gradually become like this, and that

we will be treated as equals.

"Those of us who have participated in the World's Children's Prize and learned about our rights, if we teach our families and everyone around us about the rights of the child, I really believe that life will get better for deaf children in Ghana. I want to be a maths teacher in the future."

*Duncan, 14, Sekondi School for the Deaf.*

# VOTE





# They called Matilda an animal

**"I HAVE BEEN** treated badly because I am deaf. At home I was always bullied by girls my age. I'm a good runner, but they never let me join in with their races and games. They excluded me and called me an animal. Sometimes they picked grass and held it up to my mouth for me to eat, just like you would do to a cow. Then they would laugh and make rude gestures to say that I was stupid. It hurt so much. I didn't want to cry in front of them, but I often ran away and hid in the forest.

"Often I wouldn't come out until the mosquitoes started biting me in the evening. Then I would sneak home, not letting anyone see me. Sometimes people would actually beat me. Even adults. Since I couldn't hear what they said and neither they nor I could communicate in sign language, we often misunderstood each other and I ended up getting a beating."

## Want to be a drummer

"I'm a member of the World's Children's Prize Child Rights Club at my school. We read *The Globe* together and talk about our rights. I have learned that the things I went through – not being given a language, not being able to join in, being bullied – were violations of my rights.

"Before I came to the school for the deaf, I could never make my voice heard.

During the election party some of the children perform dances. Although they can't hear the drums, they can see them and feel the rhythm.

Matilda



Today we held our Global Vote and I really did make my voice heard! It was an unusual feeling, because here people hardly ever listen to deaf children. Our opinions don't count. Today was different. I voted together with children from all over the world, deaf children and hearing children alike. And my opinion was counted. That makes me happy!

"I really want to be a drummer. Although I can't hear the music, I feel the rhythms and vibrations in my body. I usually practice with sticks on logs. People point and laugh because they don't know that I'm deaf. But I just laugh right back. I like drumming and sometimes I play drums at church. I want to be in the church band and play every Sunday."

*Matilda, 14, member of the WCP Child Rights Club at Sekondi School for the Deaf.*



# Child Rights Heroes 2014

Every year, the World's Children's Prize Child Jury selects three Child Rights Heroes from all those nominated. These three become the candidates for the *World's Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child*. In order to be able to vote fairly in the Global Vote, it's important that you know equal amounts about all three candidates. If you read all about each of them in this magazine, then you will. The two candidates who do not receive the voting children's prize receive the *World's Children's Honorary Award*. All three Child Rights Heroes receive prize money towards their work with children.



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nominated?**

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# 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: ELVE 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 NIEDRINCHAU/SAP

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/CETTY 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: SHERIN 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.

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 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*



## 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*





# 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*

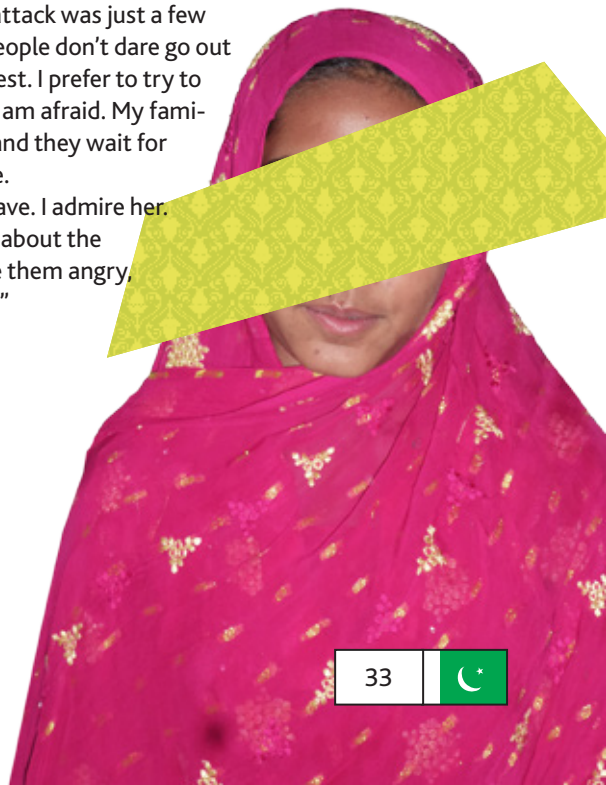


## Parents have responsibility

"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 different life 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

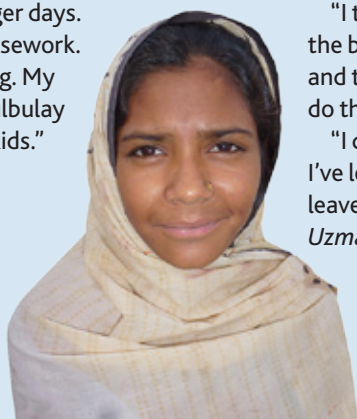


## Could my life get better?

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*



"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*



## 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*

## 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*



### 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!"



## 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



## 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



## 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 bandage.

"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



## 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



## 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

## 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."

# 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.

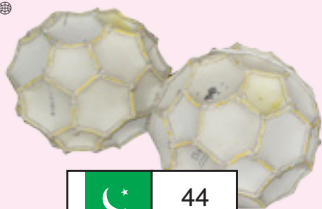
"The teachers didn't care about me. They didn't notice me. I want to have an education. My parents have never been to school, so they can't help. Now, through my work sewing footballs, I am going to be able to learn to read and write. Every day I will take a few hours off to learn.

"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.



# 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





# 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 jewelry, 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*

Boys discuss girls'

## 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."

Wakas, 11

## 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

## 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

## 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



**Why has John been nominated?**

Child Rights Hero Nominee • Pages 48–67

# John Wood

**John Wood has been nominated for the 2014 World's Children's Prize for his 15-year fight for children's right to education.**

John quit his job as a manager at the Microsoft company to fulfil his dream: to fight poverty by giving children all over the world the chance to go to school. John believes that when children can read and write, they are better equipped to demand their rights and to defend themselves against abuse, trafficking and slavery. John and his organisation, Room to Read, have built almost 1,700 schools and over 15,000 school libraries in some of the world's poorest countries. They have published 874 children's books in local languages and given over ten million books to poor children who have never before had access to books. John and Room to Read have a special focus on girls' education and have helped over 20,000 girls to finish their education and have a better life. Room to Read works in Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Laos, Nepal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Zambia and Tanzania, and has reached 7.8 million children!



**John Wood quit his career to fight for all children's right to education. His organisation, Room to Read, builds schools and libraries for the very poorest children in ten countries, publishes children's books and fights for girls' rights and education. John says that education is the best way to tackle poverty.**

**I**t all started in Hong Kong 15 years ago. John is an important manager at Microsoft. He travels all over Asia, going to hundreds of meetings and working long hours. His career is going well, but after seven years John is exhausted. He goes on holiday to fulfil a long-held dream: to go hiking in the Himalayan mountains in Nepal, far from computers and ringing telephones.

#### **At the summit**

A few weeks later, John is sitting at a small tea stall on a Himalayan mountain top. He has been hiking for hours and orders a drink from the young boy who is serving the customers. The boy returns quickly with a bottle. John has learned a few words of Nepali, and he says:

"It's tato (hot). Do you have chiso (cold)?"

The boy shakes his head regretfully. There are no

When John arrived at the school in the Himalayas and started unpacking the books, chaos broke out! Everyone wanted to look at and read the books.

refrigerators in the mountains. But suddenly an idea strikes him. The boy dashes down the steep slope towards the river, and puts the bottle in the ice-cold glacial meltwater. John laughs and gives the boy a thumbs up, and a man at the next table laughs too.

"Are all Nepali children as clever?" asks John.

"Here we have to improvise, as we have very little," says the man. His name is Pasuphati and he works for the local education department. Right now he is visiting the mountain schools to find out what they need.

"They lack almost everything," he explains to John.



“Come with me tomorrow and you will see.”

### 50 children in each class

The next morning, John heaves his lead-heavy rucksack onto his back, laden with expensive camping equipment. Pasuphati only carries a small briefcase, and walks up the mountain with quick strides. John struggles to keep up, despite being at least 20 years younger. As they climb and the air becomes thinner, Pasuphati tells John that Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world.

“At the school... you will see that in Nepal we are too poor to afford education. But until we have education, we will always be poor.”

John has prepared himself, but he still gets a shock when he is shown around the ramshackle school building. The recent rains have turned the earthen floors of the rooms to a sea of mud. The temperature is 40 degrees under the tin roof, which has been heated by the sun. Around 50 stu-



When Room to Read printed their ten millionth children's book, in Vietnam, John and the children held a ceremony together in their school!

dents are packed into every classroom. The children don't have desks, but squeeze onto long benches with jotters on their laps.

### Library without books

The headteacher suggests that they finish their tour

with a visit to the school library, and John is filled with excitement. He has loved libraries for as long as he can remember. John's mother used to tell him, “If you have a good book in your hands, you will never be lonely.”

At the library in his small

town, you were only allowed to borrow eight books per week. But John had a secret agreement with the librarian. He was allowed to borrow twelve books a week, as long as he didn't tell anyone!

While hiking in Nepal, John Wood visited a poor school that didn't have any books in its library. Six months later, he returned to the Himalayas with thousands of books that were transported up to the mountain top by yaks and donkeys.



## John and Room to Read:

- Work with education departments to develop school books and better teaching methods.
- Build school libraries and fill them with books, jigsaws, games, colourful furniture and cushions that turn the libraries into the children's favourite place.
- Get local authors and artists to write and illustrate new children's books in local languages, so that the children can read good books that they can identify with. In many of the languages, they have never had children's books before.
- Build or renovate so that the children have safe, bright classrooms where it is easy to learn.
- Give scholarships and support to girls who would otherwise have to quit school to work or get married.







The headteacher opens the door marked 'Library'. But the room is empty. No shelves, chairs, desks or reading lights. And no books. There is a small cupboard in one corner.

"The books, they are so precious and so few. We must protect them," explains the headteacher as he unlocks the padlocks on the cupboard doors. John hopes that the cupboard is going to be crammed full of books. But inside there is only a handful of old paperbacks left behind by tourists. Books for adults, in English and Italian. This is the instant when John's life turns upside down. As he is leaving the village, the headteacher says:

"Perhaps, sir, you will someday come back with books?"



John likes travelling and meeting the children that Room to Read helps, as he is doing here in Asia.

### A heavily-laden yak

John returns to work in Hong Kong and begins to call and write to everyone he knows at home in the USA. He asks them to send all the children's books they can spare to his parents. Soon, their garage is crammed with boxes of books. John's eight-year-old niece does a book drive at her school. Everyone gets involved, and six months later John and his father return to Nepal – with thousands of books.

The books are loaded onto donkeys and yaks to begin the hike up the mountain-side. As they approach the summit where the school is, John sees a huge crowd of people. Children, parents and teachers are waiting to welcome the book delivery. The students greet them with flower garlands and when it's time to unpack, chaos breaks out! Soon the children are spread right across the

mountainside, each one leafing through a colourful book.

Later, as they eat dinner, John's father asks him:

"Okay, what's next?"

John hasn't thought that far, but now his head is spinning. In the past his focus has been on revenue and sales growth – things that were ultimately going to make rich people richer and give himself a raise, a new car and a bigger house. But all of that

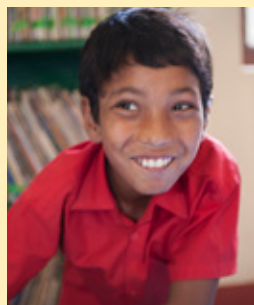
seems unimportant now.

John makes a decision. He's going to quit his top job and put all his time and savings into giving children all over the world access to books.

### Thousands of new libraries

Lots of people think John has gone crazy when he quits his job and starts his organisation, Room to Read. But his parents support him. Soon, he finds more people who

## My favorite book



**Prakash, 11**  
(name means the light)  
"My favourite book is called Tricky Jackie. If I was to write a book it would be about children with disabilities, because I have a friend who has a disability."



50



**Dipa, 9**  
(Flame)  
"I like a book called Tempo because the illustrations are so good. My own book would be about me and my sister."

**Sirjana, 14**  
(Creation)

"I like stories where the characters are animals. But if I was to write a book it would be realistic, and it would be about my village. It could be called 'The history of my village' or maybe 'Sami and the goats', because I take care of our goats."







Room to Read often uses games to make education more fun. Here, John is trying out a spelling game with a girl in Zambia.

want to work with him. John tells anyone who will listen all about his idea. Some of the listeners are rich people who he got to know during his time as an important manager. Many people want to make a contribution to help children learn to read and write. They send books, but they also donate money, so John is able to employ more staff and build more libraries.

Room to Read grows

quickly. Soon school libraries are being built not only in Nepal but also in Cambodia, Vietnam, South Africa, India and Bangladesh. But after a while John and his colleagues realise that they have missed a vital piece of the jigsaw. They have opened thousands of school libraries, but filled them with children's books in English! The children have to have the opportunity to read in their own languages. But

there are hardly any children's books available in Nepali, for example, or in Khmer, the language in Cambodia.

"We have to find great writers and artists, and publish books in the children's own mother tongues," says John.

### Towards 100 million children

Today, Room to Read has grown into a global organisation



### No cars for the bosses!

In many poor countries, the streets are swarming with expensive jeeps. John was furious when he realised that most of them belonged to the bosses of organisations that are there to help poor people. A jeep could cost around USD 75,000. That amount of money could pay for schooling for 300 children for a year. So Room to Read decided that their bosses would travel by local transport instead of having their own chauffeur-driven jeeps!



### Krishna, 9

(name of a Hindu god)

"The Mouse House is my favourite book. It's about mice who work. I would like to write a book that supports farmers. There are lots of farmers where I live, and they have a tough life."

### Nirjala, 9:

"I must have read Chandramukhi ten times. It's a historical fable. I've thought about writing a book, but I've forgotten what it was going to be about!"



### Binod, 10

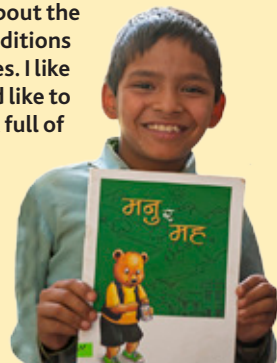
(New)

"I like a book called My garden, about how to grow plants, remove weeds, water plants, and so on. If I was to write a book it would be about our cow, who is called Eyeliner."

### Dipak, 12

(Light)

"My favourite book is Man and honey. It's about the different traditions in our villages. I like riddles, so I'd like to write a book full of riddles."







# The library is the heart of the school!

Sudip, 13, and his schoolmates have started their own club. They meet in the library, which Room to Read built together with the school and the parents in a poor village in the Himalayas. The children's club helps to look after the library, and organises lots of activities in the school.

"For example, we have quizzes every day. We ask a question at assembly in the morning, and then everyone rushes to the library to find the answer in the books there. The library has become a meeting place, and has made it easier for us children to get to know each other at school."

## Having an influence

Sudip and the children's club also help to keep the schoolyard clean, and organise poetry and short story competitions. They even make a school

magazine and organise debates on important issues.

"The debates are the best," says Sudip. "For example, we have discussed fast food, and our conclusion was that it is expensive and unhealthy. Now hardly any students eat fast food any more."

The children's club also gets to vote along with the adults in the School Council.

"That's good. It's democratic," says Sudip. "I like having an influence at school."

*The children's club wish list:*  
Computers  
Even more interesting books  
Bigger classrooms  
A fan in the library  
A real lab



The children's club holds meetings in the library or under a tree in the schoolyard.



tion working in ten countries. Over six million children now have access to a school library, and over 20,000 girls have received support for their education. But John still isn't satisfied.

"We've still only reached 1 percent of the children who need us," he says. "We have to get back to work so we can one day reach 100 million

children! Our motto is that 'world change starts with educated children'. We will never accept the notion that any child can be told that he or she was 'born in the wrong place, at the wrong time, to the wrong parents' and hence will not be educated. That idea belongs on the scrap heap of human history!"



Gokul, 13, wants a fan in the library so that it's possible to spend time there even during the hottest part of the day.



Manju, 13, wishes for bigger classrooms at his school.





Room to Read has been working in Cambodia for more than ten years. So far over 2,500 girls have received help to continue their education instead of being forced to work. The girls at this school in Khampung Plok are proud of their new school, which the inhabitants of their village built together with Room to Read.

Cambodia, one of the poorest nations in the world, has a dark history. Almost 30 years ago, the country was taken over by a violent group called the Khmer Rouge and their leader, Pol Pot.



# The country where every school

was closed

**T**he Khmer Rouge wanted to create a new, perfect country, and destroy everything they thought was bad. They closed all schools and banned education. Almost all educated adult Cambodians were killed. Children were separated from their parents and taught that the Khmer Rouge were their real family. They lost all their rights and were forced to work as soldiers, prison guards, farmers and spies – spying on adults.

## Orphaned

Kall Kann, who heads up Room to Read's work in Cambodia, was only twelve when Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge came to power. He was separated from his parents and sent to a rural area.

"I became an orphan and lived like a wild child," says Kall Kann. He never saw his mother or father again. They were educated, so the regime killed them.

During the four years that the Khmer Rouge were in

power, over 1.8 million Cambodians died as a result of torture, executions, disease, exhaustion and starvation. When the regime fell, there were hardly any educated survivors in the country – no teachers, scientists or doctors. That made it even harder for Cambodians to rebuild their country and lift themselves out of poverty.

## Never again

When Cambodia was liberated from the Khmer Rouge, Kall Kann was poor and alone in the world. He fought hard to gain an education, because he wanted to make sure that nothing like this could ever happen again.

"If we educate our children, they are strong. Then nobody

will be able to trick them and influence them like Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge did," he says.

Today, life is much better, but in rural areas there are still few jobs, and electricity and clean water are rare. It is true that almost 80 percent of children start school, but most quit their studies early in order to start working to support their families. More girls than boys quit school early. People don't believe that girls are worth investing in. Some parents also think it's harder to find a husband for an educated girl. That's why Room to Read in Cambodia puts a lot of focus on girls' education. 🌐



The Khmer Rouge abolished all ordinary schools. They organised simple outdoor lessons, which were mostly designed to teach children how to serve their leaders.

Photo: Arkiv/Dccam





"Without Room to Read's help I could never have carried on attending school," she says. "My grandpa is always nagging me to quit school and start working. He grew up under Pol

Lisa, Sopheap, Sokhit and Kunthi have just learned to write their names. They love their new school library and learning to read colourful, fun-filled books in their mother tongue, Khmer.



“We have just learned to write our names,” explains Lisa, who has just started Year 1 with her friends Sopheak, Sokhit and Kunthi. Their favourite room at school is the library, which was built by Room to Read with help from the local community. Everyone lent a hand. The library is now full of Room to Read’s own children’s books, in Khmer.

"It's much easier to learn to read with these beautiful, funny books," says Sopheak. "And both the librarian and my teacher are great at explaining things! They are teaching us the alphabet, and how to make sounds and put words together."

Language surrounds us, on signs, screens, timetables and price tickets. If you can't read, lots of doors are closed to you in society. Reading is also the foundation for all learning. That's why Room to Read invests a lot in helping the youngest children to 'crack the code' of reading early on. That means that they should be able to read and write common words and simple sentences, and be able to express themselves clearly. These are skills that will help them throughout their time at school.



People speak Khmer in Cambodia. It's a language with a unique structure. Now Room to Read is working with the Cambodian Ministry of Education to change the way that teachers teach children how to read and write Khmer. The old lessons were based on European language learning methods. But Khmer has to be taught in a totally unique way. With these smart new methods, the children can learn to read and write much faster.

## មិនយល់ទេ



# Sacty

One day, the thing that Sacty had feared for so long finally happened. The sun is setting over the rooftops in the floating village, and the river is full of boats on their way home. Sacty's mother has a serious look on her face when she sits down on the floor beside Sacty, who has just turned twelve.

"You're going to have to stop going to school," she says.



## thought her life was over



"We have no choice. I can't afford the school fees, and we need your help to work and earn money," continues her mother.

Sacty wants to cry, but she swallows her tears. She doesn't want to make her mother even more sad by showing her feelings. On the inside, she is devastated, and doesn't know what to do. All she says to her mother is: "I understand."

### Father disappeared

Sacty lives in a small village that floats on water for six months of the year. The children travel to school by boat, and most families earn their living by fishing. Then, the water disappears and the lake around the houses shrinks and becomes a narrow river. Suddenly, the houses are far above the ground on rickety, six-metre-high stilts. The children run up and down to their houses on narrow ladders. The people here live simply, without electricity or running water. But Sacty's family is one of the poorest. Her father abandoned the family just before she was born and he never came back. Since then, Sacty's mother has had to fight hard for the

Almost everyone who lives in Kompong Phluk, the floating village, fishes.

family's survival.

"I had to start working again when you were only ten days old," Sacty's mother has told her many times.

When anyone asks about her father, Sacty usually says that he is dead. It feels as though he is. But she knows that he is alive, and has a new family. It hurts to think that he doesn't care about her. The worst thing is when the neighbouring children tease Sacty.

"You're a poor orphan, you've only got a mother," they say sometimes.

It makes Sacty sad, but it also makes her angry. She decided early to put all her efforts into her schooling, so

that nobody could look down on her. And she's never missed one piece of homework, although she does housework before and after school, and goes out on the boat with her mother to help with the fishing.

And now she has to quit school. Have all her efforts been in vain?

### First day at work

Sacty starts work a few weeks before her class do their exam to move up to the next year group. It hurts, but she doesn't complain. Her moth-

er has just been ill and had to borrow money for medicine, so now they have less money than ever. She wants to help out, and she knows that her family will be angry and disappointed if she doesn't.

Early in the morning, Sacty waits with her mother and big sister at the roadside near the river. A truck stops and they climb up onto the back. Many more children and adults from the village are crammed in, on their way to work in the fields. The truck skids around on the narrow dirt track, and Sacty realises that soon they're going to pass her school. She glances cautiously from under the brim of her hat and sees her





Sacty's house is raised on stilts that are almost six metres high.



friends, wearing their school uniforms. Sacty is sure they can see her too, but she doesn't dare wave. She's so ashamed. It feels like she has let them down, and her teachers too. What will they think of her now?

All day, Sacty harvests sweet potatoes and lays them out to dry. After many hours in the burning sun, she is exhausted on the journey home. Her back aches and her arms feel heavy as lead. Her hands are black with earth, and covered in blisters. Still, she can't get to sleep that night. She lies still as a statue on the floor, listening to her sister's breathing slowing down. Once Sacty is sure everyone is sleeping, she finally allows herself to cry, in silence, so she doesn't wake anyone.

#### Where is Sacty?

At first, the teachers think Sacty is ill. But after a few days without hearing anything from one of their most

gifted students, they ask her classmates.

"She has quit school," says one girl.

"She works with her mother and sister now," explains another.



#### Sacty, 14

**Likes:** Reading school books and stories.

**Sad when:** People tease me for not having a dad.

**Scared of:** Being forced to quit school. And crocodiles!

**Favourite food:** Sour soup with chilli.

**Wants:** To be able to use a computer.

**Wants to be:** A teacher or doctor.

One of the young teachers, Srey Leap, has another important job alongside her work as a teacher. She works for Room to Read as a social mobilizer for the poorest girls. Srey Leap knows that Sacty's family are struggling, and she suspects that Sacty

has been forced to quit school. She asks the head-teacher to arrange a meeting with the village leader from the floating village. They need everyone to get involved, to make sure Sacty can return to school before it's too late.

The village elder is an

## The floating villages

Almost everyone who lives in Kompong Phluk, the floating village, fishes. The village is on the edge of Tonle Sap Lake, one of the world's largest freshwater lakes. When the water is at its lowest point, in May, the lake shrinks to an area of 250,000 hectares. When the monsoon rains come in June, the water levels in the Mekong River rise, and the Tonle Sap River flows into the lake and widens it to cover over 1 million hectares.

Sometimes when the weather is rainy and stormy, the water level rises so high that the houses become flooded. The houses fill up with water and any villagers who can afford it raise the level of their floor. They move all their belongings up high, and sleep in hammocks near the ceiling. Others who own large boats move into their boats until the water levels recede. The poorest people, like Sacty's family, have neither big boats nor money to raise their floors. Their homes and everything they own gets destroyed and they have nowhere to live until they have managed to build a new house.





### Better by boat

During the low water season, Sacty walks to school. It takes over an hour, and the path is made slippery by mud. During the high water season, she travels by boat. It's much faster that way.



Sacty's mother is proud of having such a clever daughter.

important source of support for the school and Room to Read. If he asks the family to reconsider their decision, there is a chance they will change their minds.

The village leader, the headteacher of the school and Srey Leap visit Sacty's mother when she's alone at home. They ask why Sacty isn't in school.

"It's too expensive to buy the uniform, materials, and pay school fees. I really want her to get an education, but it's impossible," her mother explains.

The village elder talks about how important education is. And Srey Leap says that Room to Read can help Sacty.

"She can get a scholarship to pay her school fees and

almost all her costs. But only if her family members will promise to support Sacty in her studies. And there's no time to lose. If she misses the exam, she'll have to repeat the year. In that case there is a major risk that she'll never come back.

Her mother promises to think it over. She doesn't tell Sacty that she's had visitors.

For the next few nights, it is Sacty's mother who has trouble sleeping.

### Exam day

One morning when Sacty boards the truck, she feels even sadder than usual. She knows that this afternoon, her friends are going to do the entry exam for Year 7. When they climb down at the field, Sacty's mother turns to her suddenly.

"Is it too late? Have you missed the exam?"



## Room to Read focuses on girls

In Kompong Phluk, girls sometimes have to quit school around the age of 12. Their parents can't afford the school fees, uniforms and materials. Instead, they want their daughters' help with housework, fishing and farming. Some girls are also sent to the big cities to work as maids or street sellers. Once they get there, some fall victim to traffickers.

So far, 80 girls in Kompong Phluk have received scholarships and support from Room to Read. In Cambodia as a whole, over 2,000 girls have been helped. This has meant a lot to them and their families. And what's more, they become role models for their friends, both girls and boys. The support exists for the poorest girls who are very motivated to study. Their parents have to sign a contract, promising to support their daughter in her studies.





# We take care of our school and our village!

Sacty and the other students help to support the school, for example by:



↑ Weeding and planting vegetables and spices like chilli, pumpkin and mint. They then sell the vegetables at the market.

→ Gathering wood

← Digging pools to collect rainwater. It is used in lots of ways, for example, to water the school vegetable patch.



→ “No, there’s still time, a few hours,” says Sacty, surprised.

“I’ve decided,” says her mother. “You’re going back to school!”

Before Sacty has a chance to grasp what’s going on, her mother has run out onto the road and hailed a motorcycle taxi. She shouts to the driver to get Sacty to school as fast as he can.

Sacty arrives at the last minute and everyone is astonished and delighted to see her. She feels nervous when the exam paper is laid on the desk in front of her. Will she be able to pass the test after missing so many lessons?

Two days later she finds out the answer. Sacty has answered every question correctly, and she can start Year 7! The minute she gets home she shares her good news. Her mother is pleased and proud.



Sacty does her homework in the only room in the house.

“That’s wonderful,” she says. “Don’t be ignorant like me. I want you to learn things.”

## Sacty’s speech

International Women’s Day is celebrated on the 8th of March every year, all over the world. Sacty’s school is organising a big party for

girls’ rights, together with Room to Read. The whole village is invited, as well as journalists and guests of honour from the city.

The headteacher has asked Sacty to share her story. When the day arrives, she is standing beside the stage, clutching the paper her

speech is written on tightly. She’s shaking and feels sick. Her heart feels like it’s going to jump out of her chest, and when she hears her name it feels impossible to climb the few steps onto the stage. But all of a sudden there she is, standing with a microphone in her hand.

When Sacty begins to speak the room is so quiet you could hear a pin drop. The tears begin to roll down her cheeks, but she carries on.

“I have never met my own father. I often feel alone and abandoned and my family struggle to survive. That’s why I had to give up my education. But thanks to my teachers and Room to Read, I have been given the chance to continue my schooling. Education is the most important thing of all. When I was forced to quit school and work in the fields, I missed





↑ Pumping water from the river for dishes, cleaning and laundry.



school so much. I thought my life was over.”

### A better future

As Sacty comes to the end of her speech, almost everyone in the audience is crying too. The other students, her friends, and their parents. Even the headteacher, the village leader, the journalists and the important politicians from the city are drying their eyes.

“If I manage to complete my education and become a teacher, I plan to return to the village where I was born and pass on my knowledge to other children,” concludes Sacty. The applause is loud and long, and everyone is smiling. Her mother runs up and hugs her.

“I had no idea you could speak so beautifully, and in front of so many strangers,” she says. “I am so happy to

have such a clever child!”

Many other parents come forward too, to thank her and praise her.

“You really are brave,” says one mother.

Sacty hopes that she has inspired many other parents to allow their daughters to complete their schooling. With support from Room to Read, Sacty hopes to be able to graduate from Year 12, and then study to become a teacher. But she is always afraid of being forced to quit school.

“My grandfather keeps nagging me, saying that I should quit school and start working again, but my mother refuses. I don’t have a father, but my mother is strong and takes care of me so that I can get an education. I’m going to build a better future for me and my whole family!” 🌐



## Life skills for the future

Sacty and the other girls go home early in the afternoon to make lunch and take care of their younger siblings. A couple of afternoons a week they return to school in their ordinary clothes, to get help with their homework and learn life skills!

Life skills is about everything from how to cope with stress and everyday worries, to how to look after your health and your money, to how to think critically, make decisions and plan for the future.

“We learn lots of useful things that help me every day,” says Sacty. “I am much more confident now and I can express my opinion. We learn about our rights and how to protect ourselves from danger. My mother and other adults in the village smoke a lot. At life skills classes we’ve learned how dangerous that is. I’m afraid that my mother is going to die from one of those dangerous diseases that are caused by smoking. That’s why I’m trying to get her to quit smoking!”

### Classes with singing and music

There is a lot of singing, music and games at life skills classes. Porath, 15, loves singing.

“My favourite song is a sad one,” she says. “It’s all about how we who live in Kompong Phluk are poor, and how we suffer when there is a forest fire. We use camping stoves and open fires, so fires do start easily. Whole villages can be destroyed, because there are no roads for fire engines to reach us. I remember a fire once. We threw together all the belongings we could carry and gathered by the river. Everyone was prepared to jump into the boats and flee if the fire came too close. We could smell the smoke and feel the heat, but we were OK in the end.

The girls in the class often ask Porath to sing the sad song.

“They clap and cheer when I sing. It feels so nice!”



Porath



# Srey Leap is girls' advocate

"I know what the girls in Kompong Phluk need, because I am one of them myself," says Srey Leap. She grew up in the floating village and dreamed of becoming a teacher. But when she turned twelve, Srey Leap's mother told her she had to quit school.

**M**y mother saw how other children worked and gave their parents money. She saw other girls get married, and she wanted me to find a husband too. My father understood that I could have a better life if I got an education. But they couldn't afford it."

At the last minute, when it was almost too late, Srey Leap got help. She became one of the first girls in the floating village to get a Room to Read scholarship.

"Room to Read helped us pay for school fees and materials so that I could finish secondary school. They also helped my mother realise that education is important.

Now Srey Leap works for Room to Read as a social mobilizer for girls in the floating village.

"They are shy at first, but then their confidence grows. The more life skills they learn, the more they are able to stand up for themselves and their friends. Sometimes the parents chase me away at first. But things get better. One mother recently told me: 'My daughter is Room to Read's daughter too now, because you take such good care of her.'"

## Wants to be the village teacher

Srey Leap has filled in as a teacher in the village school, although she has only just finished high school. But soon she's going to start her teacher training degree in the city.

"It is really hard to get teachers for the floating village school. Most teachers come from the big cities, and don't like being in a rural area. They're afraid of everything – the water, the rats, and the insects. They think it's too hot and dirty, and they can't swim or row a boat. The school board can force teachers to work here for a whole year, but after that almost all of them quit. If more of us who already live in the village train as teachers, things will be much better for the students."

Srey Leap is the person who has studied the longest in her extended family.

"I fulfilled my dream! Now I want to give other girls the same chance and be a role model for them. My mother is really proud of me. The only thing she regrets is that my older siblings didn't get the chance to continue their education." 🌐



Srey Leap helping teach Sacty's class.



This is what the school in the floating village used to look like. It didn't have space for many students, and it got destroyed by flooding every time the water levels rose.

The new school in the floating village was built by the village inhabitants and the school management, together with Room to Read. It is built on stilts to make sure it doesn't get flooded when the high water levels come.

## Room to learn!

In many poor countries, there is a major lack of child-friendly classrooms and school buildings, especially in rural areas. Room to Read works with local people to build or renovate school buildings, giving them light, airy classrooms. In Asia and Africa, Room to Read has helped to build over 1400 new schools with over 5500 classrooms, school libraries and teachers' rooms. The local people share the cost of the materials and the labour. When the school building is finished, it is owned by the village and the country's educational authorities.







◀ Rattana helps to dry the fish her family has caught every day after school. Her name means 'jewel'.



School uniform and footwear for wet and dry conditions.

Pencils, rubbers, ruler, scissors, and other stationery.

# Equipped for education!

**Rattana, 15, has received a scholarship from Room to Read which means that she can continue her education, even though her family is extremely poor.**

"I used to struggle to keep up in lessons. I often had to skip school to help my family with the household and the fishing. Now I get everything I need from Room to Read,

and I even get extra lessons. I am finally getting on well at school and my favourite subject is maths!"

Rattana's parents and older siblings earn their living by fishing. She wants to become a nurse, but her parents would prefer that she quit school after Year 9.

"I hope they change their minds," she says. "I help out at home as much as I can, although I have lots of homework. Sometimes I go fishing

with them, or take on extra work harvesting beans. I give the money to my mother. It makes her happy, and being able to help makes me happy too. But my older sister is never satisfied. She finds fault with everything I do, and she gets really angry when I have long days at school. It makes me really sad when she complains about me."



Money for school fees and extra tuition.



**This is what Rattana and her girl friends get from Room to Read:**

A bike to help them get to school.



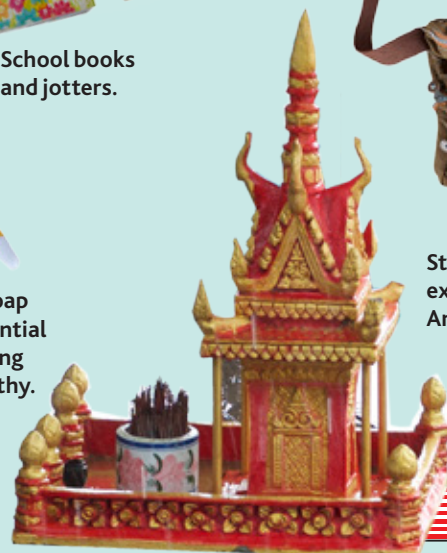
School books and jotters.



Toothbrush, soap and other essential items for staying clean and healthy.



Schoolbag.



Study trips to exciting places like Angkor Wat.

Health checks.



# Sony is leader of Friend-to-Friend Club



Sony, 13, has been elected by her friends to be one of the leaders of the school's Friend-to-Friend Club. There are clubs like this in all the Room to Read schools in Cambodia that focus on girls' education.

**W**e fight for each other and support the other girls so that they don't quit school," explains Sony, who has received a scholarship from Room to Read. "We help the others with their homework, give them good advice, and keep an eye on everyone. If someone doesn't turn up at school, we try to find out why. Sometimes we visit their home and then tell our social mobilizer from Room to Read what has happened. The Friend-to-Friend club has helped me to become more confident. In Cambodia,

fathers and sons have much more power than girls and women. I think we should have just as much influence."

## Dream office job

Sony dreams of working in an office with computers and air conditioning.

"I have never used a computer, but I have seen one at school. Computers seem to make everything easy. I came across air conditioning when I was on an outing with Room to Read and we met at a hotel. The temperature was roasting hot outside but inside it was cool. Incredible!



Sony does her homework in the light from the window, as they don't have electricity.

My home is always warm. We fan ourselves with pieces of cardboard but it doesn't help. We get so hot and really tired. In the middle of the day we lie down in hammocks in the shade under our house. Sometimes I pour a bucket of water over myself. The heat makes me feel feverish sometimes, and that means I can't go to school. It seems unfair that rich people can have cool, comfortable homes but we can't.

## Great to be able to read and write

"My parents work hard in the rice fields and my mother really wants me to go to

school so that I can have a better life," says Sony. "My parents can't read or write – they can't even write their names. People can easily trick you and take advantage of you if you can't read, write and count. If you're selling things at the market, people might give you the wrong change or trick you into selling something at the wrong price. You could lose your home if you can't read the contract. And you can't vote if you can't find out which political party is the best. If I get an education, I'll be able to help my parents more." 🌐



The Friend-to-Friend Club looks after a small garden at the school, where they have flowers and other plants.

"We grow vegetables, mangoes and cabbage too. We have fun here," says Keo, who leads the club along with Sony. Here she is in the garden with a friend from the club, Reaksa.

Firing a catapult might be fun, but it's no game. Sony fires at the birds to scare them off, so that they don't eat fruit from the family's tree.





## Keo's wardrobe

Keo, 14, has also been elected as a leader of the Friend-to-Friend club.

"I received help myself when I wanted to run away from school," says Keo. "My father had borrowed money for a kidney operation and he couldn't repay it. I could earn 2 dollars a day picking sweet potatoes, and I wanted to take the job to help my father. But my friends and Room to Read persuaded me not to give up."



## School uniform

"I got it this from Room to Read. It looks good, but it's hard to keep the shirt clean and white in all the mud."

## Sleepwear

"I sleep in a t-shirt and a cotton sarong. The best sarongs are made of silk, but I can't afford that."

## Casual clothes

"My most comfortable clothes. They're practical for work and household chores."



Peng believes girls and boys should be treated equally.

# Peng plays mud football

In the floating village of Kampong Phluk, you can only play football when the water subsides. During the dry season, areas emerge that are usually covered by water. When heavy rains fall in the afternoon, the ground turns into a quagmire, but that doesn't stop Peng, 14, and his friends from playing football after school.

**T**he mud is sticky and slippery. It sticks to your feet and gives you 'elephant feet' in a matter of seconds.

"The mud can be annoying, but it can also be fun if you're in the right mood," says Peng, laughing. Today it happens to be all boys who are playing, but Peng thinks it's completely normal for girls to play too.

"Of course there are some differences between girls and boys," he says. "Like boys are often stronger, and girls have babies when they grow up. But that doesn't mean that there should be any differences in girls' and boys' rights. For example, it's important that girls have the same right as boys to go to school."

Sometimes the boys in the school think it's a shame that they can't get a scholarship from Room to Read. They too come from

poor families that find it hard to make ends meet if they have to pay all the school costs.

"But we know that it's a lot harder for girls to get an education in Cambodia, so we understand," says Peng.

## Important for all

Having an education is particularly important when you settle down and have children, Peng believes.

"After all, both parents have to be able to take care of the family. When I get married I want my wife to have a good education so that we can share the responsibility

fairly. We need to be able to make important decisions together. I also plan to make sure my children understand how important it is to go to school. It's important for them, and for the whole country. That way our society can make progress and develop in a good way.

Peng has three older sisters who have already moved out of the family home.

"I know that they had to help out at home much more when they were my age. I have to help out a bit, but I've probably had more time to play than they ever had!" ☺

After school, Peng and his friends play football. There's no point in even trying to avoid getting wet and muddy. Soon the whole team look like clay figures.







### 05:30 Mosquito-free dreams

The sisters sleep together under a pink net. The nights are hot and humid, and those are the perfect conditions for mosquitoes.



# Home



6:00

Channy fetches water for the girls to wash and make breakfast. Any that is left over is used to water the vegetable patch.



Channys mum and dad.

Channy, 12, and her two sisters live in a small, square, one-roomed house with a tin roof. Their parents have gone to the neighbouring country of Thailand to find work. There are no jobs in Channy's small village.

"They are going to be away for at least a year, and will send money home. I miss them so much," says Channy. "The evenings are the worst time of day, because that's when they used to sing for us, and that made it easier to fall asleep."

### 11:00 Queue for the library

As she walks into the library, Channy picks up a red straw and puts it in a bowl. The boy behind her takes a green one. Room to Read want to make sure that girls and boys are able to spend equal amounts of time in the library. Every day the librarian counts the straws and writes down the result.



### 7:00 Hurrying to school

Her big sister has gone to work, and Channy is giving her little sister a lift to school on the back of the bike.



### 11:15 Finding the right book

"I look at the front covers, read the back, and borrow books that seem funny and exciting. One day I want to write a book of my own. It's going to be about my family."





# alone



## 2:30 Hungry!

Channy cooks a meal for herself and her little sister.



## 5:00 Battery-powered TV

Several of the neighbouring children usually pop in to watch TV at Channy's house. The picture is fuzzy and keeps freezing, but the programme is exciting nonetheless. The TV is powered by a car battery. Every week, the sisters lug the heavy battery into the village to charge it.



## 4:00 Water for the ancestors

Almost everyone in Cambodia has a small 'spirit shrine' in the garden. Channy lights an incense stick and fills a bowl with water for her ancestors, who protect the family.



## 7:00 Swinging homework

Channy does her homework in the hammock. Sometimes she reads aloud from a library book for her little sister before bedtime.



## 9:00 Missing her parents

Channy misses her mother and father the most at bedtime, when it's dark.

# Thim wants to be a librarian

THIM, 12, lives with his grandmother. His mother has a mental illness and can't take care of him. The other children used to tease him, and Thim struggled to concentrate in school. But thanks to the librarian, who encouraged him to read books, Thim is now one of the top students in the school. He is confident, and can defend himself against other children's taunts.

Thim is the youngest of five sib-

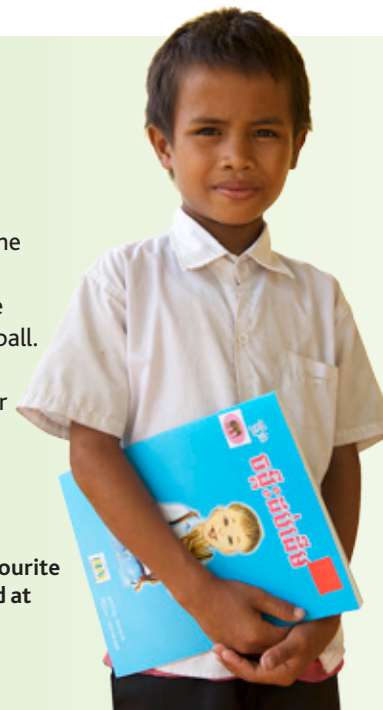
lings. Sometimes the others think Thim should quit school and start working.

"I explain that it's important to be able to read and write. Otherwise you can easily be tricked, in shops or by bad people. People who can't read and write are trapped in poverty, they can't do anything with their lives. It makes me sad when I can't afford to eat, or when I don't have time to play because I have to work."

When Thim gets home from school, he cooks rice, washes the dishes and chops wood.

"If I have any spare time I like playing shuttlecock and volleyball. I want to become a doctor, and help people like my mother to get better. Or even better, I could be a librarian! Reading books makes me happy."

"Reading is my favourite thing, and I'm good at it," says Thim, 12.







# Play good for the brain!

John Wood and Room to Read believe that children who are well and have fun learn better. Playing games is good for the brain, and laughing is never a bad thing. Here are a few of the games that the children in Cambodia play at break times.



## The rubber band game

Split up into two teams. Everyone gets a straw or a paper tube and each team stands in a line. Each team gets a rubber band, and the idea is to pass the rubber band from one team member to another without using your hands. The winning team is first to get the rubber band from the first team member's tube to the last!

## Monster, lady or monk?

Two people or two teams can do several rounds, for example, best of five. This is how to play if there are two of you: Secretly choose to be one of three characters: a monster, a lady or a monk. The monster should look scary, with hands like claws and a terrible grimace. The lady should be beautiful, with an elegant pointing finger. The monk should make a Buddhist pose. On the signal, you make your face and gesture. The monster beats the lady, the lady beats the monk and the monk beats the monster. If you both choose the same character then that round is a draw!



Lady and monk.



Monster and lady.



Lady



Monster



Monk

# Pochey uses h



The krama, a woven length of cotton or silk, has been used in Cambodia for hundreds of years. Pochey, 16, can use hers for everything from carrying schoolbooks to swatting flies. There are actually at least 60 uses for a krama!

Pochey is the only member of her family who goes to school.

"They think education is pointless. My big sister told me: 'the more you learn, the crazier you get'. She might be right. But I still dream of becoming a teacher or a nurse. If I manage, I can help my family more."

Pochey lives with her grandmother. She has always encouraged Pochey to go to school, and has helped her pay the school fees.

"My grandmother is a medium. People pay her to contact the spirit world and to tell their fortunes. Without her help I would have had to quit a long time ago," says Pochey.



Belt



## Headdress

Pochey can wind the krama round her head in many different ways to make a beautiful head covering.



## Cooling down

Put a soaking wet krama on your head when the weather's hot, and it'll cool you right down.



## Fly swatter

Pochey lives near the river. During the rainy season, the water rises right to her door, and the mosquitoes and flies love the water. Kramas are useful for swatting flies.



# er 'krama' for everything



Kramas come in all sizes and patterns. The red and white checked cotton krama is a classic.



## Doll

If you can't afford ordinary toys it's easy to make a krama doll.



## Head support

The krama helps you to balance things on your head.



## Towel

Pochey goes to the river to wash herself and the family's clothes. She likes swimming and playing hide-and-seek in the river too.



## Oven glove, apron and dishtowel

Pochey helps her grandmother to cook in the kitchen under the house. She cooks over an open fire, so it gets pretty hot and sweaty. Pochey is using the krama to wipe her face.

Right now her grandmother is in hospital. Pochey's parents have gone to Thailand to work and earn money to cover the hospital bills and the cost of an operation. Pochey is even more worried about the future now.

"Often I don't eat all day, because I can't afford food."

Now, a scholarship from Room to Read covers some of Pochey's expenses.

"My parents are happy about that, but they still think I should leave school soon. They want to buy me a little cart so that I can sell bread and biscuits at the roadside. That makes me so sad. I hope Room to Read can persuade my parents to change their minds."



## Dress or skirt

### Bag

It's easy to make a krama into a bag for carrying books or food. Here, Pochey has wound her krama around a tray of fruit and biscuits, which she is giving to the monks in the Buddhist temple as an offering.



## Rest

A krama can become a hammock for young children, or a blanket or pillow for older ones.



## Protection

A krama protects you from the baking hot sun, but also from dust, wind, cold and rain.





**Why has  
Indira been  
nominated?**

Child Rights Hero Nominee • Pages 68–85

# Indira Ranamagar

**Indira Ranamagar has been nominated for the 2014 World's Children's Prize for her 20-year struggle for prisoners' children in Nepal.**

Indira grew up in extreme poverty and had to fight to be able to go to school. Even as a young girl she knew that she wanted to help other people who had hard lives.

Indira has built up an organisation called Prisoners Assistance Nepal (PA), which has rescued over a thousand children from cramped, dirty prisons. The children end up there because their parents have been sentenced to time in prison and nobody else is able to take care of them. When Indira rescues children, they are taken to one of PA's three children's homes. There they get an education and a safe childhood. They also learn agricultural skills and how to take care of animals. PA runs a children's home called Jankuri outside Kathmandu. Children from the surrounding villages are allowed to attend the school too.

Indira lobbies politicians and authorities to make prisons more humane. Many prisoners come from very poor families. Indira and PA teach them to read and write, so that they can manage better, and take better care of their children when they are released from prison.



## Jungle girl's stubborn school struggle

**Indira's feet slip in the mud on the narrow path between the rice fields. She is six years old. Naked and barefoot, she gathers firewood in a big basket on her back.**

**Two older girls walk towards Indira on the path. They are wearing blue school uniforms and their hair is in long, shiny plaits. When they get to Indira on the narrow path they push her and she falls over. The girls laugh loudly and walk on.**

**I**ndira gathers the firewood up again. She is in pain.

But it isn't the cuts on her feet that hurt – the ones she gets from walking barefoot on soil and stones. It's something else, something inside,

that is hurting her and making her cry.

All day, she has been running around the village as usual, helping everyone. Fetching water and wood. Taking cows and goats into

the jungle to graze. Searching for edible mushrooms and roots to take home. She even found two crabs in the river, and lit a fire and cooked them.

Indira knows it's important to work hard. Not to be lazy. She likes working and learning new things. People in the village rarely call her Indira. She has two other names instead. One is Kanchi, or little one, since she is the youngest child in the Magar family. The other name is Niguri, which is the name of a jungle fruit that is covered in curly hair. Indira has a shock of wild, wavy hair on her head. She's the only person in the village with





wavy hair, so she is a bit different. Here, hair is meant to be straight and smooth and easy to tie back in shiny plaits. Indira doesn't like being called Niguri, but she tries not to let it get to her.

### **Sleeping with the cows**

She doesn't see her mother and father during the day. They work for other people in the fields, to support the family. When they come home in the evening, they often find Indira among the cows, where she likes to sleep.

"Kanchi," sighs her mother, "now let's go home and wash off the cow poo again."

The family have a simple house on stilts. It only has walls on two sides, so it's wide

open straight through. The floor is covered with old rice sacks.

For dinner they eat rice. Almost always rice, but now and again Indira's mother brings a few soya beans from the field. She hides them in her clothes.

Indira's two older brothers go to school. She wants to go too. She wants to learn to read and write, and wear a lovely school uniform. At the moment all she wears is a tunic made from prickly sackcloth.

Indira nags and nags and prays to God. But there isn't enough money. And she is a girl. There's no point in paying for schooling for girls, since all they do is get married and look after children anyway.

Instead, Indira hangs over her brother's shoulder while he's doing his homework. And she begs and begs and begs. He gets annoyed, but she keeps asking. Finally, he gives in and starts to teach her letters and numbers.

Indira learns fast. She repeats everything, and writes letters in the sand. The brothers also teach some of the adults in the village at home, and Indira listens intently while chopping vegetables or cooking rice. He reads out stories of famous men and women in history, who have done good things for others. Indira absorbs everything, and forgets nothing. Now she knows that she wants to be a person who helps others.

By the time she is ten years old, Indira can read and write, and she knows that she can learn almost anything.

### **"Of course I can!"**

Nobody can tell Indira that there are some things she just can't do because she's a girl. Like ploughing the fields, for example.

"Of course I can!" says Indira, and pulls the plough just as well as the strong boys. She draws strength from her pure stubbornness and often turns out to be even stronger than the older boys. She beats them at football.

A teacher has heard about Indira, and persuades her parents to allow her to start school. Her brother saves up for her school fees by selling bananas. The teacher thinks she should start in Year 4. Indira doesn't agree. Year 5 suits her much better, so it is decided. But there is no money for a school uniform or school-bag. Indira just wears her tunic.

That remains her school uniform throughout her years at school. They can't even afford pens or crayons. She has to strain to remember everything that the teacher shows them on the chalkboard, and as soon as they get a break she sits down on the ground and writes everything in the sand from memory. That's why she never has time to play with the other children. At lunchtime she has to run home and move the animals to a different pasture. She has to do that every morning, lunchtime, and evening.

Indira gets on well at school. She is particularly gifted at maths. Within a year, Indira is the best in the class and she gets a scholarship. And she has much higher grades than those two girls who pushed her over. She forgave them a long time ago. But she will never excuse injustice. ☹

## **The first photographs of Indira**







## Indira wasn't allowed in the kitchen

Indira didn't have many friends at school. She was poorer than most, and belonged to a lower caste than the other children. The caste system was banned in Nepal a long time ago, but it still exists nonetheless. People are divided into different groups, called castes. People who belong to the lowest castes are often treated badly.

"One time I went to a girl's house," says Indira. "Then her mother came and told me I must not go into the kitchen. Since I belonged to a lower caste she thought I was 'unclean', dirty, and I wasn't to touch anything to do with food or the kitchen. It felt so horribly unjust. It made me both sad and angry."

In a caste system, there are loads of rules that affect people's lives. What jobs they are allowed to do, for example, or who they can marry. As soon as you are born you belong to a caste, a group, which has either high or low value. If you are born into a low caste, you belong to it for your whole life, and you can never move to a 'better' caste.

There are people who are born with no caste at all. According to the old way of thinking, casteless people are worthless. They are extremely poor and have jobs like emptying toilets, or sorting waste. They often have to beg to survive, and are also called 'the untouchables' because they are seen as unclean. They are not allowed to drink from the same wells as others, or eat at the same tables.



When Indira comes to prison with the children to visit, the mums have made food for the children and they eat together.

# Indira wants to help

Wherever Indira Ranamagar goes, people recognise her.

"*Namaste Aama*," they say, which means 'good day, mother'. Street children, politicians, and rich businessmen. They know that she rescues poor children from prisons.

When she approaches in her shining white sari, it's hard to believe that Indira once ran around naked in the jungle. That she once couldn't read or write. But Indira herself will never forget the poverty of her childhood. That's what drives her to help others.

When Indira was seventeen, she left her village to continue her education in the capital city, Kathmandu. She worked hard doing other people's cleaning and laundry, so that she could afford to go to school. She also worked as a

teacher. At one school, Indira met Parijat, a well-known author who wrote a lot about human rights. Parijat thought it was wrong that people were put in prison for protesting against the injustices in society. She also wrote about how bad the conditions were for prisoners, and visited prisons to give out food and clothing.

Then Parijat asked Indira to start working with her.

"I was scared the first time I went into a prison," says Indira. "I thought the prisoners were dangerous, but I realised that they were people, just like the rest of us. Most of them were extremely poor and couldn't read or write."

Indira began visiting prisons every weekend when she didn't have school. She ran courses to teach people to read and write, and she donated clothes and food. She was shocked that so many children had to live with their parents in the dirty, cramped prisons.

### Wants to help others

One day, Parijat asked Indira what she wanted to do with her life.

"I want to help others," replied Indira. "Especially those who are as poor as I once was."







Dad's cell.

Waiting for dad.

Bye dad!

Here he is!

Indira has come along with two brothers so they can visit their dad in prison.



# the poor

"It's a terrible environment for children," says Indira.

She tried to find places for the children at various children's homes, but it was hard. The children's homes were also overcrowded with poor children.

## The first child

Indira is twenty years old, and on the way to visit a prison as usual. At the prison gate she stops dead. There is a

child lying there, sleeping. It's a little girl who is going to change Indira's life.

The girl is three years old and her name is Anjali. Her father has just been put in prison and her mother is dead. Anjali curled up and went to sleep outside the prison to be as close to her father as possible. She doesn't have anyone else.

Indira, who has already helped so many children to move from prison to different

children's homes, tries to find a place for Anjali. But nobody has space for the girl.

Indira decides to take care of Anjali herself. She is also disappointed with the children's homes. They rarely give the children the love and care they need. Indira has realised that the prison children need even more love and security, since they have often been through bad experiences. If they have been in prison for a

long time, it also delays their development. Indira studies at secondary school, and Anjali comes with her to her lessons.

Anjali makes Indira work in a different way. Instead of rescuing children from prisons and taking them to children's homes, she starts to take care of more and more children herself. Eventually, she has so many children that she has to start her own children's home. Later, she

Indira with her daughter Subani, and Anjali, the first girl she took care of.



## "Choose me or the children"

When Indira had three children from prisons that she took care of herself, she met a man and they fell in love. They got together, and they had a daughter called Subani. Indira continued her work at the prisons, and sometimes Subani came with her.

Her husband thought she spent too much time on the prison children. And that there were too many children in the house.

"You have to choose now," he said. "It's me or the children."

"It wasn't a difficult decision," says Indira. "He had no respect for my work. So I realised that he didn't really love me. I chose the children, of course."





→ starts schools and farms all over Nepal. Today, it is 22 years since Indira found that little girl sleeping outside the prison gates. Anjali is an adult now, with a family of her own. Indira has managed to save over a thousand children from prisons, giving them a safe childhood and an education. 🌐



At Indira's children's home, the children are encouraged to get plenty of exercise.



Many people in Nepal used to think that girls shouldn't cycle. Indira ignored that.



## Girls shouldn't cycle? Forget it!

Indira is not only known for rescuing children from prisons, but also as the first woman to compete in mountain bike championships in Nepal. When she started cycling, lots of people thought girls shouldn't cycle at all. But Indira ignored that. She

thought it was fun. And good exercise. She has won lots of competitions and inspired other girls to start competing. Now it's much more common to see girls on bikes in Nepal. Several of Indira's children's homes have mountain biking courses for the

children. Indira believes it's important for children to use their bodies and get exercise – cycling, running, and swimming.

"When your physical fitness improves, your confidence grows with it."



Indira and Subani.

## Subani's hundreds of little brothers and sisters

Subani, 17, is Indira's biological daughter. She has grown up with several hundred younger brothers and sisters.

"I've never felt jealous of the other children," she says. "They feel like my real siblings. Of course I sometimes wish I had more time with my mother, but I understand her work and I am so very proud of her. Wherever we go, people praise her."



Indira's daughter Subani loves playing for the children in the children's home.





All the children come running down from the children's home to meet Indira, who gives them all a hug.

## All children have light inside them

"I called the children's home outside Kathmandu Junkiri, which means firefly," explains Indira.

"When I was a child, I always followed them. I felt that every being, every person, every creature that is alive has light inside it. We have to find that light in every child! That's what we do here. That's why we called it Junkiri."



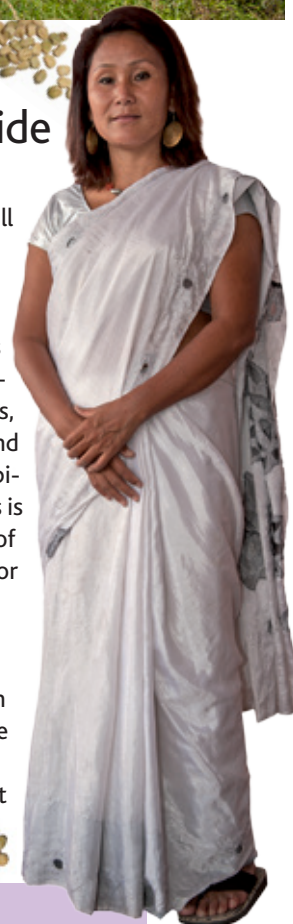
The children at the children's home and school wash their own clothes.



## Grow your own with pride

There are animals and vegetable patches at all of Indira's children's homes.

"Animals and nature are good for you," says Indira. "When the children get to tend animals, they grow as people and learn to take responsibility. And to grow crops is to grasp the meaning of life. It instills respect for nature. The children discover that they can sow a tiny seed and make it grow, and then their vegetables will be enjoyed by everyone. 'I grew this!' It's a great feeling."



## The worst ones walk free

The people who are actually in prison are not the worst offenders," says Indira. "Most of them are poor people who have perhaps stolen food to survive. They might also have been talked into committing a crime for someone else, in return for money.

Poverty is the real villain. The other criminals, the ones that earn money from dodgy deals and take advantage of people, they always walk free.

"I am so incredibly angry that this happens in my country! Nepal has so many resources, and wonderful people. We could become a fantastic country if we all played our part."

## Indira and Prisoners Assistance

- Run three children's homes, two schools, and youth programs on organic agriculture, arts and crafts, and more.
- Support girls in villages to enable them to go to school. They are also given bikes, since they often have a long journey to get to school.
- Search for relatives and support them to take care of the children.
- Make sure that children get a chance to visit their parents in prison.
- Run programs allowing children to go to school during the day and stay with their mothers in prison at night. They also educate mothers in prison up to Year 5 level and give them vocational training.
- Support prisoners who have been released, so that they can be reunited with their children.
- Speak out for the weakest in society and fight for prisoners – especially women and their children – to be treated in a fair and humane way.



Boys at Indira's children's home clean out a water tank.







"When you're painting a thangka you have to concentrate very hard," says Nima. "If you're not concentrating you might as well go home, or so says our teacher."

Nima a few years ago, when he had been living at Indira's children's home for several years.



# Nima

Nima's world is a dark concrete courtyard surrounded by high walls. A building on one side has a series of narrow openings. It's an old stable, which now houses ten prisoners in every stall. Nima knows there is another world outside the walls, but he can't remember what it looks like.

When Nima is two years old, his mother dies. The only person who can take care of him is his father. But he is in prison. Nima is taken from his home village to his father, in prison in the capital city, Kathmandu.

Many other children live with their parents in prison. The children play with one another. They make balls out of old socks, and play volley-



**Nima Rima, 15**

**Wants to be:** An engineer.

**Hobby:** Drawing.

**Favourite reading:** Science magazines.

**Favourite film:** Spiderman.

**Likes:** Doing new things.

**Makes me angry:** When people don't return things they have borrowed.



# grew up in prison

ball and football. But Nima rarely joins in. He likes watching the men play chess and he loves drawing.

He draws and draws, but he is never satisfied with his drawings. He always throws them out and starts again. His drawings are dark. Black and grey, sometimes with a splash of red that looks like blood.

## Years in prison

The prisoners receive food rations from the guards, and each one cooks their own food on a camping stove. Breakfast is a slice of bread or a biscuit. Dinner is almost always just rice. But once a week they get some vegetable curry with their rice.

During the day Nima's father and the other prisoners make hats. The children often have some kind of lessons for a few hours during the day. But Nima isn't that interested. He

often sits and wonders what is outside the walls. He hears noises from outside, but he doesn't know what is making them. In prison all the days look the same. Days become weeks and months, and eventually, several years.

But Nima knows that there are times when all the prisoners are happy and there is almost a party atmosphere when a certain woman comes to visit. She brings food and fruit, and sometimes clothes for Nima and the other children.

The woman's name is Indira Ranamagar, and she is teaching the prisoners to read and write. She reads them newspapers, and tells them that they and their children have rights, even though they are in prison.

## A new world

When Nima is five, he falls ill

with a high fever. The prison doctors don't have any medicine and his father is really worried.

It's dangerous for Nima to live in the prison now. It's cramped and dirty, and everyone sleeps so close together. Bacteria spread quickly and it can be hard to recover from illness. The next time Indira visits, Nima's father asks her for help. She agrees that Nima

needs to get to a proper hospital straight away.

"When Nima is well again, he could come to my children's home and start school," she suggests. Both Nima and his father think this is a great idea.

When Indira takes Nima by the hand and leads him out of the high walls through the heavy iron gates, a whole new world opens up before him. Nima has no memory of life outside prison. It's a world that moves too fast. That flickers, twinkles, rumbles, beeps and howls.

## What is a chair?

"I was terrified," says Nima. "How do those cars move? Everything moved so fast.

And there were people everywhere, and shops, and bikes."

"And colours! I had never seen so many colours before. It made me giddy."



# "Thangka painting helps my school work"

Painting thangkas is an old Nepali and Tibetan art form. It exists in both Buddhism and Hinduism. The paintings are of stories, packed full of details and symbols. It takes many years to become a good thangka painter. You have to work slowly, and remain completely focused. Nima is an apprentice at the moment, learning the art form with a thangka master.

"He can tell immediately if I'm not focusing," says Nima. "He says 'If you're not concentrating, you might as well go home now'. When you're painting a thangka, that is all there is. There is nothing beyond that, nothing to distract you."

"Painting has made a big difference to my school work. I find it easier to concentrate. For example, when I'm working on maths, maths is all there is. I don't get distracted."



"Nima, who is sitting in the middle, spent the first five years of his life living in a prison. When he came to Indira's children's home he loved drawing, and now he's learning to become a thangka painter."





Nima, in the middle at the front, a few years after he came to Indira's children's home. He is grateful to Indira for rescuing him from the prison.



Nima draws whenever he gets the chance.

Nima grasps Indira's hand tightly all the way, and asks her about everything he sees.

At the hospital, Nima sees a doctor and gets some medicine. He stays in hospital for a few weeks. When he is better he moves to Indira's children's home and finds lots more children who Indira has saved from prison.

"When I got there I saw

rugs and furniture that I'd never seen before," explains Nima. "I pointed at a strange object and Indira explained that it was a chair. For sitting on. I thought it was so big! Imagine that, never having seen a chair before. And I remember getting to taste mango. I had never tasted it before. It was the most delicious thing I had ever eaten!"

For the first time in several years, Nima was no longer a prisoner.

"I got a bed of my own! And I could go wherever I wanted to. Even outside."

### Ablaze with colour

Now Nima is 15 and is interested in mechanical engineering. He has moved to a house in a city near Kathmandu, where Indira runs two homes for young people – one for girls and one for boys. They learn to be independent and to do all their practical chores. In the evenings they take it in turns to cook dinner.

In the mornings the young people attend school and in the afternoons they learn different handicraft skills. Some learn wood carving and ceramics. Nima is learning to paint traditional Nepali paintings known as 'thangka' paintings.

He still loves drawing and painting, but now his paintings are ablaze with colour.

"I'm so happy now," he says. "I go to school and I have a big family. Indira is like a mother to me."

Nima's dream is to become an engineer. He laughs.

"Now I know that it's petrol that makes cars move forwards, and that the TV doesn't have people sitting inside it!"



Thangka painting is an old Nepali art form. The paintings have many details and symbols.



The young people get the chance to learn long-established handicraft skills like wood carving. Indira has shown that girls can become wood carvers. In the past only boys did that.





# Roshani

## moves from prison to Indira's children's home

It's Roshani's first night sleeping on the street. She holds her breath, listening. What's that sound? It's only a few hours since the police banged on the door of Roshani's home. They took her mother and father.

**T**he police said that her mother and father were going to prison. Roshani doesn't know why. There was nobody to take care of the children, so Roshani's two younger brothers had to go to prison with their parents.



### Roshani, 9

**Wants to be:** A nurse, and take care of sick people.

**Favourite game:** Fire and ice.  
A kind of tag.

**Favourite book:** My English book.

**Favourite film:** Don't say no.  
A romantic film.

**Likes:** Mango

**Makes me angry:** When people tease and bully others.

First Roshani ended up on the streets, then she lived with her mum in prison for a year. Finally she got to go to Indira's children's home.





Two of Roshani's little brothers got to come with her to Indira's children's home, but their youngest brother is with their mum in prison.

Roshani's neighbours were meant to take care of her. But when she gets to their door, they don't let her in. They have locked the door. She knocks and knocks. And shouts. Night falls. Shadows move in the darkness.

Threatening noises. Roshani, who is six, curls up on the pavement. Her heart is in her mouth. There are ghosts everywhere. It feels as though they are creeping around her. She can't sleep.

Then next day Roshani is still on the street. She has nowhere to go. But somebody sees her and calls the police. They pick Roshani up and take her to her mother – in jail.

### Better than living on the street

"I was so happy," explains Roshani. "All I wanted was to be with my mother and father."

At first she got to live with her mother – there were eleven people in their small cell.

"The prison officers would shout and yell at us, and it was cramped," says Roshani.

But it was still much better than living alone on the street.

A few weeks later the family were moved to another prison. Roshani's father came to the men's prison and the rest of the family to the women's prison.

"On Saturdays we were allowed to go to the men's

side and visit my father. He used to keep some of his rice for us every week."

There were lots of children to play with in the prison. The building was like a labyrinth, with stairs and small rooms everywhere. There were no doors between the rooms.

"We played hide and seek there," recalls Roshani.

### Going to school

Indira Ranamagar from Prisoners Assistance, an organisation that helps prisoners and their children, visited the prison often. She gave out food and clothes, and taught the prisoners to read and write. She also took care of children from the prison by taking them to one of her children's homes.

When Roshani and her brothers had been in prison for one year, Indira took them to her children's home outside Kathmandu. They live there now, with over seventy other children, in a large house in the countryside. They go to school and learn agricultural skills. The children also take care of the animals – 24 goats, a few dogs and one cow.

"I love being here," says Roshani, "although I do really miss my mother and father. But in a few days' time I'm going to the prison to visit them."



## Visiting mum



When Roshani visits the prison, her mother wants to look after her.



It's wonderful to see each other, but it makes you a bit sad too.





Roshani's mum does her hair.

# in prison



When Roshani visits the prison, her mother has cooked dinner for her.

Visiting time is over. The mothers call a few final words to their children.



Roshani hangs back and waits by the locked prison gate to say goodbye to her mum and little brother.



"Don't be sad Roshani," says her mother as they part. "We'll see each other again soon!"



# Joshna's first day of freedom

Joshna is five years old and has been in prison for two years. Today, she is finally getting out. Indira Ranamagar is going to take her to her home for prisoners' children.

11.00 A.M.

Indira talks to Joshna and her mother.

"I'm so happy that Joshna is getting out of here and can start school," says Joshna's mother.



1.00 P.M.

Everybody knows Indira at the central prison in Kathmandu. She has left this prison with many different children. Today, it's Joshna's turn.



## Welcome, Joshna!

The other children at the home in Kathmandu welcome Joshna. She is given a beautiful scarf. That's how you welcome someone in Nepal. It's called 'Sawagatan'.

2.00 P.M.



4.00 P.M.

At first Joshna is shy. It's a bit scary to leave her mother, and prison.



3.00 P.M.

Joshna has made a friend already – Mamita, who used to live in the same prison. There is lots to discover in the house. And you can look out the window. You couldn't do that in prison.







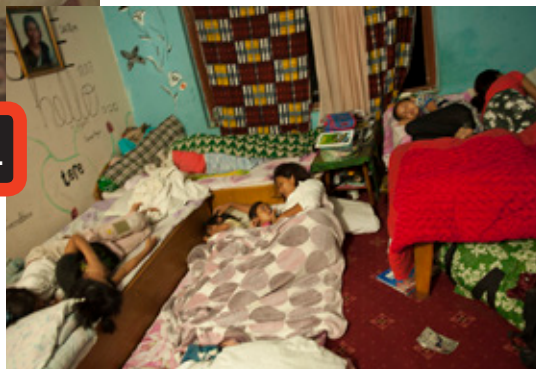
Indira and Joshna play together. There were no cuddly toys in prison.



Everyone eats their evening meal together. Large portions of rice with vegetables. Afterwards, each person washes their own plate.



Bedtime. Joshna sleeps beside her friend. Indra or one of the other adults at the children's home always sleep alongside the new children. They need to feel safe.



## Learn a greeting!

Put your hands together like Bibash, 11.

Bow your head down towards your hands.

Lift your head up and look the person you are greeting in the eyes.

Say 'Namaste' and smile.



## Reading aloud for mum

"When I visit my mother in prison, I usually read to her. She is so proud that I have learned to read! She has never been to school. I'm going to be the best in my class and then I'm going to earn money. When I'm really rich I'm going to build a big house for my mother and me."

Swastika, 12





# From prison



The boys built this house with the help of their construction tutor.



Suman immediately starts working on the farm together with the other lads, who he already knows from Indira's children's home. Today they are planting tomatoes.



Indira blows on the fire to get it going. There is no electricity here. "I want this place to be as simple and close to nature as possible," says Indira.



## The boys' crops

At Aama Paradise Home, the boys grow tomatoes, cucumber, garlic, onion, beans, mango, papaya, ginger, potatoes, bananas, turmeric, coriander, coffee, okra, jack fruit, chillies, strawberries, broccoli, cauliflower, sweet potato, cabbage, Jerusalem artichoke, aubergine, lemons, carrots, pomegranates, pears, peaches, pomelo, pineapple, corn, lychees and herbs.





# n to paradise

Suman, 18, is excited and full of high expectations. Today, he is moving to Aama Paradise Home in the jungle highlands. It's Indira's farm, where young people from prisons can learn to grow crops and look after animals.



The clouds sweep across the sky, almost touching the buildings. You can see for many miles from here. Clean water gushes in streams that have their source in the Himalaya mountain range. The water flows to the organic plantation, the wood-fuelled kitchen, and to the outdoor shower among the mango trees.

This farm is run by a group of teenage boys. Most of them have been rescued from prisons in Nepal and have grown up in one of Indira's children's homes.

Indira found Suman on the street when he was 5 years old. He lived on the street with his mother, who was an alcoholic and couldn't take care of him.

"Without Indira I wouldn't be alive today," he says. "I have a fantastic life thanks to her. And now I get to come here. It's so beautiful!"

## Sleeping under the stars

The other boys at Aama Paradise show Suman around. He knows them, because they grew up together at Indira's children's home.

After lunch it's time to plant tomatoes. An agricultural



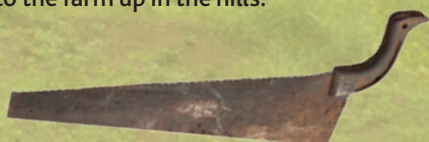
Indira found Suman on the street when he was five years old. Now he is 18 and has just moved to the farm up in the hills.



The lads get to learn how to make planks.



The bed gets a bottom and is finished. Tonight Suman will sleep outside in his bed.







Indira is cooking chicken for dinner.  
The boys love her cooking.



tutor shows how it's done, in a lesson that blends theory and practice.

There is also a carpenter on the staff, who shows the boys how to build everything from furniture to houses.

After work the boys run down to the river that flows through the valley.

Swimming there helps them cool off. They often fish in the river too.

For dinner, Indira is cooking chicken on the open fire. There is no electricity.

When it's time for bed, the boys pull their beds out into the yard. They want to sleep outside.

"I'm going to be really happy here!" says Suman, gazing up at the stars. 🌍





The boys cool off in the river after working on the plantation. They often fish here too.



## Mushroom treats snake bite

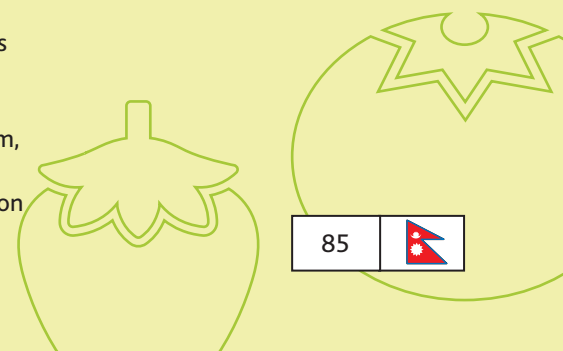
There are many plants in the jungle that can be used as medicines.

The boys in Palpa often go into the jungle to search for them. Today they have found an unusual mushroom, called a 'veiled lady mushroom'.

"If you get a snake bite, you can put this mushroom on the bite and it sucks out the poison," explains Indira.



"This root should be cooked in the embers of the fire," says Indira. "You should eat it at least once a year. It will keep you healthy." Indira and the boys found it in the jungle.





# Fight for girls!

## Join in the struggle for girls' rights

"Boys and girls should have the same rights! It is unfair that we can't go to school and have to do all the housework, while boys are allowed to study and play," says Sanjukta, 12, from India. She is one of millions of children all over the world who are less valued just because they are girls.

**T**he rights of the child apply to all children, girls and boys alike. But girls are often treated worse than boys. Half of the world's children are girls, but many more boys than girls go to school. Girls are poorer, hungrier, and more likely to fall ill than boys. They work harder, are likely to be victims of violence, and are forced to marry when they are still children themselves. It is also harder for girls everywhere to make their voices heard and be able to make decisions over their own lives.

### Girls for sale

One of the worst violations of the rights of the child is the child sex trade. Children all over the world are exploited as sex slaves and in pornography. Most victims are girls. But now girls all over the world are fighting back with the help of the World's Children's Prize! And lots of boys are helping too!

### Fighting together

From this year on, hundreds of girls are training to be World's Children's Prize Child Rights Ambassadors. Many of them have themselves experienced violence, abuse and extreme injustice. They learn about their rights and about how life is for girls in their country and all over the world. Then they help children to start their own World's Children's Prize Child Rights Clubs. In a Child Rights Club, children work together to:

- Raise awareness of the rights of the child
- Tell people what life is like for girls
- Make their voices heard
- Demand respect for the rights of the child, for boys and girls alike!

And much more!

On pages 86–113 you can read about girls' rights and about the child sex trade.

The Swedish Postcode Lottery has made it possible for the World's Children's Prize to collaborate with ECPAT Sweden to defend girls' rights and combat the child sex trade.

*I demand  
respects for  
girls' rights!*







### Certificate

"On the last day of the training, I got a certificate that shows that I am a qualified WCP ambassador for girls' rights. I was so proud! It felt important! I have put it up on my wall."

# Victory

## is an ambassador for girls' rights

"Ever since I was little I have felt that girls are treated unfairly and not valued as much as boys here. I have always wanted to do something about it, but never really known what. As a WCP Child Rights Ambassador, I finally have a chance to fight for girls' rights," says Victory, 17, in the small town of Ada on the Volta River in Ghana.

**V**ictory and her girl friends are excited. One after another they are called up to receive their certificates, showing that they are now Child Rights Ambassadors who fight for girls' rights. Finally, her turn comes.

"Victory!"

Proudly she accepts her certificate from the head of the area social welfare office.

"Your name is Victory, and I want you to win many victories in changing the lives of children," he says.

### Abused at home

Victory knows that life has to change for many poor children in Ghana. Especially for girls.

"My family is very poor. For as long as I can remember I have had to work," says Victory.

At the age of just two, she began helping her mother sell freshwater mussels at the market and taking care of the housework along with her sisters. They cooked, cleaned and washed dishes.

"My father has never loved me. But he has beaten me a



### Ambassador training

"I learned loads about the rights of the child, especially about girls' rights and the child sex trade. I felt like I was getting stronger together with the other girls."

lot. I have scars all over my body. My siblings too. I'll never forget one night when I was twelve years old and my father came home late. He woke me and told me to heat up some soup for him. I was still half asleep and a bit clumsy and by accident I

spilled a little bit of soup on him. He flew into a rage. He hit me so hard I thought I was going to die. He shouted, 'Don't you forget that there are children in graveyards! Do you want to keep them company?'"

TEXT: ANDREAS LÖNN PHOTOS: JOHAN BJERKE







## Victory, 17

**Lives:** In Ada, on the Volta River.

**Loves:** Dancing.

**Hates:** When children are treated badly.

**Best thing that's happened:** Getting to start school.

**Worst thing that's happened:** Being abused by my father.

**Wants to be:** A TV reporter.

**Dream:** To start a nursery for poor children where they get food and love.



### Became child labourer

When Victory turned fourteen her life got even harder. Her father refused to pay for her education, although he had promised that he would.

"I got a job loading mussel shells onto trucks to help the family survive, and to earn money so I could continue going to school. Every load weighs 30 kilos and you carry it on your head. It's extremely heavy work. I was much smaller when I started. I often fell ill, with exhaustion causing fever and pain all over my body. Later I had to start another job washing dishes at a restaurant at the weekends and during school holidays. My life is still the same now, and on the days when I'm carrying mussel shells I can't go to school at all."

### Girls rights

It was when Victory began having to work so hard that she started thinking lots about how girls and boys are not treated equally.

"We girls do everything in the home. The boys play football and play with their friends, and they have plenty of time and energy to do their homework. We girls have to help earn money for the family and make sure everyone

"First I sweep the yard, collect water from the river, wash the dishes and throw away the garbage. Then my sister and I collect mussels from the river. After that I get washed and eat breakfast before going to school, which starts at eight o'clock."

survives. We miss loads of time at school. Some families choose not to send their daughters to school at all. They think the only thing we can manage is hard work in the home. They think that's our role in life."

For Victory, the worst thing of all is that girls in poor families are very vulnerable.

"Sometimes girls are thrown out of their homes and forced to fend for themselves. When this happens they can easily be exploited. In exchange for food, money or a place to sleep, they end up being lured into the child sex trade. Boys would never be thrown out of their homes in that way. Sometimes our parents are tricked. People come round and say they can offer the daughter in the family a job as a cleaner, shop worker or waitress in another city. The parents are given a small amount of money and they are promised a regular cut of their daughter's future wages. But they never see any more money. Instead, the girls end up in the child sex trade."

### Becoming an ambassador

Ever since Victory started the job carrying mussel shells, she has wanted to do something to change the fact that girls





"Two days a week I load mussel shells from the river onto trucks. The drivers let us know the day before, and on those days I don't make it to school, and neither do lots of the other girls here. Every load that you carry on your head weighs around 30 kilos, and I get 10 cedis (4.5 US dollars) for a day's work."

where people talked about girls' rights. It was also the first time that anyone had been interested in hearing our stories."

#### Raising awareness

On the final day of the course, Victory and her friends were awarded certificates as proof that they are now Child Rights Ambassadors who fight for girls' rights.

are treated so much worse than boys.

"I think it's incredibly stupid and unfair. We are equals! I have always wanted to fight for a better life for us girls, but I never knew how to do it. Then the World's Children's Prize asked me and some other girls here in Ada whether

we wanted to attend a three-day training course about the rights of the child, to become ambassadors who fight for better lives for girls. 'Finally!' I said, and I signed up immediately!"

On the course, Victory learned all about the rights of the child, girls having equal

rights, the child sex trade, and the World's Children's Prize Program.

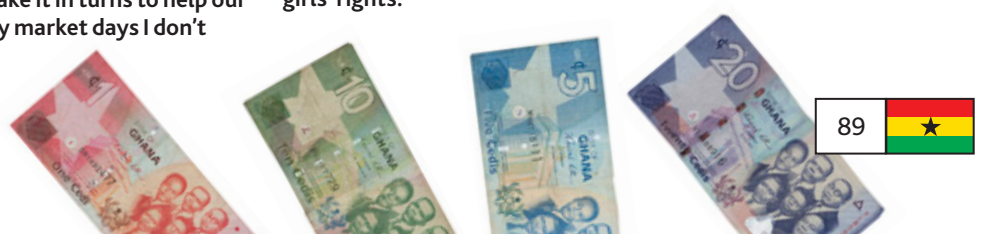
"It was the first time ever that I had been in a situation



"On Tuesdays and Fridays my sisters and I take it in turns to help our mother to sell mussels at the market. On my market days I don't usually make it to school at all."



"As soon as I have time to spare I try to read my copy of The Globe. I think it's really good. It teaches me loads about my rights and about what life is like for children all over the world. I often identify with the stories. For example, in the stories from Nepal, girls are the ones who have to work hard, just like me. That makes me sad because it's unfair! The stories in The Globe convince me to keep fighting for girls' rights."







### Global Vote necklace

The braided greenish-yellow necklaces that the ambassadors wear are called Kpa Na Lo.

"Election campaigners from the different parties often wear these in the lead up to political elections. The necklaces are dyed to match the colours of the political parties. As Child Rights Ambassadors we chose yellow and green for our Global Vote, because we think those colours look good," explains Victory.

### Victory shows us five outfits from her wardrobe

All five girls are Victory, and from left to right she is dressed as: A Child Rights Ambassador, a market stall holder, a school student, a mussel carrier, and a churchgoer in her Sunday best.

"My school uniform is definitely my favourite outfit. It is proof that I go to school, and I think I look good in it," says Victory.

They in turn train other girls. But it's just as important for us to train teachers and head teachers on girls' rights, the child sex trade and how to use The Globe and the World's Children's Prize program in the classroom.

We talk a lot about how girls and boys are equal human beings and should be treated as such. About how it's obvious that boys and girls should share all work equally, so that we girls are not forced to miss school and

so that we have more time and energy to do our home-work properly.

If we continue informing people and raising awareness, I really believe that girls' rights will be respected in the future!" 🌐



### Educating teachers and head teachers

"I also teach teachers and head teachers about the rights of the child, girls' rights and the child sex trade. The idea is that what we teach them, they then pass on to their students when participating in the World's Children's Prize Program. Under normal circumstances, children would never get to teach adults here. Never! But they actually listen to us and take us seriously."

*Teachers are being trained here at Presby Junior High School.*

➡ "I was incredibly proud! From that day on, my ambassador friends and I have been working in different ways to ensure respect and a better future for girls. First and foremost, we educate girls on their rights and help them to start Child Rights Clubs.





## Child Rights Radio

"I often listen to a news program for children called Kids News, on Radio Ada. For ages I have wanted to talk about girls' rights on the program, but I have never dared try. But since the ambassador training I have had more courage and confidence, so on Saturday I plucked up the courage to do it for the first time. I talked about girls' rights, the child sex trade, and the World's Children's Prize. I was so nervous, but I felt that I had important things to say, so I did it anyway. Now I can't wait for the next broadcast!"



## Child Rights Clubs

"We ambassadors help girls to start Child Rights Clubs. We teach them about the rights of the child, and girls' rights in particular, and about the child sex trade and the WCP Program. The clubs are really important, because that's where the girls learn about their rights, so that they know exactly what to fight for. The clubs raise awareness among girls at other schools too. Part of the idea of the clubs is also to try to help any member who is struggling, for example by crocheting tablecloths and baby clothes to sell at the market. Any money raised will belong to the club, but can be given to whoever needs help at that time." *A girls' club is being started here at Methodist Basic School.*



## Latest news!

The radio station where Victory talks about girls' rights has a gong as its symbol. In the olden days, people known as 'town criers' used to walk from village to village in Ghana, telling people the latest news. The town criers would strike a gong to gather as many people as possible to hear the news. These days in Victory's area, the latest news and information about girls' rights, the child sex trade and the World's Children's Prize is all communicated by radio.



## War and the child sex trade

"I've been living in this refugee camp for two years now because of the war in my country, the Ivory Coast. War is extremely dangerous for us girls. We are abused by soldiers, and during wars men often take advantage of girls who are poor and hungry. First they seem kind, saying, 'Come and eat with us if you are hungry!' But the girl won't get any food unless she agrees to let them take advantage of her. That is called the child sex trade. I learned that from The Globe, which we read together at the WCP Child Rights Club here at the camp. When soldiers promise not to kill a girl's parents or siblings as long as they can have sex with her, that's part of the child sex trade too.

The Globe tells us that the rights of the child are violated in all sorts of ways in war zones. Children are often kidnapped and forced to go with the soldiers to their camps and bases. Both boys and girls are also forced to become child soldiers. During wars, schools shut down and teachers have to run for their lives just like everyone else. Not being able to go to school is a violation of our rights.

Now I'm going to be a WCP Child Rights Ambassador and I'll have the chance to teach other girls about our rights. If many more gain this knowledge, the world will be a better place for children everywhere. Even here in the Ivory Coast!"

*Manuella, 12, WCP Child Rights Club, Ampain refugee camp, Ghana.*





**Election posters**  
Making posters about children's rights and the candidates.



**The voting booth**  
When the poles are fixed in the ground, the voting booth is covered with traditionally woven straw mats.

# Global Vote at High Class



"Today we ambassadors helped the Child Rights Club at High Class Academy to organise their Global Vote. The vote is important because it is our chance to support real leaders who fight for us children," says Victory.



**Ballot box made of fans!**  
"We made our ballot box from hand fans that we sewed together with brightly coloured wool. It turned out pretty well," explains Victory.



**Voting queue**  
It's hot and there is a long queue for voting, but everything goes smoothly at today's Global Vote.



**Lele dye prevents cheating**  
In the shade of a tree sit WCP Child Rights Club members Elisabeth, 14, Vivian, 13, Belinda, 14 and Francisca, 13, mixing red, white and black dye. Everyone who votes will get a mark on their face so that no-one is able to vote more than once.

**Red dye:**  
Leaves from the lele tree are ground down with rock salt using a stone. Then some water is added. The mixture is squeezed by hand, and the juice that runs out is the red dye, which is ready to use.

**White dye:**  
Ground chalk mixed with water.

**Black dye:**  
Ground coal from the fireplace mixed with water.







Show your ID card!  
Ok, you're on the electoral register!



### Chopping for a voting booth

Child Rights Ambassador Bernice chops wood in a grove of neem trees for poles to make the voting booth.



Prosper, 13, one of the school radio reporters at High Class Radio Station, who was covering today's Global Vote.

# Academy



### There's the ballot box!

Victory shows the way from the voting booth to the ballot box.

### No ID card, no vote

Everyone who votes must have an ID card like this one.



### High Class Radio

Editorial meeting under the tree. The day's radio journalists discuss their coverage of the Global Vote.

## "Girls, invite us boys!"

"Today I am a reporter at our school radio station, High Class Radio Station 93.1. I am asking my schoolmates for their thoughts on voting. Everyone I have spoken to thinks this is an important day because it is about our rights, which is the most important thing ever. All the people I have interviewed agree that nobody should be allowed to violate our rights. We learn that from the World's Children's Prize. And once we know our rights we can also protect ourselves better.

"The WCP ambassadors have helped the girls at our school to start a WCP Child Rights Club, but us boys haven't been invited to join yet. I hope we will be soon, because this is important for us too.

"But here in Ghana, life is harder for girls, so I understand why they are making clubs for themselves first and finding out about their rights. But after that I think it would be great if we could join. After all, if life is to improve for girls in the future, we boys need to learn that girls have exactly the same rights that we have.

"Today has been a fantastic day. It felt amazing to vote and show our support for REAL leaders who fight for our rights. Now we're going to write up our notes so that everyone in our school can read about all the important things that happened here today."

*Prosper, 13, High Class Academy.*







# We are all Child Rights

Here are lots of proud newly qualified World's Children's Prize Child Rights Ambassadors.

## Together we are strong!

"I have just become a Child Rights Ambassador for girls' rights. I'm a member of a WCP Child Rights Club too. This gives me a chance to tell other girls about our rights. Because we really need that here in Ghana.

"We girls have to work our fingers to the bone at home. It's terrible! Not fair at all! Boys should share this work with us. We should share everything equally. We have the same rights to a good education and good jobs. We are clever too. We can do anything that boys can do. Often we can even do it better!

"As an ambassador, I want to encourage all girls and women to dare to demand to be treated well. We have to take a stand!

"Something awful happened to one of my best friends. Her family is poor. One day, a man in his fifties said to her mother, "If you give me the girl, I'll make sure you get food, money and everything else you need."

"My friend's mother gave her away to the man. She was only thirteen then. Now I know that what happened to her is part of the child sex trade. I helped her to get to hospital first, and then to the police. I encourage her to keep attending school and to join in with our Child Rights Club. She needs our support, because otherwise she is left alone with her traumatic experiences. In our villages we have a saying: 'Together we build. Alone we fall.' That's exactly how things are with the Child Rights Club and girls' rights. Together we are stronger!

"In the future I want to be a TV newsreader, and tell people about what is happening in the world."

*Deborah, 14,  
WCP Child Rights  
Ambassador, Ada,  
Ghana*



## Refuse to be silent

"I grew up in the neighbouring country of Togo with my father. I have never seen my mother. When I was in Year 5, my father thought I should come to live with my aunt in Ghana and continue my education. I came and to begin with I was treated well, but everything changed the day that some money disappeared in the house. My aunt accused me even though I was innocent. She said it couldn't possibly be her own children, because she hadn't raised thieves! After that, she refused to pay my school fees. To be able to continue my education, I had to get a job carrying heavy mussel shells from the river up to the trucks. I even started doing laundry for people.

"How strange it is that my father sent me off to Ghana, but let my two brothers stay at home in Togo. That would never have happened if I had been a boy. It's just not right!

"Now I am a WCP Child Rights Ambassador and a member of a Child Rights Club. It is fantastic. Before I knew nothing about my rights. I couldn't stand up for myself with my aunt, and I obeyed her every wish. Now I know that I have a right to say what I think, to have my own opinions and to be listened to. That's why I refuse to be silent any longer. I know that I have a right to go to school and I tell my aunt that. The Child Rights Club has given me the courage to demand respect for my rights!

"In the future I want to be a maths and science teacher."

*Racheal, 15, WCP Child Rights Ambassador, Ada, Ghana*







# Child Rights Ambassadors



## Learn about rights at club

"Boys and girls are not treated equally here. When it's time for cooking or cleaning, the parents say that the boys can go out and play with their friends, while the girls are forced to stay in and work in the home. I think that the boys should help us with housework. We girls would also like the chance to play and have fun sometimes."

"At home, if I ask permission to go and visit my friends I get a beating, because my parents think I'm going to meet boys. Sometimes to punish me my parents withhold the money I need for school fees and books, which makes it hard for me to attend school. Sometimes they even deny me food. They would never do those things to a boy."

"Now I'm a Child Rights Ambassador and a member of a WCP Child Rights Club. At the club we learn that we girls actually have exactly the same rights as boys. Before, I had no idea about my rights. Thanks to the club I now know what my friends and I should be fighting for!"

"In the future I want to be a police officer. I think female police officers have an important job to do."

*Sarah, 15, WCP Child Rights Ambassador, Ada, Ghana*

## No to trafficking

"Girls here can be victims of trafficking. That's when you get sold and taken from one place to another to work. It happened to me when I was ten. My family was very poor. When a woman offered to take care of me and make sure I got the chance to go to school, my mother and I were delighted."

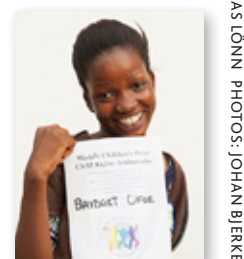
"I thought I would get to go to school all day long. Instead, I had very little time at school and a great deal of work to do. Early in the morning I sold water at a market, and in the afternoon I sold school books and other things. One day, the woman's daughter accidentally accepted a fake bank note from a customer at the market, but everyone blamed me. They beat me so badly that I still have scars on my body. They scorched my legs with burning logs and beat me on the back with a cast-iron pot. And they refused to pay my wages."

"Since I didn't have anywhere else to go, I was forced to work for the woman as a slave for two years. But one day, after a severe beating, I had had enough. I put on my favourite dress and ran away. Finally, I ended up here in Ada, with my aunt."

"Now I'm in Form 1 at Junior High, and I'm a Child Rights Ambassador and a member of a WCP Child Rights Club. Before I joined the club I didn't know a thing about the rights of the child, or about girls having equal rights. But now I know that I have a right to an education and a right to live with my parents."

"Through being a WCP Child Rights Ambassador, I can tell other girls about our rights. So that they don't get tricked and end up in the same situation I had to endure. It's important to know your rights. If you read *The Globe* magazine, you will be well-informed on that subject!"

*Theresa, 15, WCP Child Rights Ambassador, Ada, Ghana*





# Child Rights Ambassadors

**"There is a war on girls going on at our school. The girls here are exploited by teachers and the headteacher in exchange for exam passes and good grades. It's part of the child sex trade," says Maria Rosa, 17, WCP Child Rights Ambassador from the boarding school in Namaacha, Mozambique. Maria Rosa fights for girls' rights alongside Sara and Fatima at the school of horror.**

## War on girls

I have lived at this school for four years. Before I moved here I was really looking forward to starting school. But I quickly realised that something was wrong. Nobody treats children well at this school. Neither the teachers, nor the headteacher, nor the guards, nor the people who supervise the dormitories. It's as though they are waging a war against us girls.

"One day I was called to the headteacher's office. He asked me to close the door and started playing pornographic films on his computer. He told me to watch. When I asked him why, he replied that I already knew all about what people do in films like these. Then he asked me if I was going to tell him the truth or not.

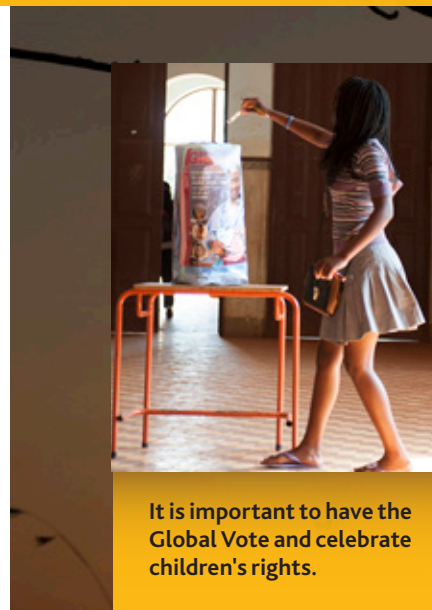
"I said that I always tell the truth. Then he showed me a list of all the students in the school. He pointed to a boy's name and asked if it was true that he was my boyfriend. I replied truthfully, that I didn't have a boyfriend. Then he said I was lying.

### Personal questions

"Then he asked me if I was a virgin and I said I was. He told me to show him the palms of my hands and then said, "You're lying! I can see from the palms of your hands that you are not a virgin!"

"I told him that all the questions he was asking me were my own business and that they were very personal. And he replied, "I am your headteacher and I am older than you! I have a right to ask you these things. Tread carefully or I'll tell your parents!"

"I said that my mother and father know that I always tell the truth, and that I would tell them myself what had happened. Then he said: "If you do that, I will kick you out of this school and make sure that you will never attend another school in Mozambique for as long as you live! Now you can tell your classmate outside that



it's her turn." That day, he interrogated lots of the girls at our school in the same way.

### Taking advantage of weakness

"But the interrogation isn't the worst thing that happens at this school. Teachers threaten us and say that we won't pass our exams or graduate unless we sleep with them. The headteacher says the same thing.

"One of my friends and I used to be in the same class. She struggles a bit with school work and I had much better exam results. When the headteacher discovered her weakness, he used it to get what he wanted. Since she was afraid of failing her

exams and having to drop out of school, she felt that she had to agree to everything the headteacher asked of her.

"Since then she has passed all her exams with excellent grades. Even though I am better at school work, she is the one who has been moved up to Year 12, and I'm still in Year 10. I am not making progress in school because I refuse to do what the headteacher demands of me.

### Fear disappeared

"Seeing girls being exploited in this way makes me angry and worried. I think this is partly because I myself was abused when I was just eight years old. For a long time I



# at the school of horror



## Not all commit abuse

Please note that not all teachers and other staff at Namaacha Secondary School commit abuse.

The three friends at the school of horror, Maria Rosa, Sara and Fatima, all live at the boarding school. Many of the girls who live at the school come from poor families who live a long way away.

have wanted to fight against all the bad things that happen at school, but I just didn't know how.

"But one day I was selected to go on Child Rights Ambassador training from the World's Children's Prize. The Globe magazine opened my eyes. I realised that we could no longer tolerate the abuse we faced at school. That we had to become like the girls in The Globe, who fight for their own and others' rights. I used to only see the problems and not know how to fix them. Now we have learned about our rights and where to go for help if we are treated badly, like the police and the Ministry of

Education. We used to be afraid of voicing our opinions. But the World's Children's Prize took away our fear. Suddenly we felt strong enough to face all those who violate our rights.

### Hate the ambassadors

"Since the day we Child Rights Ambassadors returned from our training to set up the WCP Program at school, the teachers and headteacher have been afraid of us. They began to hate the World's Children's Prize. They don't want us to teach other girls and boys about our rights, because they want to continue exploiting us. Because if we learn that what they are

doing violates our rights and learn who to contact for help, that makes it much harder for them to continue with it.

"They want us girls to remain ignorant. But that will never happen now that we have gained this knowledge. And we have had enough!

"Today we had our Global Vote at school, but the headteacher and many of the other teachers have opposed and sabotaged our vote right from the start. Several of the teachers didn't let their students read The Globe. Not a single teacher came to the Global Vote today. It's quite clear that the school is totally against the idea of us learning

about the most important thing we have – our rights.

"The adults opposed us in every way, but for us it was incredibly important to hold our Global Vote and celebrate the rights of the child at school. Because we know that what the headteacher and other teachers are doing is part of the child sex trade. They use their power to get what they want.

"We are not going to stop telling people about girls' rights until we have put a stop to all the abuse at our school and all other schools!"

*Maria Rosa, 17, WCP Child Rights Ambassador, Namaacha Secondary School, Mozambique*



# Sara's repulsive headteacher

One Saturday I was washing my clothes behind the school. Then the headteacher appeared and parked his car. He told me to fetch a plateful of food from the kitchen. When I passed him the plate he told me to get in the car. I didn't understand why, but he said that if I didn't obey him he would kick me out of school.

When I sat down next to him he started touching my legs and he pulled off my capulana, my sarong skirt. I was naked from the waist down. The headteacher took out his mobile phone and took pictures of me naked. At the same time he touched me and himself. I was terrified.

When he was finished he gave me a packet of biscuits and a soft drink and told me I could never tell anyone about what had happened. If I did, I would get a beating and then be thrown out of school.

## Exploited again

One Sunday as I was walking home from church, the headteacher stopped his car and told me to get in. I refused, but he said if I didn't get in he

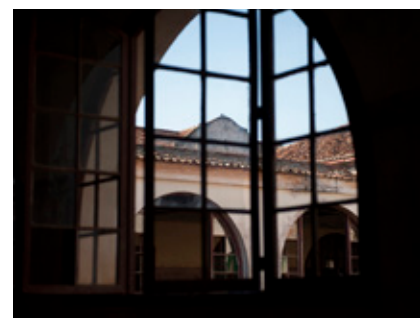
would force me to quit school. I was too scared to say no.

The headteacher said he was going to drive to school, but he drove in a completely different direction for almost an hour. I was frozen to the spot with terror. He stopped the car in a secluded place and took all my clothes off. He forced me to lie down on the back seat and then he touched me all over. It felt like being raped by my own headteacher.

## So ashamed

One day one of my classmates told me that the headteacher had shown her pictures of me naked. It was horrible. I was so incredibly ashamed. I think the headteacher does the same things to her. I think that's why he showed her the pictures of me. Knowing that the headteacher has pictures of me naked makes me feel shameful and uncomfortable. It makes me worried. What is he doing with those pictures?

The Child Rights Ambassadors have taught us girls at the school about our rights. Now I know that what has happened to me and other girls is a violation of our

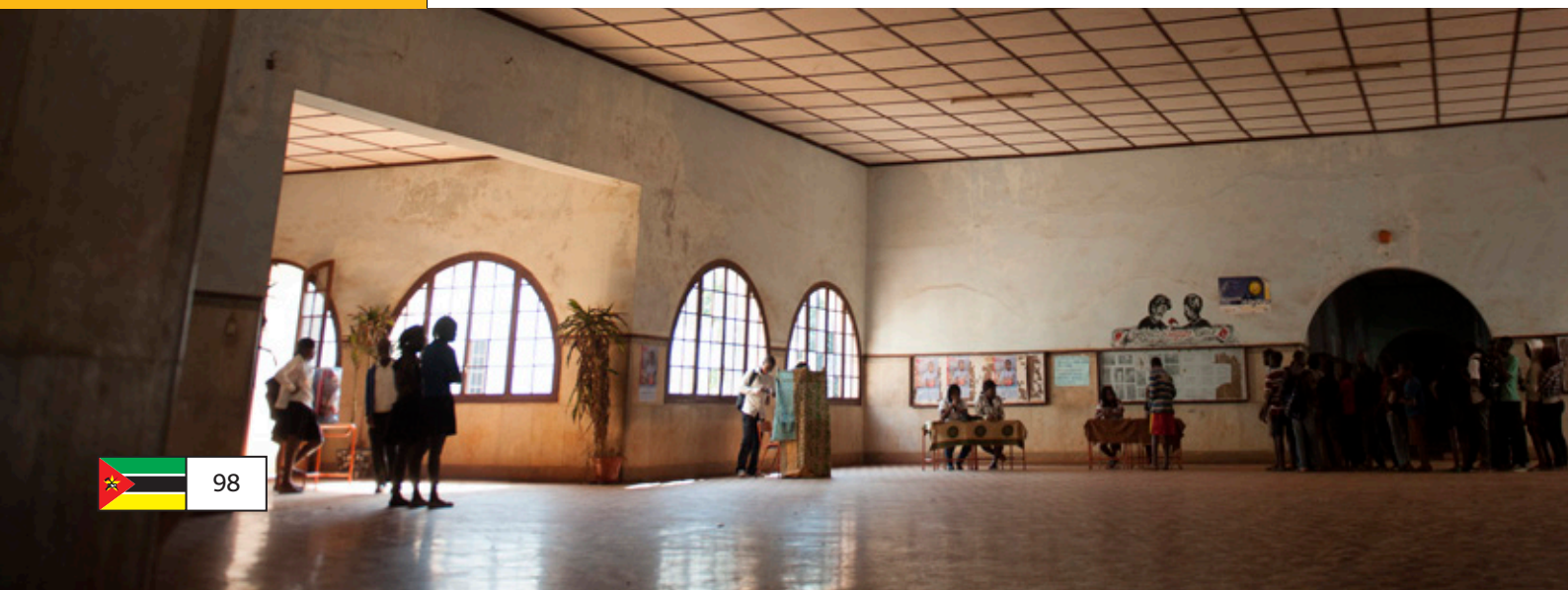


rights. The ambassadors have also helped me feel more brave. I have had enough. I want to tell people so that it becomes common knowledge how the headteacher treats us girls. So that it never happens again, to me or anyone else. A headteacher should be a good person who takes care of his or her students. The exact opposite of our headteacher.

*Sara, 17, member of WCP Child Rights Club, boarding school in Namaacha, Mozambique*

"The things that the headteacher and the other teachers do to us girls at our school make me very sad. The headteacher is the worst of them all," says Sara.

The voting station at the school of horror.





# Fatima takes a stand

**W**hen I came to this school four years ago, the teachers showed us respect for one month. They saw us as students, as children. We learned a lot. Then everything changed. The teachers started to grope me, saying, 'If you don't come to my bedroom, you won't be able to sit your first important exam.' I was fourteen then.

There were lots of girls who felt forced to let the teachers do these things to them in order to pass their exams and get good grades. When we have our final exams, it becomes even more obvious. Lots of us are nervous and sit up late in the dormitories, studying. Then the teachers often come in and say, 'Come to my room and I'll make sure you pass your exams.'

Girls who sleep with teachers get good grades and pass their exams no problem. The girls who don't get bad grades, don't pass their exams, and have to repeat the year.

## Unsafe dormitories

The teachers approach those of us who live at the boarding

school because we are poor. The teachers don't only offer good grades in return for sex, they also offer good food and money. Teachers can come in whenever they want and take girls to their bedrooms. We never feel safe.

Many of the girls get pregnant. Then the teachers take them to hospital and make them have abortions. Sometimes the teachers give the girls some kind of medicine to make the baby come out. When the girls come back to school they are often ill because the foetus has not come out yet.

## Exploiting poor girls

Even the guards at the school gates exploit the girls. If you get back to school a little too late in the evening at the weekends, they say, 'If you don't sleep with me I'll tell the teachers you were late, and you'll be thrown out of school straight away.'

One girl went for an evening stroll with her boyfriend and she wasn't allowed back in until she agreed to sleep with the guard. This mostly happens to girls from poor families who have no power.

Everyone knows that poor families have to make huge sacrifices for their children to be able to go to school. These things don't happen to girls from richer families.

We girls don't dare to stand up to the teachers and say no. One of the most important tasks for us Child Rights Ambassadors is to empower girls to fight for our rights. The World's Children's Prize has boosted our confidence and helped us to deal with a lot of our fears.

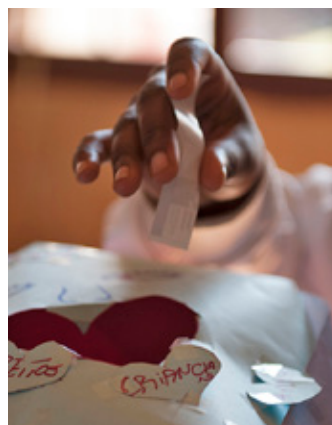
*Fatima, 17, WCP Child Rights Ambassador, Namaacha Secondary School, Mozambique*



The teachers come to the dormitory to offer girls good grades if they come with them.



The ballot box



A vote for children's rights at the school of horror.



Marking the finger to prevent cheating.



It's Global Vote Day at Everyone's Circus in Betim in the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais. There will be circus performances but also a demonstration for the rights of the child. The Child Rights Ambassadors in *Rights Actors* are making sure of that. That's the name of their Child Rights Club.

Valesca



Members of the group Rights Artists perform during the Global Vote Day at Everyone's Circus.



Valesca, 13, and her friends from Rights Actors often walk around their neighbourhood to find out how children are living.

"We started doing door-to-door research after we found out that many children don't



Sayra presents diplomas to the WCP Child Rights Ambassadors.

come to play at the circus because they have too much housework to take care of."

The Rights Actors group also go to the public schools that are participants in the World's Children's Prize in Betim. Valesca explains how they prepare the visits to homes and schools.

"Every week we gather at Everyone's Circus to discuss the rights of Betim's children

and of all the children in Brazil."

#### Together for change

Sayra, 13, is also a member of Rights Actors. Besides school and housework, Sayra also looks after a two-year-old child.

"We girls don't always have an active voice in the family or at school. Because of that, I am proud to take part in the

World's Children's Prize. We learn a lot about girls' rights. Anyone who doesn't know their

Sayra's friends chose her as the President of the Electoral Commission for the Global Vote.



## We will change the boys



"Many people think that because we live in the suburbs, boys will turn into drug addicts and girls into prostitutes. We are looked down on because we are poor. To learn about our rights is to learn to value and have respect for ourselves! Even here at Everyone's Circus when we debate children's rights, there is a lot of prejudice against girls. But our group has been working a lot with the boys, and slowly we are changing their attitudes."

Jordana, 15

## Girls rights a wake-up call!



"Studying the rights of girls was a wake-up call! Here where I live there are children working in hard labour and girls who are sold by their own parents. There are children who are forced to exchange their studies for work. That's a crime. Children need to study to have a better future. The World's Children's Prize is very important because it defends the rights of all children."

Yara, 15, Arthur Trindade Municipal School

## Girls are enslaved



"I worked with the World's Children's Prize in my school, telling my classmates about the rights of girls. There are a lot of girls enslaved and working as child prostitutes. Here in Betim it's normal to see children working in the streets selling all of sorts of products. Girls doing this are harassed to become prostitutes. Everyone can see the situation and no-one is doing anything about it."

Scarlet, 13, Arthur Trindade Municipal School

## We must raise awareness



"We have problems with bullying in our school, and girls suffer a lot. We must raise awareness and promote a different view of life. During the World's Children's Prize I was so impressed with the solidarity and conviction of the nominees. I could see that when we grow up and get ahead in the world, we must not leave the more vulnerable behind."

Ismael, 15, Adelina Gonçalves Municipal School





## We will teach girls' rights

"In Brazil, usually boys' rights are respected more than girls'. We girls need to fight to make society recognise that we too have our rights. In 2014, my friends and I will be visiting the schools in our area to raise awareness of girls' rights. We would like to make other children aware of how the rights of girls make a difference in our lives."

*Ana Carolina, 13, EMEF Maria de Melo, São José dos Campos, Brazil*

# rights



Lorryne

rights remains ignorant and becomes a slave! If you know your rights, you can fight for yourself," says Sayra. She was elected President of the Electoral Commission of the Global Vote at Everyone's Circus.

Valesca explains that they discovered a brothel in the vicinity that used children.

"That's why we promote debates in schools about the

rights of girls so we can strengthen our voice, participate and fight for our country to grow. Children have the right to speak out, so we can tell the world about these violations. Together we can change things."

"Many children here don't know they have rights. For this reason, during our visits to schools we also read the articles of the UN

Convention on the Rights of the Child. We put the main articles of the convention in a box. Each child picks one out and reads it out to the entire group, after which we talk about it. We discovered that violations of the rights of the child are closer to us than we would ever have imagined when we began this exercise! There is so much abuse!" says Lorryne, 13, also a Child Rights Ambassador from Rights Actors. 🌐

## No girls' rights talk at school

"The World's Children's Prize made me aware of my own rights. Discrimination against girls is not explicit where I live. But it does exist. At school, there is no discussion about girls' rights. The biggest concern is that students must get good grades."

*Esther Gladys, 13, EMEF Hélio Walter Bevilacqua, São José dos Campos, Brazil*



## Girls' rights made me understand my mother

"It's very important to learn about our rights. I used to have a very bad relationship with my mother. We argued a lot. I shouted at her. When I started learning about girls' rights, I began to think about my mother's rights. It's not easy for her. We began to have better conversations when I discovered that girls also have rights."

*Amanda Laís, 13, EMEF Luzia Levina Aparecida Borges, São José dos Campos, Brazil*



## Children best to talk about rights

"Learning about our rights from the World's Children's Prize, we get to know how to act when facing certain situations. Now we would like to tell other children about the importance of our rights. As teenagers, we are naturally the best people to do this."

"Adults don't trust us though, they don't believe we are capable. Today, during the Global Vote I was impressed to see so many children interested in debating about children's rights. The subjects we are discussing here during Global Vote Day are important for the life of every child."

*Esther, 16 and Joyve, 15, Maria Aracélia Alves Municipal School*



## My brothers don't help

"In my opinion, to learn about girls' rights is to acquire knowledge for life. Now I want to share this knowledge with my cousins and schoolmates. I have personal experience of the huge gap between how girls' and boys' rights are respected. In my house there are six of us. As I'm the only girl the hardest tasks are left to me. None of my four brothers help with housework. Besides going to school, I have also worked as a nanny, looking after a five-year-old child. It was a very difficult period. Occasionally, I didn't have time to eat lunch because I worried about leaving my house tidy for my mother. She always comes home from work so tired. When I ask my brothers to help me with the chores, they refuse. Sometimes they even get angry when I ask for help."

*Kethelin Jenyffer, 12, EMEF Ruth Nunes da Trindade, São José dos Campos, Brazil*







**Chelsea was exploited**

**Now she's a Child Rights Ambassador!**

**"For almost all my life, my rights have been violated. I had my first experience of the child sex trade at just nine years old. Now, as a Child Rights Ambassador I am fighting to prevent other girls in Zimbabwe from being abused as I was. And I am fighting for my right as a girl to express my opinions!" says Chelsea, 15.**

**M**y mother died giving birth to me and my father died one week later. Luckily enough my grandmother and grandfather were able to look after me. But when I was nine years old, both my grandparents became seriously ill with AIDS. Eventually they were so weak that they had to stop working in the fields.

I was hungry almost all the time. Often the only thing we had to eat was tomatoes from our garden. Sometimes a neighbour gave us some cornmeal so that we could make a kind of corn porridge called sadza. When my grandfather died, I was sent home from school because my grandmother and I could no longer afford the school fees.

I was distraught. I loved studying and I knew even then that education was the only way for me to have a better life in the future.

#### **Selling tomatoes**

My grandmother asked me to go up to the main road and sell tomatoes to people passing by, just as many other girls from our village did. Every morning I picked tomatoes from our little garden and laid them out nicely on a platter at the side of the road. Then I ran up to every passing car to sell them tomatoes. After a whole day working in the burning hot sun, I had usually earned around 2 US dollars.

One day a truck stopped. I

ran over and asked the driver if he wanted to buy some tomatoes. I had noticed that my tomatoes didn't look as nice as the other girls', so I wanted to sell mine cheaply so that he would still choose mine. I said he could have the whole platter of tomatoes for 1 dollar. Then the driver said, 'If you do me a favour I can give you ten dollars instead. What do you say?' I knew that ten dollars would really help my grandmother and me. We hadn't eaten for days and my grandmother needed medicine. I hesitated, but then I said yes.

#### **In the truck cab**

I thought he wanted me to clean the truck cab so I start-







# Hard for girls in Zimbabwe

"The situation for girls in Zimbabwe is horrendous. Boys are seen as superior in every area of life. We girls are less valued. We are seen as second-class citizens. That makes me sad and very angry," says Chelsea, explaining some of the things that are wrong:

- Girls do all the housework. Boys are allowed to play and are sent to school.
- Girls are forced to work much earlier than boys, for example as maids.
- Girls can easily fall victim to the child sex trade.
- Girls as young as twelve are forced into child marriages with older men.
- If parents die, their son inherits everything and their daughter doesn't get anything.



ed wiping the dashboard with a cloth. But then he said, 'You can stop that. That's not what I want you to do.' He showed me a narrow bed at the back of the cab. But I was only nine, I didn't understand what he wanted me to do. Then he said, 'Come and sit here on the bed with me.' And he started touching my legs. I got scared and tried to get out, but he pulled me back down onto the bed.

What he did injured me. Afterwards he threw me a towel and told me to clean myself up. I started to cry. He told me not to be sad, and that this was how all girls earned money. He gave me ten dollars and said, 'Don't tell anyone about this. If

other girls find out about it, they'll all want to come to me and there will be no money left over for you.' And then he opened the door and said, 'Don't forget your tomatoes! Carry on selling your tomatoes as usual, and I'll come back and stop again soon.'

I was sad. At the same time I thought to myself that this must be how all girls earn money. I also thought about how happy my grandmother would be when I came home with the money.

## Alone

The next day I was able to buy medicine for my grandmother and food for both of us. I carried on going up to the road to sell tomatoes. And

every time the truck driver passed, the same thing happened and I got my ten dollars. That's what my life was like for a whole year.

One day when I got home my grandmother was lying still in her bed with her eyes closed. I thought she was sleeping. The next day I tried to feed her some cornmeal, but she wouldn't take any. I thought maybe she just needed to rest. On the third day there were lots of flies around her. When I went out to get a bucket of water to wash her, a neighbour came past. She wanted to check that we were okay. She tried to wake my grandmother but she couldn't. After a while, the neighbour explained that she was dead.

**When she was nine, Chelsea started selling tomatoes by the main road. One day, a truck driver stopped who would come to abuse her for a year.**

My worst nightmare had come true. I was just ten years old, and completely alone.

## Deceitful pastor

A pastor told me that he felt sorry for me and wanted to take care of me. I was so happy that someone cared. The pastor's wife and their children welcomed me into their home. They gave me food and a place to live, and I was able to start school again. I didn't have to go and sell tomatoes at the roadside any more. Or see the truck driver.

For a while everything was







Once she had been on the course to become a Child Rights Ambassador, Chelsea decided to run away from the pastor who exploited her. She ran and ran, and jumped on a bus to the capital city, Harare.

➡ good. Then the wife and children went away to visit relatives. It was just me and the pastor left at home. One night he came home late and he was drunk. He asked me where the keys to his bedroom were, because he couldn't find them. He said I had hidden the keys and so I had to let him sleep in my bed.

He started to touch me. It was just the same as it was with the truck driver. And there was no way I could say no. This was what he expected of me in return for giving me a home, food, the chance to go to school, and some kind of family. This was the price I had to pay. The pastor

exploited me for three years.

#### **Child Rights Ambassador**

While all this was going on, I and some other girls from school got the chance to go to the capital city, Harare, for an ambassador training course all about girls' rights, run by the World's Children's Prize. We learned that it is wrong for girls to be exploited or sold. We also learned that we have a right to make our voices heard, and that our bodies belong to us and nobody else!

On the training we learned about lots of terrible things that were wrong and were violations of our rights. I thought a lot about the fact that these were things that

had been happening to me for most of my life. It hurt so much. I also learned that what the truck driver and the pastor did to me was part of the child sex trade. Those two days in Harare changed my life.

When we got back, we set up Child Rights Clubs where we ambassadors taught other girls the things that we had learned. We sang, we danced, we were happy and we encouraged one another. I felt such joy because what we were doing was incredibly important. At the same time, I realised that I was living in a house where I was being subjected to the very crimes I was teaching people about and

warning girls to look out for. That made me sad and confused. I had had enough.

#### **Escape from the pastor**

One afternoon when I got home from school, I packed a bag with my clothes, my school uniform and my books. Then I hid the bag in the forest. I went back to the house and cleaned, swept the yard, washed the dishes and made lunch. While I was cooking behind the house the other family members were sitting at the front. After a while I slipped away from the house to get my bag. My heart was in my throat and I was so scared I could hardly move. But in the end I ran as



"In preparation for our Global Vote we read The Globe magazine a lot and we learned about our rights and about how life is for children around the world. We ambassadors were responsible for making the Global Vote Day work. It was a fantastic day!" says Chelsea.



fast as I could to the main road. And I jumped on a bus to Harare.

Once I was sitting on the bus I felt sad because I felt I was letting the other ambassadors down and abandoning our important work with the girls' club. At the same time, I was so relieved that I might finally be free. The ambassador course had given me the knowledge and courage to leave my old life behind.

### Safe village for girls

At the training course they gave us the phone number of Girl Child Network (GCN), an organisation that takes care of girls facing difficult situations. They picked me up

when I arrived in Harare, late in the evening. I realised that life was finally going to be good.

Now I live in one of GCN's safe villages for girls, and GCN have reported the pastor to the police. For the first time in my life, I feel truly safe and secure. I go to school and I'm still a WCP Child Rights Ambassador. I'm planning to continue with that. I want everyone in our whole country to know that girls have rights.

**"I am a WCP Child Rights Ambassador. I want all the girls in the country to know that girls have rights."**

In the future I want to be a doctor and earn lots of money. I'll use the money to help girls who are having a hard time. 🌐





# Girls teach girls who

The girls in the Child Rights Club have gathered in the playground of Sadza Primary School in Zimbabwe. Child Rights Ambassadors Pride and Loveness are leading Faina and the other club members. This has happened at least once a week since Pride and Loveness returned from the ambassador training in Harare almost a year ago. They trained at the same time as Chelsea. Just like her, they are convinced that the fight for girl's rights is vital in Zimbabwe.



A meeting of the Child Rights Club at Sadza Primary School.

## Same rights as boys

"As Child Rights Ambassadors, our main task is to teach other girls about their rights and combat the child sex trade. The more we know, the easier it becomes to guard and defend our rights. This is really needed here. Life is not the same for boys and girls in Zimbabwe. Many girls are not allowed to go to school and end up in the child sex trade instead. Many parents actually believe that girls shouldn't go to school at all. They think that their daughters

should find a man to marry as soon as possible instead. It pains me to hear this, because it is so wrong. We have the same right to a good life as boys!

Now the girls we taught have become new Child Rights Ambassadors and they in turn are teaching new girls about their rights. This is how life is going to get better for us Zimbabwean girls in the future!"

*Loveness, 12, WCP Child Rights Ambassador, Sadza Primary School, Zimbabwe*

Child Rights Ambassadors  
Pride and Loveness.



## Fantastic rights

"Here in Zimbabwe the greatest danger for girls is being exploited by boys and men. As well as parents not being able to afford their children's school fees, which affects us girls the most. If a family is poor it's always the daughter who has to quit school, not the son. This situation is dangerous for us. If we are left alone at home, men

could exploit us. It's common for girls to be abused by truck drivers passing our villages. Or for young girls to be taken to bars, where they are exploited during the night and

then released in the morning.

Last year some schoolmates and I got the chance to go to the capital city and learn about children's rights at a WCP Child Rights Ambassador training event. I was delighted! It felt fantastic to learn about our rights. Most of the things I learned were completely new to me. It is a violation of girls' rights to buy and sell our bodies. As a Child Rights Ambassador we now teach this to other girls in the Child Rights Clubs we have set up. I believe that trading in girls will gradually decline, and that girls' lives will get better as a result."

*Pride, 13, WCP Child Rights Ambassador, Sadza Primary School, Zimbabwe*



Time for one of the girls in the Child Rights Club, who is a polling officer, to vote for child rights in Sadza Primary School's Global Vote.



# teach girls...

## Together we are strong

"When the girls who had been on the Child Rights Ambassador training in Harare came back to our village, they started this Child Rights Club that I am a member of. The ambassadors told us everything they had learned about girls' rights. That we girls must be allowed to go to school. And that we must never be sold as slaves, which is common here in Zimbabwe. Girls are kept imprisoned by men who use them as slaves. It makes me so angry just thinking about that!

Together in a Child Rights Club, we are much stronger than we are alone. If someone is unwell or is being subjected to abuse, we can help one another. And when we know our rights as a group, it becomes harder for others to treat us badly. That is important, because it is common for boys and men to treat girls and women badly here.

Early this morning we came to the school and prepared our Global Vote. Along with the Child Rights Ambassadors, all the members of the Child Rights Club were responsible for ensuring everything went smoothly. The Global Vote is important because it's not just about voting, it's about learning about our rights before we vote. The Global Vote is extremely important for us girls. We learn about our rights and we often vote for people who are fighting for girls' rights in particular."

*Faina, 13, member of WCP Child Rights Club, Sadza Primary School, Zimbabwe*

Faina



The Child Rights Ambassadors and members of the Child Rights Club made sure everything went smoothly at the Global Vote at Sadza Primary School.





# Dunani leader for chil

Dunani and her fellow Child Rights Ambassadors, Hlayisani and Ntwanano, help girls from villages around the Ngisimani School in Limpopo in South Africa to form child rights clubs. The clubs have become places where girls can share secrets and talk about their problems.

## We ask for the Chief's help

"There was a girl in my village whose uncle paid her school fees. He decided that because of this, he had the right to abuse her. The girl kept silent. But her teacher noticed that her schoolwork was suffering and called her aside. The teacher went to the police who then went to the family. The police said that the family had to decide if they wanted to report the uncle. The family decided not to do so.

Our big challenge in our village is the lack of knowledge about children's rights. We ambassadors have to work hard. We want to ask the village

Chief to call a meeting so that we, the ambassadors, can talk about the rights of the child and what it means.

We speak about these challenges in our club. Being an ambassador has made me dream that when I finish my studies I can play a role in helping children be aware of their rights. I am a leader now and it has made me realise that as a child who knows her rights, I have a role to play. I enjoy each and every moment of it, even though it is painful as well. I feel that I can make a difference."

*Dunani, 17*



Dunani prepares for today's meeting of the World's Children's Prize Child Rights Club.



Dunani can discuss girls' rights with her grandmother. The village has changed a lot since her grandparents married. But Dunani wants it to change to a village where children's rights are known and always respected.



Dunani with her mother. She and the other club members want to teach the adults of their village about the rights of the child.



# Children's rights

## Our village needs to change

"After relaxing with song and dance, we talk about our experiences. Some girls are afraid and can only write it down. Then we look at our rights in The Globe and see that this is wrong."



It is important to have a child rights club because many girls in our village are afraid of talking about the abuse they experience. In our culture we are supposed to keep quiet about problems of rape and abuse. In the club we encourage the girls to talk about their stories and what happens in their lives, what to do and how to fight that. Many girls here have been abused. If we cannot talk about these things, we cannot change our village."

*Ntwanano, 17*

Ntwanano as Presiding Officer of the Global Vote.

## Right to say no

"The Globe taught me about the child sex trade, and how this happens everywhere. One of the girls in our club had a secret. I gave her The Globe and she started reading. Now she is no longer afraid to talk."

Our parents do not understand much about children's rights and there are so many children's rights challenges in our village. Adults can change by understanding children's rights. They must also come to our club and learn about our rights and read The Globe, and get knowledge from it.

In our club I learn how to chat with boys about our rights, that boys and girls have the same rights. I learnt that I have the



Hlayisani was part of the peace keeping force during the Global Vote Day.

right to say what I think and have my opinions respected. I have learnt that we have the right to say no and that older people cannot make decisions about my life without my consent. I want to be the voice of thousands so that I can change this world by telling everyone about children's rights, especially about girls' rights."

*Hlayisani, 17*

TEXT: MARLENE WINBERG. PHOTOS: SATSIRI WINBERG

## Boy members in girls' club

When Godfrey and Nyikiwe heard that the girls had formed a child rights club they were keen to be members as well.

### Educate the adults

"During our Global Vote Day we showed that no child should be forced to do things against her will. In our play, I acted the role of a cruel principal who beats the children, until the children force him to realise that he is wrong. All the adults and teachers who attended our Global Vote Day saw this play."

Everyone has the right to be respected as a human being. The Globe is about the children's side of the story. I think

adults should respect us the way we respect them. The government should come to villages and teach adults the rights of children. I joined the club because I want to know my rights. I need to know this because if someone violates my rights I can say: This is wrong."

*Godfrey, 16*



### Exercise our rights

"Global Vote Day at our school was special. The village Chief and adults from government saw how it empowered children as we exercised our rights and power to vote."

I learnt from The Globe that there are many children and adults in the world who fight for children's rights. This empowers me. I think that at our school we should fight for girls and boys' rights. The club empowers girls and even boys

to get more knowledge about their rights. In our club we have talked about human trafficking as it happens everywhere. People take children to use them for selling drugs or for child sex trade. I don't want that to happen to people around me. This is why I talk about it in the club."

*Nyikiwe, 17*





# Child Rights Ambassador

What causes the commercial sex trade?

## Equal to boys!

There is a meeting of the Child Rights Club at Chris Hani Secondary School in Khayelitsha, a township in Cape Town, South Africa. Amanda is writing suggested causes of the child sex trade on the board.

**A**s a Child Rights Ambassador, I am able to stand up for children's rights and to tell other children that it is not necessary to be humiliated and treated badly. If you know your rights, you can find help and report the people who abuse you," says Amanda, 15. "Here in Khayelitsha there are taxi drivers who offer girls free rides in return for sex, or rape them. The girls are too afraid to speak up. In our club, two girls have been exploited in this way."

because it is dangerous out there for girls. When we have a bad experience and share the story of it, we are not alone any more."

### Helps change

"We girls have to speak about what is inside our hearts. I want to help change things. As a Child Rights Ambassador I want to teach everyone about our rights," says Sisanda, 17. "Many girls do not know that they have rights. In our club they know that when bad things happen to them it is not because they are bad, but that someone else abused their rights. I am equal to boys. With the World's Children's Prize, our parents can be taught that."

"It is true that boys are also abused," says Yolanda, 17, "but girls are abused a hundred times more. In our club, I have had the courage to talk about my own personal life to the other girls and then discovered that they too have stories of abuse to tell."

### Not alone

The members of the Child Rights Club have many stories of abuse to tell.

"The older Xhosa generation often thinks that girls are the ones who are to take responsibility for household work and not benefit from education. When you want another career, your mother will say: 'I gave birth to you, so you should obey me. No man will marry you if you are refusing to do the housework. If you do not listen to me, you can get out of my house and find somewhere else to live.' This is one reason why girls end up on the street and selling their bodies," says Xolelwa, 15. "I am a Child Rights Ambassador



Yolanda



Xolelwa

Proud Child Rights Ambassadors.



Sisanda





# Radio interview with a Child Rights Ambassador

Isabelle from the city of Beni in DR Congo has just become a Child Rights Ambassador. Several radio stations are interviewing her about why she wanted to become an ambassador for girls' rights.

Isabelle and 202 other girls have proudly received their certificates as Child Rights Ambassadors. Eastern Congo is one of the worst places in the world to be a girl. Girls are often abused at gunpoint by different armed groups, or are treated badly in other ways. Some of the Child Rights Ambassadors have been through difficult experiences of their own, and now they want to fight for respect for girls' rights in DR Congo.



## Daughters are worthless

Florence, 14, is one of six sisters in a family with no boys.

"Our father doesn't take care of us because we are girls," says Florence, explaining that two of her sisters have been forced to start selling sex in order to survive.

"My father told me that I am just a burden. My sisters pay for my school fees and give me clothes. Now I have had the chance to become a Child Rights Ambassador and fight for girls' rights. My father has read The Globe magazine and has started asking questions. I think he has started to change!"

## Want to fight against violence

Angeline, 13, became a mother when she was eleven years old, after being raped.

"I was forced to quit school because we couldn't afford the fees. Becoming a Child Rights Ambassador is a way for me to share my experiences with other girls and fight against exploitation and violence."

Angeline has finally received help to go back to school.

"At my age I should be at high school, but I'm not ashamed. I want to study and build a good life for me and my daughter."

## I want to be president

"My parents don't let me go to school, just because I am a girl," says Elizabeth, 17. "When I needed anything when I was young, my brother's needs always came first. That's why I want to study, so that one day I can become the president of our country and change the situation for girls and women. And that's why I want to be an ambassador for girls' rights."

## Alone in the world

Sophia was eight years old when her mother died. Her father married again and his new wife didn't want to take care of her.

"One day, when my father had gone away to work, his wife threw me out of our home. I was poor and had no parents to care for me. Finally I found a place to live, but the condition was that I was forced to become a sex slave. I had nowhere else to go. My rights were taken from me, because I couldn't go to school and I was rejected by my family and everyone else. But now I have started school again. I want to get an education, whatever happens," says Sophia, 16.

# Child Rights Ambassador in Nepal



## Teaching friends about the child sex trade

"Many children do not know about their rights or about the trafficking of girls. I am lucky that I have been able to learn about children's rights and can teach my friends what I have learnt."

*Phoolmati, 16*



## Want to help others understand

"I feel good about this program. I have learnt many things and now I'm interested in helping others understand about their rights and about human trafficking."

*Subita, 15*

Read more about the Child Rights Ambassadors in DR Congo and Nepal at [www.worldschildrensprize.org/childrightambassadors](http://www.worldschildrensprize.org/childrightambassadors)



Proud Child Rights Ambassadors with their certificates, ready to fight for girls' rights and against the child sex trade.





The girls in Benin made their own banner when the WCP program started. It says: "I am a girl. I am educated. And you?"

and abuse. Others are debt slaves. Girls are also exploited in the child sex trade.

#### Play and spare time

Since girls often have to help out at home, they have less time to play and see friends. Sometimes girls are not allowed to cycle, run or dance because of old traditions.

#### Power and influence

It is harder for girls to make their voices heard and make decisions over their own lives. Their views and ideas are often treated with less respect, both by their peers and by adults such as teachers, parents and politicians. Many also feel under pressure from old-fashioned ideas on how girls should look and behave. 🌐

# Girls' rights

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child decrees that all children are equal and should be given the same chances in life. Still, girls are often treated worse than boys. They are discriminated against for two reasons: because they are children and because they are girls!

#### Survive and develop

Girls' lives and development are hit hard by poverty. They are often hungrier and more likely to be ill than boys. Of the 1.4 billion people in the world who live on less than US\$1.25 a day, 70 percent are women and girls. Girls are even discriminated against before they are born. The UN estimates that up to 100 million girls are missing from the world as a result of abortion of female foetuses and murder of newborn girls, because sons are thought to be more valuable than daughters.

#### Right to education

Investing in girls' education is one of the best ways to tackle poverty. A girl who is allowed to go to school gets married later in life, and gives birth to fewer and healthier children. When she learns to read and write she is more

able to demand respect for her rights. For every school year she completes, a girl's future salary increases by up to 20 percent! But many parents don't believe it's worth letting their daughters go to school, because they will marry into another family. Of the 125 million children in the world who don't go to school, 75 million are girls.

#### Health and health care

Girls have less opportunity than boys to see a doctor, and to make decisions over their own bodies. Many girls have children too young, and injuries caused by childbirth are the most common cause of death in poor girls aged between 15 and 19. Discriminatory traditions such as female genital mutilation also cause great damage. Girls are affected more often than boys by mental health issues and eating disorders.

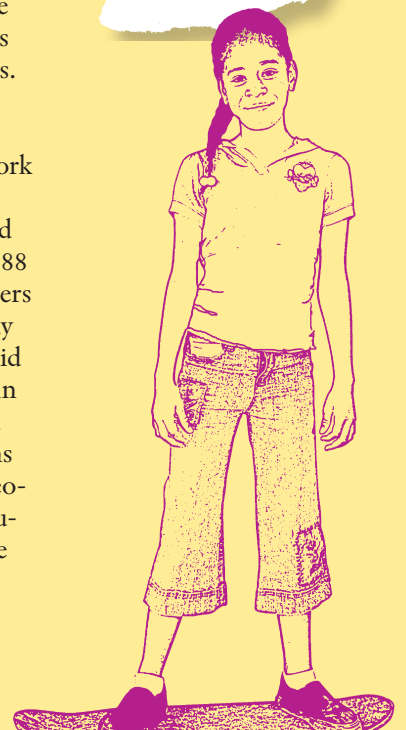
#### Violence and abuse

Girls are often subjected to violence at home and in school. The victims of almost half of all sexual violence in the world are girls under 15. Girls who are forced to marry before the age of 18 become victims of domestic violence more often than girls who marry as adults. In war and conflict situations, girls are kidnapped and exploited as child soldiers and sex slaves.

#### Harmful child labour

Millions of girls have to work instead of going to school. They work in the home and elsewhere. Approximately 88 million of the child labourers in the world are girls. Many of them have the lowest paid and most dangerous jobs, in factories and on farms and construction sites. Millions are domestic workers in people's homes and are particularly vulnerable to violence

"I am a girl.  
I am educated.  
And you?"





# The child sex trade

# Modern day slavery!

**"I was kidnapped and sold to foreign men. It felt like a living death," says Mary from the Philippines, who was 13 when she was subjected to one of the worst forms of child rights violation. The child sex trade affects at least 1.8 million children every year. Most of them are girls.**

## What is the child sex trade?

The child sex trade is whenever a child is exploited sexually by a perpetrator, usually an adult, who pays for it in money, gifts or services. Examples of gifts are food and clothing. A service could be a promise of protection or better grades. The child sex trade is different from other sexual abuse of children, because there is some form of payment involved. It is also called 'commercial sexual exploitation of children'.

## Where does the child sex trade happen?

The child sex trade exists all over the world. Children are exploited on the streets and in brothels, but also in people's homes and at schools and children's homes. Examples of the child sex trade are:

- when people travel within their country or abroad to have sex with children (child sex tourism)
- when children are bought and sold so that perpetrators can have sex with them (child trafficking for sexual purposes)
- when perpetrators take pictures of or film sexual abuse of children (child pornography).

## Child trafficking

Every year hundreds of thousands of children are taken from one place to another, in their own countries or abroad, in order for perpetrators to be able to exploit them sexually. Trafficking is now the third most profitable ille-

gal trade in the world, after illegal drugs and weapons. The advantage of trading in children instead of, for example, drugs, is that children can be sold over and over again.

## Child sex tourism

People who travel within their own country or abroad to commit sexual abuse of children are called child sex tourists. Some are on holiday, others on business trips. The child sex trade is illegal all over the world, but in some countries there is less of a risk of being punished, and children's bodies are sold cheaper. But according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, all states must stop their own citizens from exploiting children sexually, even if the crime is committed in another country.

## Child pornography

When sexual abuse of children is filmed or photographed, this is called child pornography. Perpetrators buy, sell and swap pictures or films via the internet, on websites, through file sharing programs and by email. Child pornography is also disseminated by mobile phone and in books, magazines and DVDs. For the exploited children, the pictures and films are constant reminders of the abuse. Every time they are

distributed, the rights of the child are violated.

## Child marriage

Every day, around 25,000 girls under 18 are married. One third of these are aged between 10 and 15. Many parents arrange marriages for their children, usually with older men, in order to get something in exchange, such as land, money or livestock. In war-torn areas, girls are forced to marry soldiers in order for the rest of their family to be protected. This is also part of the child sex trade, since the girls are often forced to have sexual intercourse.

## Why does the child sex trade exist?

One reason why children are drawn into the child sex trade is poverty. Poor girls and parents can be more easily tricked or forced into the slave trade. But the *fundamental problem* is that there are people who want to buy sex with children. Their demand means that people who want to make money are always looking for more children to sell. The more buyers there are, the more young people will be exploited. Without the buyers' money, it

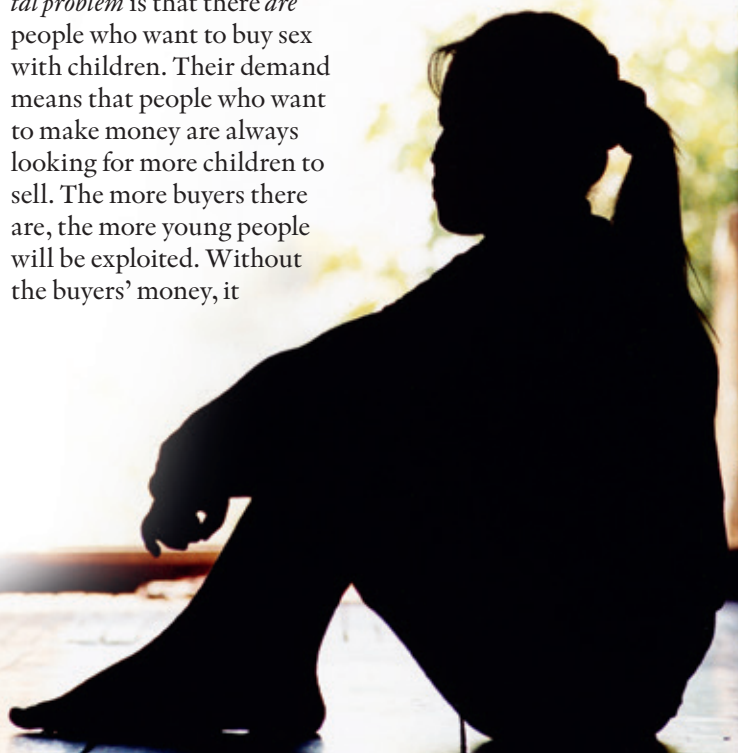
wouldn't be possible to make a profit. Then the traffickers would trade in something more profitable instead.

## The children have no choice

When a child is exploited sexually for some kind of payment, some people think the child has agreed to sell sexual favours. But a child never chooses to be sold and sexually exploited. It is always perpetrators who trick, pressurise, threaten or force children, and sometimes their parents, into doing what they want them to do.

## Damaged for life

Children who are exploited in the child sex trade are seriously damaged, both physically and mentally. The abuse affects their health and development for their whole lives. Children are exposed to threats and violence, and risk contracting diseases like HIV and AIDS. They suffer from low self-esteem, nightmares, depression, feelings of guilt, insomnia and suicidal thoughts. Those who manage to escape are often rejected by their families and have nowhere to go. ☹





# Organise a World's Children's Press Conference

You and your friends can organise a World's Children's Press Conference. Only children should speak and be interviewed by journalists during the press conference. Every year, children all over the world hold press conferences at the same time. They are held at the end of the WCP Program period, when children all over the world have voted to decide who should receive the awards for the rights of the child.

## HOW TO DO IT:

### 1. Time and place

If possible choose the most important building in your area for your press conference, to show that the rights of the child are important! Holding it at your school is fine too.

### 2. Invite the media

Invite all newspapers, magazines and TV and radio stations. Write the time and place clearly. Using email is good, but make sure you also call the journalists you think may be interested in coming! Remind them by telephone or

by visiting them the day before the press conference.

### 3. Prepare

Write down what you plan to say. Give yourself plenty of time to prepare what you want to say about the rights of the child in your country. Shortly before the press conference you will receive secret information from the World's Children's Prize, which should be revealed at the press conference.

### 4. Hold the press conference

If possible, begin with music and dancing, and explain that other children all over the world are holding press conferences at the same time. Then proceed with the press conference roughly as follows:

- State facts about the World's Children's Prize and if possible show a short WCP information film.
- Explain how children's rights are violated in your country.
- Tell the politicians and other adults your demands for respect for the rights of the child in your country.
- Reveal the 'big news' of the day, about the Child Rights Heroes.
- End by giving the journalists a press release and the WCP fact sheet on your country. In the press release

At the end of the World's Children's Press Conference at Etec Paulinho Botelho School in São Carlos in Brazil, Lucas said: "Somewhere in the world, there is always someone who makes a stand and fights for change. The proof of that is the Prize laureates, who are not content to just stand by, but who work to make a difference in vulnerable children's lives."

you will have summarised information on the WCP, the rights of the child and the Child Rights Heroes. You can get a sample press release from the World's Children's Prize.

## At [worldschildrenprize.org](http://worldschildrenprize.org) you'll find:

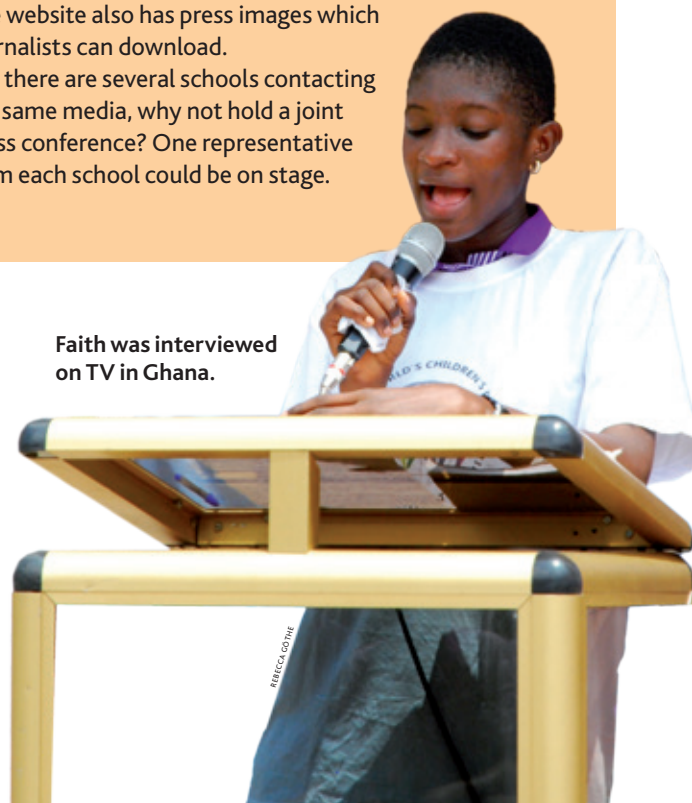
Child rights fact sheets for your country, advice on how to invite journalists, questions for politicians and other tips. The website also has press images which journalists can download.

If there are several schools contacting the same media, why not hold a joint press conference? One representative from each school could be on stage.

Nadine, 14, led the first Children's Press Conference in Burundi. Never before have journalists listened to children. Nadine talked about violations of the rights of the child and urged the government and local authorities to do their best for children.



Faith was interviewed on TV in Ghana.





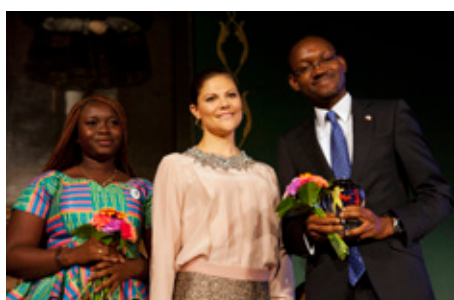


◀ Chandana from Indian dance group Nadam is dancing for Crown Princess Victoria and Child Jury members Poonam from Nepal and Nuzhat from Bangladesh.



Lisa from Zimbabwe chaired the ceremony, which was her last one as a member of the Jury.

# We are celebrating the rights of the child!



Kimmie Weeks and Youth Action International work for Abigial and other children who have experienced armed conflict in Liberia or other countries. Kimmie received the *World's Children's Honorary Award* from the Crown Princess.

The annual global ceremony is held at Gripsholm Castle in Mariefred, Sweden. It is led by the children of the jury, and children from 15 countries perform. In 2013, Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden helped the children present their prizes to the Child Rights Heroes.



Makukhanye from Khayelitsha, a township in Cape Town, South Africa, performed during the ceremony.



Crown Princess Victoria presented the *World's Children's Honorary Award* to Sompop Jantraka, who fights for a better life for children at risk of ending up in the child sex trade in Thailand. Fanta is one of the children who has received help.



Poonam and Nuzhat thanked Crown Princess Victoria on behalf of the jury.

## Loreen new patron

Swedish singer Loreen is a new patron of children's rights and the World's Children's Prize Foundation. She shares this honour with five Nobel Prize Laureates and several other global legends. In addition to (the late) Nelson Mandela and Graça Machel, the

patrons include Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma, Xanana Gusmão of East Timor, and Desmond Tutu of South Africa. The WCP's first patron, H.M. Queen Silvia of Sweden, has said: "The World's Children's Prize does fantastic work to promote children's rights."



SENAI BEHRE



Queen Silvia of Sweden

Aung San Suu Kyi



Loreen with the WCP Child Jury







REBECCA GOTHIE

Faith, Sarah and Bridget in Ghana are all involved in the *Rights and Democracy for One Million Girls* project, which is being run by the World's Children's Prize in collaboration with ECPAT Sweden. The Swedish Postcode Lottery – the lottery for a better world – is funding the project.



JOHAN BJERKE



JOHAN BJERKE

THE WORLD'S CHILDREN'S PRIZE FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD