

## Educational Challenges for Girls in Pakistan

Pakistan is one of the poorest countries in the world. Consequently, there are limited funds available from the State to provide quality education. Government support to primary schools mainly covers the cost of textbooks and school uniforms.

School infrastructure is inadequate. Approximately 16 percent of public schools have no buildings or cover. More than 75 percent have no electricity, almost 50 percent have no water, and 60 percent are without toilets. Well-trained teachers are in short supply, and most do not have access to modern learning resources or new teaching techniques.

Girls in Pakistan do not have equal access to education. Parents who can't afford to send all of their children to school usually send the boys and keep the girls at home, since boys are seen as the future breadwinners for the family. For cultural reasons, parents often don't want to send their daughters to schools lacking separate toilet facilities, separate water sources for hand washing, and "boundary walls" to provide adequate security and protection.

**We can help create a hopeful future for girls in Punjab, Pakistan by donating to the Soroptimist International December 10 President's Appeal 2006.**

Note: All photographs are courtesy of Annie Bungeroth and Oxfam.

## About Oxfam GB

Oxfam GB is a charitable, British development, relief and campaigning organization that works with others to find lasting solutions to poverty and suffering around the world. Affiliated with Oxfam International, Oxfam GB recognizes that poverty makes people more vulnerable to conflict and natural calamity, much of which is preventable. To overcome poverty and suffering involves changing unjust policies and practices, nationally and internationally, as well as working closely with people in poverty. Oxfam, together with its partners, believes that we can build a more just and safe world, in which people take control over their own lives and enjoy their basic rights.



Oxfam is a charity registered in the UK, No. 202918.

All donations should be sent to your Federation Headquarters for onward transmission to Soroptimist International.

Please mark donations:

**December 10 President's Appeal 2006**

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*SI President's Appeal 2006*

## Project Punjab: Helping Girls Into School



**A project in partnership with Oxfam GB to increase girls' attendance and improve the quality of education in rural, impoverished areas of Punjab Province, Pakistan**

*December 10 President's Appeal 2006*

**Project Punjab:  
Helping Girls Into School**

Each year the President of Soroptimist International selects a project that provides direct assistance to women and girls in extreme need.

This year, Soroptimist International is partnering with Oxfam GB to raise £100,000 to increase girls' attendance and improve the quality of education at six primary schools in rural, impoverished areas of Punjab Province, Pakistan.

**In Pakistan, one in four children between the ages of five and nine do not go to school. And in rural areas, boys are three times more likely than girls to receive a primary education. As a result, literacy rates for women in some areas are as low as nine percent.**

Project Punjab will provide assistance in the districts of Rajanpur and Muzaffargarh, areas that are prone to droughts and flooding and represent two of the three poorest areas in Punjab. Literacy rates among girls are low, and crimes related to violence against women and "honour killings"<sup>1</sup> are high.

Working with Oxfam GB, Soroptimists can help improve educational access and opportunity for more than 1,000 girls—and enhance the overall quality of primary education through teacher training, classroom rehabilitation, and community support and involvement.

<sup>1</sup>*Honour killing is the practice of a family member killing a female relative when she has been considered to have brought dishonour to the family, even if she couldn't have prevented the situation (rape, for instance).*



*Nasira's class has been learning about the rights of the child. She writes, "We should get educated at school."*

**Project Punjab will:**

***Train 40 teachers in women's issues and child-friendly teaching techniques.*** Project Punjab funds will be used to provide training on women's rights, behavioural change, children's rights and sensitive issues such as child sexual abuse, violence against women and honour killings. Teachers will also receive refresher training on modern teaching techniques and have access to the latest teaching aids and materials through the establishment of a new local Resource Centre.

***Rehabilitate classrooms and the physical environment of schools to enhance learning and encourage more parents to get their daughters educated.*** Project Punjab funds will construct new classrooms, gender-specific toilet and washing facilities, and boundary walls to help reassure parents that their daughters will be secure and well protected at school. Classrooms will receive essential furniture, such as benches, and be equipped with charts and messages about gender equity and prevention of violence against women.

***Raise awareness among educational organizations and the local community about the importance of equal access to education for boys and girls.*** Through the establishment of parent-teacher "School Management Committees," parents will become more involved in educational decisions affecting the lives and futures of their daughters. Awareness building within the community at large will lead to a more supportive environment for girls to receive an education, both now and in the future.

More than 1,500 pupils will benefit from Project Punjab, 70 percent of them girls. With access to an education, girls will have greater opportunities to earn a decent living and realize their rights.



*Adeeba says, "We've been learning how to measure things. This will help us when we are at the market."*

**Please support Project Punjab now!**

To ensure Project Punjab can be initiated, we need to raise at least GBP £50,000. If we do not reach this figure, Oxfam will use our donations to fund existing projects to increase access to education for girls in Pakistan. **Please send donations to your Federation Headquarters, marked "December 10 President's Appeal 2006."**