

STORIES FROM OUR **PROJECT** COUNTRIES



علم طفلاً
EDUCATE A CHILD

A programme of **education above all**[™]

Image: ©EAA

APRIL 2015



The stories contained in this booklet are examples of real stories from the field, in locations where Educate A Child and its partners operate.





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**EDUCATE A CHILD IN
CAMBODIA**

KEY FACTS

- **There are over 31,000 out of school children in Cambodia**
- **Children in school through EAC co-funded projects: 57,372 by 2017**
- **To date Aide et Action has enrolled 7,094 out of school children**

Cambodian children are denied an education due to obstacles such as poverty, child work, minority group status and gender. Children with disabilities are one of the most vulnerable groups in Cambodia, and are the least likely to go to school. Less than 10% of Cambodian children and youths with disabilities have access to any form of education.

EAC's and Aide et Action's (AEA) efforts in Cambodia address the range of obstacles children face and include support to children like 13-year-old Ratha Natra. Natra has hydrocephalus and was abandoned by his parents at birth. AEA's partner, the Rabbit School, a Cambodian organisation that supports disadvantaged children and develops formal education programmes for children with multiple and severe disabilities, began working with Natra in 2008.

'He was not able to walk or talk. He could not understand pictures. He could not use the toilet or get dressed', recalls Hun Touch, a mediator for the Rabbit School. 'He was so skinny, even after years of treatment. He was critically sick and had already had brain surgery twice.'

Natra's caregivers and teachers at the Rabbit School developed an individual educational plan tailored to his specific intellectual and physical needs. Their work with

Natra paid off: in 2012, he enrolled in the Rabbit School's integrated classroom at Toul Kok public primary school.

There, learning alongside nondisabled children, Natra learned to read and write words, to speak using three-word sentences and gestures, and to make simple calculations.

Today, Natra is healthy and strong. He enjoys reproducing his teachers' handwriting in his own notebooks. He can also walk by himself. 'He likes to help caregivers and teachers. He helps to clean the table, sweep the floor or help his friends', explains Hun Touch. 'He is an amazing little boy.'

Although Natra has only just started his formal academic journey, his caregivers hope he will engage in vocational training and job placement by next year. 'Natra is unsure about what he would like to do in the future. But some teachers here are confident he could be a teacher or a driver', says Touch.

The partnership between EAC and AEA is an example of EAC's commitment to reach the most marginalised out of school children by partnering with local not-for-profit organisations. EAC identifies suitable partners and co-funds their efforts in priority countries to reach more children and get closer to the goal of education for all.





Image: ©Al Baker

**EDUCATE A CHILD IN
BANGLADESH**

KEY FACTS

- **There are over 600,000 out of school children in Bangladesh**
- **Children in school through EAC co-funded projects: 219,700 by 2018**

While enrollment in the first grade in Bangladesh is high, as many as half of those students fail to complete primary school. In 2010, the total number of children who dropped out of school, combined with the number of children who had never enrolled, was estimated at almost 8 million. A major reason for this is poverty, which results in many children working to help their families. In these cases, the income the child generates provides a much-needed contribution to the overall income of the family. While not ideal, this immediate financial returns makes the perceived delayed return on education difficult for struggling families to justify. Another significant problem for certain areas of Bangladesh is difficult geographies, making it impossible for children to reach school. To address these barriers, Educate A Child (EAC) has partnered with The Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) and BRAC.

DAM is a Bangladeshi organisation that provides education and medical services to children and adults. Operating more than 1,900 learning centres in rural locations in 26 districts across the country, DAM recognises that some children will inevitably have to work for a living, and provides children with a non-formal education model that puts students through five grades of education in four years. Tamanna is a 12-year-old girl who attends one of DAM's schools. "I come to school for three to four hours a day before going to help with housework or the textile orders from home. This is the only school I have ever been in; without it I would not have an education at all." Through its co-funded partnership model, EAC and DAM will establish 1,000 new Children's Learning Centers in the Noakhali, Laxmipur, Chittagong, Mymensingh, and Netrokona districts of Bangladesh. As of January 2015, the project has enrolled 25,955 out of school children and aims to enroll a total of 40,000 by the end of 2017.

Another of EAC's partners, BRAC, is a Bangladeshi development organisation dedicated to alleviating

poverty by empowering the poor to bring about change in their own lives.

BRAC offers free non-formal primary education at a low cost, using a 'one teacher, one school' model. BRAC operates around 23,000 schools across 64 districts in Bangladesh and has enrolled 700,000 students, focusing its efforts on enrolling children not currently served by government primary schools or private schools, particularly those living in poor and marginalised families.

The Haor basin flood plain in the northeastern region of Sylhet is a permanent marshland. More than 40 per cent of the villages in Sylhet have no primary schools, and for six to seven months each year, large sections of the area are almost entirely covered by water, making it extremely difficult for children and teachers alike to reach schools.

BRAC operates 'floating schools' that serve a dual purpose - they act as a bus, collecting the children, and as a classroom, providing a space for education. This solution is innovative and inspiring, as the children are excited to learn - an opportunity often denied to their parents. EAC and BRAC have enrolled a total of 14,486 children and will provide them with a full primary education by the end of 2018 on purpose-built boats in the Haor basin flood plain. In addition, the partners have also enrolled 60,345 out of school children in urban slums in and around the cities of Dhaka, Sylhet, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Rangpur, Jessore, Mymensingh, Comilla, Gazipur, and Narsingdi. They plan to enroll a total of 62,000 by the end of 2017.

Together, the projects with DAM and BRAC have enrolled 100,786 children in schools in Bangladesh so far.





Image: ©Al Sada

**EDUCATE A CHILD IN
SUDAN**

KEY FACTS

- According to UNICEF there are over 1,800,000 out of school children in Sudan
- Children in school through EAC co-funded projects: 611,900 by 2017

Sudan is the point where Africa meets the Middle East, a country with a rich cultural heritage and enormous potential for development.

Any nation aspiring toward peace and prosperity must invest in its human resources, especially its children, and Sudan is no exception. In Sudan, approximately 1,800,000 children are out of school, primarily due to conflict, poverty, special needs or gender. In eastern Sudan, where nomadic lifestyles predominate, school enrollment has its particular challenges.

The nomads of Sudan have age-long traditions of shifting their families and livestock from place to place, and the transient nature of this way of life makes it difficult for nomadic children to stay long enough in one place to be enrolled in school. For the parents of these children, the benefits and importance of formal education may even seem irrelevant.

To address this situation, Educate A Child has partnered with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for the next three years to increase access to education in 14 out of 18 states in Sudan, including the nomadic communities in the east of the country. Working together, the partnership aims to enroll 600,000 out of school children into basic education between 2012 and 2017.

So far, results of the partnership efforts in Sudan are promising. As of January 2015, 230,542 out of school children, half of whom are girls, were enrolled in primary education programmes. Raising awareness is an important first step, but the way schools are run also makes an important difference in keeping children in school.

In eastern Sudan, parents are becoming increasingly engaged in their children's education. Parent-teacher associations (PTAs) have played a major role in resolving problems and barriers that used to keep children out of school. PTAs have been vocal in advocating the importance of education, girls' education in particular. Nearly 1,900 PTA members have been trained since the projects began,

Ms. Salha Baraj is a member of the PTA in Um Ushoush School. As a woman, Ms. Baraj is very aware of the cultural norms that may hinder girls' education in the region. In eastern Sudan, many girls drop out of school at an early age to get married. Ms. Baraj is actively engaged in discussions about the future of children's education in her village and focuses on issues that make girls more confident around school.

For example, water and sanitation facilities are critical in providing dignity for female students. The PTA members in Um Ushoush School have worked hard with UNICEF and the Ministry of Education to increase the number of classes, train more teachers from remote areas, and to provide private bathrooms for girls and decent accommodation for female teachers. As of January 2015, over 950 teachers and classroom facilitators and 80 headmasters have participated in trainings, 53 private latrines have been constructed, and 193 classrooms have been renovated.

Thanks to the efforts of EAC, its partners, and on-the-ground advocates like Ms. Baraj, the prospect of educating children from nomadic communities in eastern Sudan is becoming brighter every day.





Image: ©M. Cazals

**EDUCATE A CHILD IN
INDIA**

KEY FACTS

- **There are over 1,673,900 out of school children in India**
- **Children in school through EAC co-funded projects: 408,064 by 2018**
- **As of January 2015, Educate Girls has enrolled 35,880 out of school children, trained over 4,500 teachers and enlisted the efforts of over 3,150 (Team Balika) volunteers for community mobilisation purposes**

The number of out of school children in India without access to primary education is estimated at almost 1.7 million, and poverty is identified as a fundamental challenge to enrollment. However, gender discrimination is a significant contributor to the growing number of out of school children. To many poor families, educating a girl means losing her as an income provider for the family.

EAC partners with Educate Girls, a local NGO in India with an impressive track record of enrolling young girls into schools in areas with the worst gender indicators. EAC and Educate Girls have teamed up to provide quality primary education to 64,000 out of school children in the Bali, Sumerpur, and Rani blocks of the Pali district.

Educate Girls runs a comprehensive model of reform for government schools through community ownership, with the aim of securing 100% enrollment, higher attendance and improved learning outcomes for all girls. The organisation engages girl students, teachers, schools, communities and government officials within existing frameworks to create a sustainable, scalable and holistic platform in each village.

The programme recruits youth advocates, known as Team Balika, who tackle the issue of gender inequality. These youth leaders work as champions for girls' education and catalysts for school reform. Team Balika works in the schools as well as village communities spreading awareness about girls' education—often visiting homes to highlight the benefits of education to reluctant parents. This approach has boosted enrollment, retention and learning outcomes for all girls.

EAC's partnership with Educate Girls aims to provide hope and opportunities to girls like Seema. Seema lost her father at the age of 11 and to make things worse, the villagers blamed his death on her ill fate.

Adding to Seema's despair was her marriage to an abusive alcoholic twice her age. Soon after her marriage, she conceived a baby. Instead of being happy, her husband threw her out of the house. She lived on the streets for several days without proper care and nutrition, which resulted in a miscarriage.

A few days later, Sharda, a Team Balika member, found Seema and counselled her to forget her past and face her struggles with confidence. She re-enrolled Seema in school, where she studied for two years and later cleared her 10th grade exam with flying colours. Today, Seema is a proud member of Team Balika. She works with Sharda to enroll out of school girls, supports the schoolteachers and conducts life-skills education sessions for adolescent girls.

By 2016, Educate Girls will expand its programme to the nine districts in Rajasthan with the worst gender indicators to improve education opportunities for children, especially girls. Beyond that time, it will establish partnerships with other state governments to allow them to replicate its model across India and around the world.

EAC is committed to helping Educate Girls achieve two key milestones: directly enrolling and retaining 64,000 out of school children by 2018 and training teachers at 6,600 schools to implement creative teaching and learning techniques.





Image: ©Imagine1day

**EDUCATE A CHILD IN
ETHIOPIA**

KEY FACTS

- **There are over 1,702,600 primary out of school children in Ethiopia**
- **Children in school through EAC co-funded projects: 113,229 by 2017**
- **As of January 2015, imagine1day has enrolled 13,801 out of school children and trained over 1,000 teachers and 1,540 other stakeholders such as school administration and community members**

There are over 1,702,600 primary aged out of school children in Ethiopia. A lack of infrastructure, child marriage, and child labour and in some cases a general distrust of formal education are all barriers that prevent children from going to school. Thanks to a partnership between EAC and imagine1day, an international education-focused NGO, this situation is going to change for at least 28,599 out of school children across 103 school communities in Ethiopia's Bale Zone.

Targeting one of the most marginalised areas of Ethiopia, EAC and imagine1day are applying ingenuity to support communities in bringing quality primary education to children of all ages.

In the community of Yadot, imagine1day's impact is already being felt. Sisey and Genet Bekele, aged 15 and 13, used to work as delivery girls for local coffee producers to pay for school supplies like pens, notebooks and uniforms. They only had enough money for one meal a day. The girls were about to drop out until Tagene Dame convinced his church to support the girls' studies.

Dame, a religious leader in his community, was one of the first people to participate in imagine1day's Religious and Clan Leaders Training in February 2014.

For the first time ever, imagine1day invited 206 religious and clan leaders in the Bale Zone to talk about gender equity and to analyse what religious texts say about the value of education.

'During the training, there were some misunderstandings about formal education and religious education, but in the end we finally agreed that both are important and, more than that, they are complementary', says Dame.

'Previously, I used to believe that if I sent my kids to school, that was the limit of my responsibility. Now I feel

like it's my responsibility to make sure my neighbours' kids and my whole community is [sic] educated', he says.

With EAC's support, imagine1day is also training hundreds of teachers, school principals, Parent Teacher Association (PTA) members and other community leaders in active learning, leadership, educational policy and income-generating activities.

Saddam, aged 15, missed one year of school because his parents had to migrate with their cattle when the rains stopped last year. 'When we came back, I was angry because they told me not to go to school. They said people who went to school before me didn't get anything, so why should I go?'

Following imagine1day training in February, a member of the town of Betele's PTA went to Saddam's house and talked to them about the importance of education. Saddam joined in: 'I tried to convince them by saying that you didn't have a chance to go to school, so why don't you give me this opportunity?'

Thanks to the persistence of Betele's PTA members, Saddam's parents agreed to send him back to class, and he is now a proud and determined Grade 3 student. He gets up at 5am and walks 7km—a 90-minute walk each way—to get to school.

EAC, together with imagine1day, is supporting community leaders in removing barriers to education for children of all ages. This project, ending in July 2017 will directly benefit over 74,000 children, educators and community leaders. In the town of Betele, that means Saddam is one step closer to achieving his personal goal: 'Now I am in an early grade, but when I complete high school and university I will be an engineer or an administrator'.





Image: ©EAA

**EDUCATE A CHILD IN
CÔTE D'IVOIRE**

KEY FACTS

- **There are over 1,160,700 out of school children in Côte d'Ivoire**
- **Children in school through EAC co-funded projects: 61,343 by 2017**

EAC and Save the Children are collaborating in Côte d'Ivoire to reach children who have been hardest hit by the protracted violence in their country over the past decade. Among the casualties of the conflict is primary school education. Educational investments have declined steadily over the last ten years, resulting in the deterioration of educational buildings, programming and central planning, as well as teacher training.

Through its partnership with EAC, Save the Children is implementing the Build a Future project to work with communities affected by over a decade of violence, to create opportunities for children to access quality primary school education.

The Build a Future project encourages communities without access to public schools to take ownership of the construction and operation of community schools. The project targets communities that are willing to supply labour, materials and time to the development of their schools. To support their efforts, the project rewards these communities with both financial and capacity-building support to develop and launch their schools.

The project will oversee construction of 200 schools in the northern and central regions of Côte d'Ivoire, providing communities with sufficient educational infrastructure, equipment and training to offer six years of primary education. EAC and Save the Children aim to enroll 28,800 out of school children in the newly constructed schools. As of January 2015, 65 schools have been built and 13,640 out of school children have been enrolled.

As part of the Build a Future project, EAC and Save the Children will provide students with kits containing the materials they will need for school. In the words of Fofana Amed, a 10-year-old student at the newly-

opened Kofila community school, 'I am very happy today for the gifts of school kits. In September my daddy could not buy all my books because he had no money. He says they have contributed to build the school. Thank you very much; I'll work hard at school'. To date 13,299 learning kits, 116 recreation kits, and 266 teacher kits have been distributed.

The first year of the partnership between EAC and Save the Children was a success. As of January 2015 Build a Future has:

- Trained 398 teachers
- Trained 120 Community members
- Trained 103 local NGO members
- Reinforced and improved child protection
- Trained an additional 240 community members and local NGO staff on child rights and alternatives to humiliation and physical punishment

Local implementation partners conducted 263 awareness campaigns on children's schooling, the identification of out of school children as well as the establishment of their birth certificates. These campaigns reached over 12,540 adults and 9,330 children.

Parents and teachers are enthusiastic about the impact Build a Future is having in their communities. 'Indeed, the support we received for the construction of the school gives us so much pleasure; teachers and parents have consistently demonstrated exemplary mobilisation. Today emotion is great because of the distribution of school kits and educational and recreational kits. We also appreciate the training we received with our colleagues. We promise you to make good use of all these facilities', says Miss YA Tékibla Angela, a teacher at the Kongobanadougou community school.



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Macmillan Primary
ENGLISH
for Rwanda

PUPIL'S BOOK

3

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ENGLISH
for Rwanda
PUPIL'S BOOK

3

**EDUCATE A CHILD IN
RWANDA**

Primary English for Rwanda is an exciting new level course for Rwandan primary schools. It introduces the structures and functions of English through a

KEY FACTS

- **There are over 70,000 refugees in Rwanda**
- **Children in school through an EAC co-funded project: 6,236**

Rwanda currently hosts over 70,000 refugees, most of whom have fled armed conflicts over the past two decades in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The Government of Rwanda has generously allowed 40% of refugee students to be integrated into local schools, while the remaining children attend schools within the refugee camps. Thanks to EAC and the UN refugee agency (UNHCR), Rwanda has been able to enroll and retain 6,236 out of school children in primary school since 2012 with project activities indirectly benefitting 10,970 additional refugee students.

One effective intervention to promote access and retention of refugee children in primary school in Rwanda has been teacher training. Teachers remain a cornerstone to learning and the protection of children, and this becomes even more critical when supporting children who have been affected by conflict and displacement. These trainings, which have reached a total of 205 teachers and 27 National Education Officers, focus not only on providing teachers with the necessary tools to improve teaching and learning, but also on providing them with the awareness and skills to ensure a safe learning environment for children.

‘These children have survived war. I am teaching traumatised children who have seen their parents being killed in front of them with machetes’, says teacher Ruhorinbere Ntagomwa. ‘When the teachers try to talk about history and our past in Congo, some children break down. It is our duty to counsel these children and reassure them that they are safe in Rwanda. We are teachers and protectors.’

Ruhorinbere, like the children he teaches, is a refugee from the DRC. Today he lives in the Nyabiheke refugee camp in Rwanda’s Gatsibo district. The incredible beauty of the surroundings belies the experiences of the more than 14,000 Congolese refugees who have found safety and security here.

While the trauma of war is now behind them, the long-term impact of displacement presents ongoing challenges, particularly for the children and young people living in the camp. For Ruhorinbere, education is crucial to overcome the horrors his students have experienced, and he loves his job as a teacher. ‘I believe it was my calling in life. I can’t see myself doing anything else. It is the most fulfilling job one can do – teaching the next generation and giving them a future.’

Over the past three years, with the support of EAC, UNHCR has implemented a series of teacher training workshops in Rwanda that have given Ruhorinbere and his colleagues better techniques for teaching and protecting children. For example, recent training

explored simple techniques for supporting and encouraging children with disabilities, and the results have been astounding.

‘I have been teaching for 12 years and never thought that there could be such simple solutions to helping children [with disabilities]’, Ruhorinbere says. ‘Before I thought it required special, expensive materials to help these children – something I wouldn’t be able to provide. But I’ve learnt simple techniques of how to counsel and encourage them and it really helps. Having special needs doesn’t mean your life has to come to a stop. It’s just a bump.’

‘Even the other children have changed their views. Now the kids are more sensitive to those with special needs and treat them better. Before these children were isolated and made fun of. Now the other students are actually helping out their classmates. This has also improved everyone’s school marks.’

In addition to teacher training, EAC has enabled UNHCR to expand access to education through supporting the construction of new classrooms and bathroom facilities at schools.

As many families struggle with the cost of living, UNHCR has also helped to provide new students with school kits containing uniforms and shoes, books, pens and pencils—all of the essentials required for attending school in Rwanda. Such assistance is critical in ensuring that children enroll and stay in school.

For 12-year-old Solange, the school kit has allowed her to return to school and focus on building a future away from war. She is thriving with the support and is at the top of her class.

‘I fled with my mum, my dad and siblings to escape war’, she says. ‘There is peace here, not like in Congo, where we were always afraid. Here I can sleep without dreaming of bullets.’

‘I like the prospects of the future [school] brings me. It’s important for refugees to be in school. One day I want to help other refugees. My family received help when we arrived. The children were given books and uniforms and were enrolled in school. I want to give books and uniforms to other refugee children and see them smile!’

In Rwanda and the 11 other countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East where the partnership is implemented, UNHCR and EAC are helping refugee children to thrive through education. With more displaced people in the world today than any time since the Second World War, access to quality education is essential for the future development of these children and their communities.



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EDUCATE A CHILD

A programme of education above all™