

### The Need for Education Worldwide

Malala Yousafzai has said “One child, one teacher, one pen and one book can change the world.” Malala is the Pakistani girl who was shot by the Taliban in 2012 while she was walking home from school. She went on to receive the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize and is still active in promoting education. She now started The Malala Fund in 2013, to help enable girls to have a quality education and to “advocate for more resources for education and safe schools for every child” (The Malala fund ). So far the fund is found in Pakistan, Nigeria, Kenya, Sierra Leone, and for Syrian Refugees. Malala is a young person standing up for what she believes in, to help the kids from where she grew up and all over the world, that all kids around the world have a chance to receive an education. We should stand with Malala to make sure that ALL children around the world have the opportunity to attend school, especially those in developing nations in the Middle East.

The Malala Fund is a partner with the United Nations and their 2015 Global Goals, these 17 goals are to help end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda, these goals are to hopefully be achieved by 2030 (UN). The goal of a quality education is to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” (UN global goal). According to the United Nations only 49% of kids will attend school secondary school worldwide (UN global goal). Some of the goals they hope to achieve by 2030 are that all children “complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education,” that they have “access to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education,” to eliminate gender disparities in education to ensure equal access to all levels of education, to ensure that all youth achieve literacy and numeracy (UN). To “build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disable, and gender

sensitive, and provide safe, nonviolent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all,” and to increase the supply of qualified teachers (UN). In the United States we are privileged to have a free education system in place for kids through secondary education level.

Education does not just teach children to read, write, and math, it has benefits of reducing poverty, promotes peace, boosts economic growth- increasing income, promotes girls’ and women’s rights (GPE). “103 million youth worldwide lack basic literacy skills, and more than 60 per cent of them are women,” how can women make choices for themselves and their family if they do not know how to read (UN)?

If the youth are not able to learn, then they grow up to be adults and still not have any literacy skills. Adults literacy has remained high, in 2011 there were 774 million illiterate adults, they are hoping it to decline to 743 here in 2015 (Provost). The ten countries that account for almost three- fourths of the world’s illiterate adults are India, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Egypt, Brazil, Indonesia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

It is estimated that 38% of children not able to attend school are in conflict ridden areas (Global partnership for education). When they are forced out of school they are more vulnerable and at risk of violence, forced labor and displacement (GPE). Sadly only about two percent of humanitarian aid was invested into education in 2013 (GPE). Reestablishing schooling in these countries promotes peace, and helps foster new economic growth. Most importantly, it can provide normalcy to the children. This could help keep them safe and off the streets, it gives them a positive place to go after going through hard times. How can kids know about why things are happening in their country if they do not know the history of their country?

As of September 2015, forty percent of children from five conflict- scarred Middle Eastern countries, of Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, and Sudan, are not attending school (Laub). In 2010 between 7 and 8 million children in these countries were not in school, currently it is around 13.7 million are not (Laub). If these children do not receive the education they need it could lead to more militancy, migration and a dim future for the region. "Close to 9,000 schools in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Libya have either been destroyed in fighting, turned into shelters for the displaced people or been commandeered by fighter" (Laub). A United Nations report from September says "The forces that are crushing individual lives and futures are also destroying the prospects for an entire region," (Laub). They believe that the lack of education is helping drive refugees to reach Europe, because children that are not going to school are more vulnerable to recruitment by militant groups (Laub).

Nearly two-thirds of the world's women are illiterate, 63 millions girls around the world are not in school, as girls get older fewer stay in school (GPE). Some reasons that they may drop out of schooling include poverty, being forced to marry, because of violence in or around school, due to the cost of school, or of area traditions that do not value girls learning (Malala Fund). Educating girls can help prevent them from being married as children and gives them greater control over their relationship (Malala Fund). The United Nations has their own Girls' education Initiative, it was launched in "2000 by the UN Secretary-General to assist national governments as they fulfill their responsibilities towards ensuring the right to education and gender equality for all children, girls and boys alike" (UNGEI). There is an African proverb that is "If you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman, you educate a nation."

In October 1965 Pope Paul VI first wrote about education in *Gravissimum Educationis*, for which he states

All men of every race, condition and age, since they enjoy the dignity of a human being, have an inalienable right to an education that is in keeping with their ultimate goal, their ability, their sex, and the culture and tradition of their country, and also in harmony with their fraternal association with other peoples in the fostering of true unity and peace on earth.

He later talks about the importance of schools themselves that they are “designed not only to develop with special care the intellectual faculties but also to form the ability to judge rightly, to hand on the cultural legacy of previous generations, to foster a sense of values, to prepare for professional life.” He concludes at the end that education is important no matter the work load that the youth should take it up to be prepared for life.

He then wrote about education in the *Populorum Progression* that was published March 1967. He writes

We can even say that economic growth is dependent on social progress, the goal to which it aspires; and that basic education is the first objective for any nation seeking to develop itself. Lack of education is as serious as lack of food; the illiterate is a starved spirit.

When someone learns how to read and write, he is equipped to do a job and to shoulder a profession, to develop self-confidence and realize that he can progress along with others.

He makes the point that education is not just greatly beneficial for the individual, but even as much needed for any nation looking to grow. He also states “literacy is the "first and most basic tool for personal enrichment and social integration; and it is society's most valuable tool for furthering development and economic progress.”” Without education and learning, culture and

society would not be able to develop and evolve over time, it's as important as food, shelter and clothing.

There are plenty of different Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) that are doing different work within the sector of education in developing nations. Whether that is the Peace Corps, The Malala fund, the work that Oprah has done with opening the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls in South Africa, Teach for India, Oportunidades in Mexico, or the female secondary school assistance project in Bangladesh, all of the organizations are doing their own part of providing education to children that need it. Whether they are building schools, help fund the building, or paying stipends to poor families so that way their children can go to and stay in school (White). But part of the problem is making sure that the kids that are able to make it to attend school, is that they are able to get a quality education. That they are not in an overcrowded classroom, they have qualified teachers, and the teaching materials needed to have a quality learning environment (White).

The Global Partnership for Education is a NGO that wants it to be “possible for all children, including the poorest and most marginalized, to attend school and receive a quality education... We support developing countries from the design of their education sector plan to its funding, implementation, and evaluation” (GPE). They work together with their partners and local education groups to help develop, implement, monitor and evaluate education sector plans at country-level. The local education groups “led by the national government and usually include: donors and development agencies, teachers' organizations, civil society organizations, and private education providers” (GPE). Their program focuses on three areas; learning outcomes, out-of-school children, and education financing. The global partnership is found in 61 countries, including; Haiti, Nepal, Pakistan, Liberia, Mozambique, Uganda, and Afghanistan

(GPE). They are there to “ensure that every child receives a quality basic education, prioritizing the poorest, most vulnerable and those living in fragile, and conflict- affected countries” (GPE).

Growing up where you go to school from the young age of 4 through secondary school of the age of 18, it can be hard to remember that majority of kids around the world do not have the same opportunities as we do. Education can help change their lives and their country. It would also help revolutionize the world, by bringing peace and economic stimulation. If we can help educate those who need it, we can see how it can really change the world. Malala has described education as a precious gift, it should not be that way it should be accessible for all, "In some parts of the world, students are going to school every day. It's their normal life. But in other parts of the world, we are starving for education... it's like a precious gift. It's like a diamond..."(Global Goals).

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