

PROJECT
MALA

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Mala
News

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Obeetee Pvt Ltd

An action programme for the elimination of child labour in India

Dear Robin,

After Project Mala 2

In reading the comments of past students in preparation for these newsletters, I am most impressed by the mature attitude and in particular that so many of the girls have chosen to postpone their marriages. Some are pursuing further education but for many the reason is just because they feel they need some life of their own before devoting themselves to motherhood. Also it is interesting how many of them praise the Project Mala Social Workers who are the main link between Project Mala and the villages.

Mehender

Mehender is clearly one of those people who was born bright, as even from an early age he recognised the importance of education. None of his brothers attended school, yet he enrolled at Project Mala Hasra School. At that time Project Mala only offered schooling up to grade five, so after he passed out in 1996 he continued his education in some other school.



Mehender feels privileged that, in spite of the family poverty, he was able to continue his education. Today he is doing a Masters degree in Political Science in a correspondence course. He says that he would have been working as an unskilled labourer, like many of his peers, if he had not attended school.

He praises Project Mala not just for the quality of education offered but also for the health and hygiene instruction. He blames the high mortality rates of the villages on a lack of cleanliness. His house has toilet facilities, in contrast to all the other village houses. He has also installed a tube well to supply the family with clean drinking water.

Pushpa

Pushpa attended Project Mala Patehra School and passed out in 2001. She comes from an extremely poor family and lives in a mud hut with her parents who are both daily wage labourers. Their



drinking water comes from a deep dug well (not a tube well). Pushpa is now the main wage earner and her Rs 2,500 (£25) a month salary is supporting her parents and younger siblings, one of whom is attending a Project Mala School.

Pushpa is a confident and motivated young lady. She believes that education for women is an important tool for overcoming social and economic obstacles. She took a bold decision not to marry early, like her friends, as she felt that early marriage destroys women's self-esteem and makes them dependent on their husbands. Pushpa is still studying English and Sanskrit and hopes to become a teacher one day.

Robin Garland

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