

## **SRI UPDATE**

**June 28, 2015**

Dear SRI supporters and friends,

I wanted to give you an update on SRI's activities, as I have been in Pakistan since the 5<sup>th</sup> of March inspecting our new and ongoing programs for health, education, women's economic development and access to clean water. I am happy to inform you that I was very pleased with the progress we have made in making a difference in the lives of women and children in Pakistan.

Through your generous support we started 8 schools last year, which are providing quality education to more than 1,500 students. Most of our schools were started in areas where children were deprived of an education because there were no schools in the vicinity. After inspecting these schools, I was really impressed by the enthusiasm of the students and the dedication of the teachers. I am so grateful to all of you for giving these children a life changing opportunity through education.

We have also completed almost 9 clean water projects, such as water filtration plants, hand pumps and water supply systems in many of our villages. Swat has a very difficult mountainous terrain where we have to dig almost 200 feet to find water (versus 50 feet in a flat area), but we continue to create access to clean drinking water as it is very important for saving lives and preventing disease, especially during Ramadan, the month of fasting, when people are very vulnerable.

This year, we also decided to give support to women and children in a government-run shelter called Darul Aman. When I visited this institution and saw the condition of the supposed beneficiaries, I was horrified to find that it was also being used as a high-security prison for women who have disobeyed their parents or husbands. There are 80 women and children crammed into three small rooms with no access to daily supplies for hygiene, healthcare, education or a chance to get legal aid. These women and children are the most vulnerable and destitute people in their society, as most of them are victims of gender-based violence, and some have even been threatened with death by their families.

You will be happy to know that now, through SRI, your donations are going towards free legal aid and psychological help for these desperate women, along with medicines, education and supplies to maintain hygiene in this cramped and poorly run institution.

Again, a big thanks to all of you, as the important work SRI does for women and children is only possible because of your generous contributions and the many hours of work that our volunteers contribute.

Best regards

Zebu

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