

„School is fun and we want to learn!“

Monika Girls High School in the Bagrot Valley, Northern Pakistan



View of the classroom

This statement was often repeated by the girls and young women in Bagrot valley on our visit in Mai 2009. We had numerous talks with pupils and teachers of different schools, and with parents, too. At Monika Girls High School we were regular guests. Travelling in the Northern Areas of Pakistan is still safe. Since autumn 2009, after decades of struggle, the region achieved more political independence and is now called **Gilgit-Baltistan**. It is out of the way of Pakistan's current trouble spots.

Monika Girls High School

The school- and college-classes are by – and – large running smoothly, based on a high rate of acceptance within the population. The numbers speak for themselves: 302 pupils are now attending the girls school and 42 students the three college-classes. Instructions for the pupils and the students are taught by 21 teachers. Nine teachers are financed by the Board of Education and twelve teachers from your donations. **The 12 privately - financed teachers are costing a total of 830 EUR.**

Elementary schoolgirls



Most of the girls are eager to go to school, they like it and achieve good to very good results. This year 90 %



A little break on the daily way to school

of the girls in the 10th class passed the final exams, in the 9th class the figure was still 70%. And this, despite the fact that the girls have no time to do regular homework because they have to do a lot of work in the house and in the fields. Sometimes they have to miss the lessons.

A view of the kitchen

For many years lessons have been organized in two



shifts. The morning is reserved for the seven classes of pre- and elementary school, the afternoon is for further education lessons up to class 12.

Since the beginning of the new term in April the 9th class has 86 (!) pupils and had to be split into two classes – a great success which speaks for the school. Credit for this goes in particular to the two local co-ordinators Ahmad Ali and Muhammad Sharif. They look after the interests of the school and run its affairs with extraordinary ability.

New offer of education

Because of the requirements from some young women they offer since March 2009 upgrading courses for a further education section: one additional teacher prepares the school- and college graduates for the „Certificate of Teaching“. This certificate, awarded after a written examination at a public college, is required for employment in government schools, apart from a

regular school- and college certificate. And more and more women are very much interested in that. **The additional teacher costs 80 EUR per month.** Considering our limited funds there was nothing left for the measures such as the purchase of teaching material for the school or for a reading competition. Priority goes to the professional interests of the young women. It was also necessary to increase the salaries of all teachers by about 30 %, backdated to January, in view of the considerable price-increases (50-100%) for everyday goods like wheat, flour, oil, sugar, rice, firewood, gas etc.

Donations well invested

For the current year the total expenditure for all teachers amounts to 10.000 EUR, a sum which is well invested. Many of our friends and the organisation "Forum Kinder in Not e. V." made with their donations this development program this year possible. Some have called for donations instead of presents at private functions. Thank you very much for that. The former class 10 of the Ursulinen Secondary School Cologne provided with their engagement an impressive contribution and the team from Offroad Reports in Zurich donated their well deserved film-award. For that, too, our sincere thanks!

Scholarship system



Test in the schoolyard

The award of scholarships for attending the BASE Public School in Bagrot is now in its third year. It was to be decided on the basis of a test in maths, Urdu and English for girls from all primary schools in the valley who have cleared the 3th and 4th class. The huge interest took us completely by surprise: 117 schoolgirls showed up for the test! In the past two years 30-40 girls took part. At present a scholarship, i.e. **the school-fees cost 3 EUR a month for one schoolgirl.**

Donation account: 2 75 3609, Kreissparkasse Tuebingen, bank code 641 500 20, account holder: Forum Kinder in Not e. V. Please indicate the keyword „Pakistan“ for tied donations. By indicating your complete address on the remittance slip a donation confirmation will be dispatched.

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There are now 12 girls from different villages, who are able to attend the private community school this way. I have undertaken to be responsible for the school-fees of the scholarship-holders until they graduate from class 8, which at present is the final class. That is done in the hope that after that the parents are willing and able to finance attendance at a secondary school outside the valley from their own means.

The teaching staff



Economic factor school

The Monika Girls High School is today the third biggest employer in the Bagrot valley, after the government and the community school BASE, which is managed by a local self-help organization. And nearly all working women in Bagrot, e.g. in schools and in the health services, are graduates from our girls school. Even small local businesses benefit from the big school, because the schoolgirls regularly need things for school and school uniforms etc..

A very big thank you from Bagrot to all donors and to the women of the "Forum Kinder in Not e. V." As in all previous years the donation money will be spend one to one for the salaries of the private teachers and the most important school materials.

Kind regards to you from Hamburg!

Monika Schneid
November 2009