

# BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE

Globally 258 million children and youth are unable to attend school. That is 59 million children missing out on primary school, 62 million unable to attend lower school, and 138 million not receiving a secondary education. Most of these children come from families struggling with poverty. Girls, refugees, children with disabilities, and disaster victims are also less likely to receive an education and the skills they need to build a better future.

For many children in need, providing them with school supplies changes everything — giving them the tools they need to attend school, which leads to access to higher paying jobs, which can result in improvements to the welfare of their families and communities.

## ■ WHOLE PENCILS

In one rural Zimbabwean village, over 700 children attend the local primary school in first through seventh grade. They want to learn but accessing school supplies is a big problem for most children and their families.

*The nearest store where parents can purchase a pencil or notepad — if they can afford it — is over 18 miles away.*

Previously, when the school's teachers occasionally received access to pencils, they would break them so the children could share. They wanted to make sure each student had at least something to write with for their lessons.

Local Unto® team members built a relationship with the school's administration. They provided the school with supplies so each child could have their own items. Spiwe, a little girl in the third grade, was so excited when she received two unbroken pencils all to herself.

The school's headmaster told our team members, "The kids are so excited to have at least a full pencil each; for some it is their first time to have such things. Thank you so much! We hope this will help develop responsibility and their eagerness to learn."

For children like Spiwe the gift of school supplies allows them to fully engage in the classroom. New pencils mean they can improve their writing and math abilities — and gain the skills they need to build a better future. A School Supply Pack also shows them how much God loves them and cares about their every need.

## ■ HOPE IN A FOREIGN LAND

Ameer\* and his young family dodged flying debris and coughed as they breathed in thick smoke from the bombs and missiles going off in the war zone around them. As the army tried to capture Ameer, his wife clung to their infant son and ran, while he and their other three children also fled for their lives.

They sought refuge in a neighboring country, but life there has not been easy. The cost of living is expensive in their new country, and as a refugee it is illegal for Ameer to work. They struggle to have the basic items they need to live and build a better future.

Despite the challenges they face, the oldest daughter, Sarah, is able to attend school. One day our local team members visited the family's home and provided school supplies for each of the children while Sarah was away. She was so happy when she got home, celebrating over her new School Supply Pack and the other critical aid she received.

The School Supply Pack helps her excel at school, and the items give her siblings an opportunity to learn too. Even though they are unable to attend classes, their mother uses the supplies to teach them at home.

Our local staff team member shared,

*You might think this is something very small. It's basic. It's not even luxurious, but that should give you an idea how the war is ugly. It took what is supposed to be their right, the necessities of life, and made it out of reach.*

*We shared with them that God sent those gifts to them, and He is taking care of them all the time. He is preparing a wonderful future for their kids. Do NOT worry. Just trust in Him.*

For Sarah and her family, the gift of school supplies means more than white paper and colorful pencils. It means a chance at a better life. And it gives them the opportunity to learn about the One who cares for them and holds their future in His hands.

*\*Name changed for security purposes.*