

Some comments from David Eades, Eades Foundation, Champaign, IL, USA



I selected Pakistan as the country to receive assistance from the Eades Foundation even though there are places in Africa where poverty is more severe. There are powerful extremist groups in Pakistan. Pakistan is politically unstable. Pakistan has nuclear weapons. There is the possibility that helping Christians in Pakistan might make a difference in whether our children or grandchildren are pulled into wars.

The support is directed toward education. My focus is very long-term. Population growth is a threat to the prosperity of the world and to the environment. It makes poverty worse and stimulates political unrest. Aid for hunger and medical care are short-term solutions for crisis situations. However, that just helps create a larger population and more severe crisis for the next generation. Education is the long term solution. It helps solve both poverty and overpopulation.

To be more specific, the Eades Foundation provides support every year to the Presbyterian Education Board of Pakistan to help Sangla Hill School. It is an elementary and secondary boarding school for girls. Most of the money is used for scholarships to help girls from families that otherwise could not afford the cost. The Eades Foundation has also provided annual support for Forman Christian College in Pakistan. Many of the senior leaders of the Pakistani government attended Forman College. The influence has been far out of proportion to the number of students who attend. These schools and many others were nationalized in 1972. More recently they were returned to Presbyterian control. In both cases a majority of the students are Muslim, but Christians are present in numbers much greater than their proportion in the overall population. This partially offsets the discrimination that Christians suffer in Pakistan. The interaction among Muslim and Christian students helps fight the alienation between these groups. This is in addition to the great impact in improving the lives of the students.