

Millennium Development Goal 2 – To achieve universal primary education

Target – Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

Education is vital for combating poverty and disease. It creates more opportunities for people and gives them a stronger voice in society. Without education there can be no development – personal, economic or social.

In 1990, many countries pledged to achieve primary education for all children by the year 2000. However, the target was missed. There are still 103 million children not in school. Most of these are in developing countries, and 57 per cent of them are girls.

In order to achieve this target by 2015, governments must ensure that all children are not only enrolling in primary school but completing their primary education as well. Currently, only 37 out of 155 developing countries have achieved universal primary completion.

For more information about the current campaign to achieve universal primary education, see www.campaignforeducation.org.

Pedro's story – Guatemala

This is me, Pedro. I live in a refugee camp called El Triunfo in Guatemala. I was born here. Until a few years ago people were fighting a very long, very bloody war in my country. At that time, life where my parents used to live was very dangerous and my parents had to leave their village and come here to the camp to find safety. They tell me that after they left the village, their house, the school and the whole village were destroyed.



Although the camp is not like a village, we are doing our best to make it a good place to live in. In the mornings, I help my mother to make the *tortilla** and then go with my father to look after the animals. The best thing is that in the afternoons I go to school. For a long time there was no school here, but now I go every day. This is very important to me because I want to be a doctor when I grow up, so that I can look after people where we live.

*A flat bread made of ground maize. Many Mexicans eat *tortilla* for breakfast.

Note: This is a true story, but these are not Pedro's actual words.