



Who are the change-makers?

The world's true change-makers are often the hidden few. They are inspirational people who are changing the world for the better. We call them "teachers".

They are the people who are equipping, instructing, moulding and modelling the young lives of tomorrow's world. Throughout the past year, teachers have been a priority for Starfish Pakistan. We have worked to provide training, encouragement and inspiration to some of the world's forgotten heroes — men and women who are preparing the next generation of Pakistan's Christians.



These are our priorities:

- 1 **Training that inspires.**
We aim to ensure that teachers are inspired as well as capable.
- 2 **Respect that reassures.**
Our high regard for teachers emphasises the significance of their task.
- 3 **Salaries that reward.**
We work to increase the salaries of desperately under-valued teachers.
- 4 **Values that transform.**
We aim to ensure biblical faith and values in the lives of Christian teachers.



Meet the change-makers

Murree Hills July 2019

100 Christian teachers attended training workshops in the cool Murree Hills in July. Organised by Starfish Pakistan, the training was conducted by professional trainers from CASTT (Centre of Academic Solutions & Teacher Training).



This month we have begun to support **6** more schools, serving **520** children from deprived Christian homes.

Read inside about "a dream come true" — and the "scandal" of teachers' salaries.

Looking to the future

A new CEO for Starfish Asia



Mike and Kerstin founded Starfish Asia in the UK in 2003. They are not retiring yet, but they are planning for the future. The UK Board set out to search for a new leader and we are delighted to welcome Duncan Stonehouse as CEO in waiting.

Duncan comes with many years of invaluable experience in the business world. He is married to Jenny and lives in Liphook, Hampshire. They have two children, Emma and Andrew, both currently at university. They attend the parish church in Liphook.



“ I have always felt that God has given me the desire to devote a significant portion of my life outside of the commercial sector to trying to make a difference in our world. This was surely nurtured during my Christian family upbringing and my father's work for Scripture Gift Mission (now Lifewords); involvement in the missions committee when I attended Kensington Baptist Church when I lived in Bristol 20 years ago; and ever since during my involvement with the Church.

Earlier this year, events led me to believe that the time was right for me to change my career. It was on 14th May when I tentatively responded to a job advertisement for Starfish Asia. Since that date, I became increasingly captivated by the amazing work that Mike and Kerstin started many years ago, and how God has blessed their work in providing Pakistan's Christian community with education and hope.

Mike and I plan to visit Pakistan in October. I cannot wait to meet Anser, Kashi and the team and to be fully involved in improving the lives of Pakistan's Christian teachers and students. **”**

The Change-makers

Starfish Asia now supports about 450 teachers in more than 40 schools. On these pages you will read of our concern for the lack of support given to teachers in low-income Christian schools. Teachers deserve better rewards for their work with parents and their children in the classroom. Please help us provide better salaries to our teachers, in addition to training that will inspire and motivate them.

6 more schools

The challenge to do more for Pakistan's Christians has motivated us to begin support to six more schools. First is the **Christian Public Model School** in village Kotrey. Here are their students. Read more about them on page 3 under *Addressing the Scandal*.



Risen Hope School, Islamabad

Read on page 4 about Mrs Sweeta and the Risen Hope School, which will open in Rimsha Colony this month.

Ambrose School, Zaman Park, Sheikhpura

For seven years Asif has served as a pastor and as principal of a small village school for Christians. Every day he and his wife travel 8 kilometres to the school. "The Christians are very poor and almost all of them are illiterate," he says. Starfish Asia has helped upgrade the building, provide books and furniture, and will now begin to give reasonable salaries to the teachers.



Aims Public School, Gujranwala

Mrs Roopa's passion is to provide education to poor Christians. "Christians in this area were studying in Muslim Schools," she says, "quite unaware of Christian teachings. Now, thanks to our school the situation is much better. Fifty families live here but students also come from far off." Starfish Asia has begun to provide support for their teachers. They started with 7 children and now serve 103.



Eden School, Gujranwala

Miss Nazia has run her school for 12 years out of a personal desire to give the privilege of education to her community. She has 111 students, mostly Christians from a poor area ("very poor sewerage... water is everywhere in the streets"). She asked for help to renovate her school building and increase her staff salaries.

Little Angel School, Faisalabad

With 30 years experience in teaching, Mrs Razia started her own school, called the Little Angel School. Her son is pastor of the church and also a teacher in the school. They have struggled for 20 years and now have 70 students, all Christians. They have only been able to pay 2,000 rupees (£11) a month to each teacher, until Starfish Asia agreed to raise their salaries and provide other help.





Our Annual Success Stories

106 students from 15 schools supported by Starfish Asia have passed their Matric exam this year. *Congratulations to all!* — especially to Calvary Model School (18 passes), Solomon Convent (13 passes) Holy Shepherd (12 passes), and Zeenat School (12 passes).

All these young Christians have passed their first great academic hurdle. We want to encourage them all to go further and invite them all to apply for a Starfish Asia scholarship for further study.



Eleven students passed their Matric exam from Ghauri Wisdom High School. Top of the list was Sagar Niaz, with A+.

Congratulations, Sagar!

Sagar Niaz is the oldest son of four children. His father works in a factory on a salary of 15,000 rupees per month (about £78 / \$95). His father did not want him to go to school, but to earn some money in the factory. Sagar pleaded and his mother agreed that he must study. His ambition was to be a male nurse. Then Kashi talked with him: *"He was so excited when I told him that he could be a doctor if he studied hard. He promised that he would work hard and aim to become a doctor one day."*

Many of these successful students are applying to us for small scholarships to enable them to go on to further studies or vocational training. Can you help us to help them? We currently provide about £2,500 each month for 250 young Pakistani Christians to pursue their dreams.

Addressing a scandal



I (Mike) recently had a text conversation with a school principal, working in a village north of Lahore. He is a committed Christian who has studied in Korea and returned to his home village to serve as a pastor and school head. Sosthenes has a special passion to provide a good education to the Christian girls in his village. This was our conversation:

Sosthenes: Hello Brother Mike. Thank you for supporting our school with windows, doors and electricity. God bless you and Starfish Pakistan. Your encouragement did a lot in my life. It gave me strength to work more for my community.

Mike: How were your Matric results this year?

Sosthenes: It was very poor. Only one student got through.

Mike: What happened? We need to learn the lessons.

Sosthenes: For me it is a big challenge. My students can't pay fees, so it is very hard for me to hire good teachers.

Mike: Which subjects did they fail? Science? Maths?

Sosthenes: Chemistry. All got through in English.

Mike: Are more qualified teachers available in your area? What salary would they need?

Sosthenes: They demand 5,000 rupees (£26 a month) or more.

Mike: What do you pay now?

Sosthenes: Rs.2,500 (£13 a month).

Mike: That is a scandal. Can we help?

Sosthenes: I don't understand the word "scandal".

Mike: Scandal means that 2,500 is bad news — far too little for qualified, capable teachers. Offer better salaries to teachers.

Address the scandal: Four teachers from Sosthenes' school attended the training workshops in the summer. We have agreed to support the school and increase the teachers' salaries, and Sosthenes will be introducing EDKASA (see below) into his school to improve science teaching.

What is Edkasa?

While we are thankful for the reasonable results in this year's Matric exams, it once again raises some important issues which we must continue to work at.

1. Why are there so few students in Class 10, when there are thousands of children in primary school?
2. Why did so many students fail in science and maths?

We have been working on the first question, though there are no easy answers. Our solutions revolve around monitoring, teacher inspiration, extra-curricular activities, closer relations with parents and student motivation.

The second question relates especially to the teachers in the higher classes. Firstly they need better qualifications, which means improved salaries. We are working on that. Secondly, teachers need better qualifications and ability in maths, English and science.

How can Edkasa help?

EDKASA is a local initiative to assist teachers in secondary schools like ours. They style themselves "Pakistan's most innovative learning platform." (see <https://edkasa.com>)



Anser has signed a contract with EDKASA to provide their services to 13 Starfish Asia schools.

EDKASA focuses on the teaching of science and maths for higher classes. They provide a wireless projector and internet connection to each school, that provides interactive online lessons to assist the teacher — or in place of the teacher where necessary. EDKASA staff will visit each school every two months to give tests and monitor progress. Senior teachers from 13 Starfish Asia schools have signed up to the programme.

"23 million adolescents never complete secondary education, which severely limits their future potential. EDKASA's mission is to provide easy access to quality education to enable young people to take full advantage of future opportunities."



"I am so happy that my dream will come true"

Anser and Mike visited Rimsha Colony in February, urged on by members of a UK Parliamentary delegation that had visited in 2018. They were troubled by the lack of amenities for the Christian families in this crowded slum outside Pakistan's capital city. We recorded our extraordinary meeting with Mrs Sweeta in the March Starfish Asia newsletter.

Mrs Sweeta is now about to see her dream come true. With the support of Starfish Pakistan, she is preparing to open her school. We have provided rent for a larger building, money for furniture, books and other facilities — and a regular salary for her teachers. Anser and Kashi visited her in August and recorded this interview with her.

“ I graduated from college in Lahore, and moved with my family to Rimsha Colony in September 2013. I saw many problems here in this colony — no electricity or sewerage system, and no education for the children. My dream was to start a school for the Christian community, and I wanted to give them proper education. There are so many children in the street who are not going to school and I wanted to work for these people.



Rimsha Christian Colony, Islamabad

Two years ago, I started a school with the name of **Risen Hope School**. There were many children in my school, but nobody could support me at that time. After two years unfortunately I had to close the school. Now I am planning to start a school again with the kind support of Starfish Pakistan. My school will also provide Bible education. The parents will be happy about this, and they will grow in their knowledge of Jesus.



Mrs Sweeta and her husband Zain attended Starfish Pakistan teacher training in Murree in July.

I am searching for more and more children to bring them to my school. I am really pleased that parents are so excited about the school. 30 or 40 children will be coming in my school. I am so happy that my dream will come true. ”

Awards for the High Achievers

“Ever since Starfish started this programme, our children are aiming to get this Award, and it has motivated them to work hard for their studies.” (Said by a parent in Multan)

Since these Awards for outstanding achievement in the Matriculation Exam were launched in 2016, the number of Award-winners has grown. The Awards are advertised widely and given only to Christian students who have gained more than 70% marks in their Exam. A cash prize is given to those more than 90%.



In 2016, 60 students received an award at a ceremony in Lahore. This year, it is expected that 400 students will apply, and as of today, having gained more than 90%, 118 of them will be given a cash prize for their further studies. Ceremonies will be held in 5 cities.

The message to all: Christians can succeed, and will be leaders in tomorrow's Pakistan!

Charity change

In July 2019 Starfish Asia (UK) became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), number 1181649, registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales.

This is a technical change and the old Trust will ultimately merge with the new CIO. Our name remains the same: **Starfish Asia** and our Bank details remain the same.

www.facebook.com/starfishasia

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www.starfishasia.com



STARFISH ASIA

giving hope to the children of Pakistan

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