



## GOAL 4: EDUCATION FOR ALL

'There is nothing bad in the world, that can't be turned into something good'  
[proverb from Columbia]

### A day spent with Miguel from Colombia

Hola Soy Miguel. But all my friends call me Coroto, which translates as junk or rubbish. They call me that because when I was a little child, I put everything that I could find on the streets in a plastic bag and carried it around. I am nine years old and live with my older Brother Ricardo in a little hut that we build for ourselves. It is located on a steep dirt road near one of the biggest cities in Colombia. The road has a particularly steep curve where a lot of car accidents happen. You might ask yourself why we chose to live on such a dangerous road? Ricardo and I help the big lorries to get past the steep curve and sometimes we are lucky and the drivers throw some change out of the window.

My mother and my father got divorced when I was very little. Now they have turned their back on me. My father lives downtown in the city of Medellin. I once went down there to ask him for some clothes but he didn't have any for me. Nevertheless, if I behave and bring him some money every now and then I am allowed to sleep at his place and he also gives me a little something to eat.

When we first came here, we had nothing, not even a pair of shoes. The rich people, that drive past us everyday sometimes give us clothes, blankets or like I said, throw out some money. My brother and I figured it would

be a good idea to also offer the truck drivers a chance to have their lorries washed. That way we could earn a little money and afford to build our hut bit by bit. This is the washing station, where my brother and I work. I enjoy washing the lubricating grease of the lorries the most. The sticky grease is all over the chassis of the truck and a lot of it is stuck in the engine compartment. You need a lot of strength and it takes ages to wash it off. Washing the lorries is great work. We earn more than the farm workers that help to bring in the harvest. Sometimes one of the heavy lorries tips over in the dangerous curve. Then my brother and I help to pick up the goods, that fall out the lorry and in turn we get a piece of wood or a tyre. We take these materials and build ourselves „caritos” – these are soap box cars. We tie them to the back of the lorries, that then pull each other up the steep hill. When we go down again we race the lorries just for fun. Going downhill we are much quicker than the lorries. Sometimes we go down so quickly that I get a little scared!

Out of all the children that live here on the pass road only Markos, Mariana and David can afford to go to school. It costs about 14.000 Colombian pesos for the school enrolment. That would be around 4.30 Euros and that is a lot of money for me. A book that teaches you how to read costs about 2.15 Euros, crayons cost about 30 cents and a rubber another 30 cents. I would also need a pencil sharpener for about 50 cents, pencils cost around 25 cents and exercise books cost 1.50 Euros. If I work really hard for one year and wash many many lorries to try save up the money I would be able to afford a school uniform and all the other materials. But only for one year. Then I would have to work another year to be able to go back to school the following year. This is the only way this is going to work out. Work a year, go to school for a year. Then work a year, and go back to school and so on.

I have a dream, that one day I could go to university to become a geologist. I am really fascinated by stones and mountains. People have told me, that there are many universities in this country. Some of them are among the best universities on this continent. I wish I could go to school, without having to work for it. Every child on this planet should be able to go to school!



Source: 'Miguel, the race driver' by Heike Fritz Stephan Krause, D/Kolumbien 2001. Documentary Film



## Education for everyone — Access to education for everyone, equal opportunities for girls and boys

You are probably fed up with school sometimes but it is actually something really special and important. Not everyone has the chance to go to a school five days a week. 58 million children and 63 million young people around the world, still don't have access to a good education system. It should be a fundamental right for every child to be able to go to a school, because good education is the key to a happy and successful life.

For many people it is also the key to get out of the poverty trap. If you are able to receive good education your chances of getting a good job and a stable income increases enormously.

Goal 4 sets out to ensure education for all children. This is especially important for girls, children with disabilities and children with a poor social background because very often they do not have the opportunity to go to school in the many developing countries and the poorer regions of this world. In fact, 90 percent of all children with disabilities are not able to go to school. In a lot of countries only boys have the right to go to school and it is prohibited for girls. This makes girls especially vulnerable in society, they stay dependent on other people and they are in great danger of being exploited. They stand very little chance of living an independent life.

But it is not enough to just sit in a classroom, the teachers also have to be qualified. 250 million children around the world are not able to read or write even though they have attended at least 4 years of school. Therefore, children should not only learn how to read and write and how to add and multiply numbers, they should also gain knowledge about important world topics, such as human rights and taking global action.

Goal 4 also covers education for teenagers and adults. You call this 'life-long learning'. You don't stop learning as soon as you leave school. Adults should also have the opportunity to continue learning. Austria has a compulsory education system, where children have to attend school for at least 9 years, between the ages of 6 to 15. There are plenty of teachers, schools, universities and other educational institutions.

In many countries there are simply not enough schools and sometimes children have a very long way to go to school; this often prevents them from going at all. We have to build more schools in this world and we need more good educated teachers. Going to school needs to be affordable for all children!

### What can we do to achieve this goal?

- At the 'Kinderuni' which takes place in the summer, children and young adults between seven and twelve years old, can try out what it is like to go to university. You get a tour of the main university in Vienna and take part in many workshops and experiments. Here is more information:

[www.kinderuni.at](http://www.kinderuni.at)

By the way there are 'Kinderunis' in other parts of Austria, too. In Innsbruck it is called 'die junge Uni' and in Klagenfurt it is called 'The university for children'.

**Franzi (19) from Neusiedl/See, Burgenland:**  
'Looking back, my school years have been the best of my life. We had a great classroom energy and really likable teachers.'

**Johannes (13) from Villach, Carinthia:**  
'In our last English lesson I noticed that my classmate Fabian could not follow, what the teacher was saying. I then kindly asked the teacher to repeat what he had said. That was not only helpful for Fabian, but also for many others in our class.'

- If you notice that one of your classmates is struggling at school, offer them your help. Revising for tests together is much more fun!
- Have you ever had a school or class partnership? The exchange with other students can be really exciting. You can start projects together and learn a lot from each other. Information and support to find a school partnership you can find on this website: [www.schulpartnerschaften.at](http://www.schulpartnerschaften.at)