

*"Before I came to Perna School, I could never open my mouth at home. I was a frightened weak girl. Now I speak up. Now I am not afraid. My father has stopped beating us because we speak up. Now I know my rights and am not afraid to demand them. Now I dream, and I want to be a teacher. I wasn't sure I would even finish high school, but now I have a BA and I want to get a B.Ed. I want to learn dancing and computers and everything, anything!"*

- Aarti, a graduate of Perna School and Aarohini Girls Empowerment Program

### The Opportunity

Aarti was among the 1.3 billion people who cannot read or write to lift themselves and their families out of poverty. But with the support of the Mona Foundation and caring people like you, Aarti has found her voice and is now working on her B.Ed. to become a teacher. At Mona, we believe every child like Aarti has the right to fulfill their dreams and contribute to building a better world.



### Our Work and Impact

Funded by a widening circle of generous supporters like you, Mona Foundation works to ensure that no child ever goes to bed hungry, is lost to preventable diseases, or is deprived of education due to lack of resources. We partner with grassroots organizations around the world who serve economically disadvantaged populations and aim to **educate** all children, **empower** women and girls, and enable them to **transform** their own communities.

**In 2019, Mona Foundation supported the education and empowerment of 429,901 students through 19 partner organizations.** We also trained 3,968 teachers and helped 2,373 schools globally. We currently partner with programs in Brazil, Haiti, India, Mongolia, Panama, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, Vietnam, and the United States.

With your help over the years, Mona's partner projects have grown from humble beginnings to effective, sustainable programs for change. For example, we are having an impact on high school graduation rates in Haiti where 92% of the students in Mona-supported programs graduate as compared to the national average of 22%.

We are also making significant strides in preventing child marriage in India in partnership with the Aarohini Girls Empowerment Program. This highly successful program now reaches more than 100,432 girls attending schools across the Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan provinces. When the program began in 2013, 54% of the girls were at risk of child marriage (per a sample study). A few years later, in 2019, there was no incidence of child marriage among girls completing the 8th grade

### Mona Foundation is unique because we:

- Focus on education and gender equality as key drivers of progress
- Partner with local organizations to support building capacity at the grassroots
- Establish long-term relationships with the organizations we support to sustain positive impact
- Support character education to develop citizens who contribute to the betterment of their communities
- Allocate 100% of donations received from individual to supporting the education of students in need, (a private donor covers our low 15% overhead)

## History and Vision

The Mona Foundation was started in 1999 by a small group of people who experienced the despair of poverty firsthand and witnessed how the power of education can transform lives. Inspired by the universal Bahá'í principles of justice, equality, and service to all, they envisioned the foundation would work to alleviate global poverty by supporting grassroots initiatives that provide education to all children, empower women and girls, and emphasize service to the community.

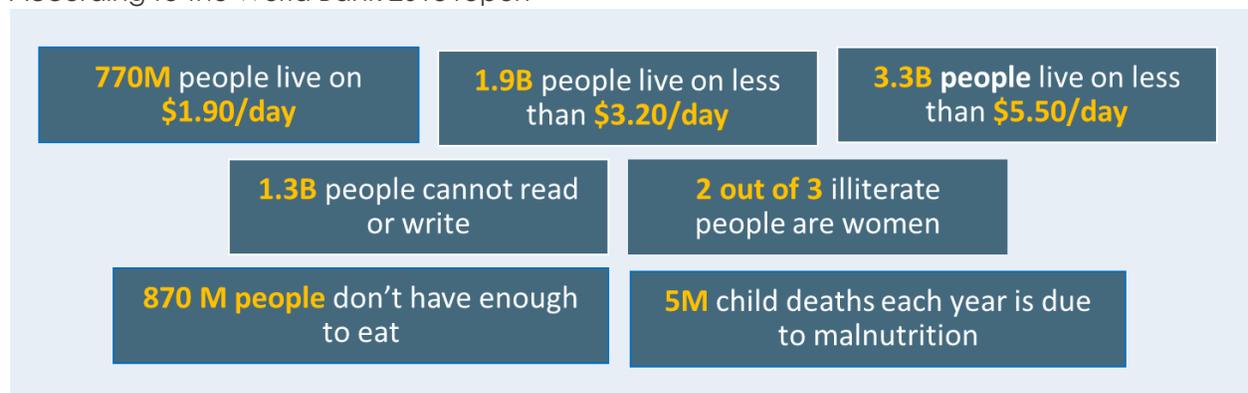
The foundation is named after a 16-year girl who was executed in Iran because of her beliefs. Mona loved children and volunteered in an orphanage as a young girl. Her courage, youthful energy, and dedication to justice and service inspire our work.

## Our Journey

At this point in human history, it is critical that the world learn about new approaches to development. While some progress has been made in the past seventy-five years, the traditional top-down model has been generally ineffective at alleviating the suffering of more than 2/3 of our global population. According to the World Bank 2018 report

### Select Recognitions and Awards

- Microsoft Alumni Integral Fellow
- UN DPI Associate NGO
- Peter F. Drucker Award for Nonprofit Innovation
- Gratitude Network Fellow
- Member Leadership Council, Brookings Institution Center for Universal Education
- Best of Western WA Nonprofits
- GuideStar Platinum Status
- BBB Wise Giving Alliance Accredited Charity



Mona Foundation is deeply committed to learning about **a new paradigm of development** in which all people, whether rich or poor, literate or illiterate, participate in building a peaceful and prosperous world. Over the past twenty years, we have learned valuable lessons about this new approach: how to effectively select and collaborate with our partners, how to invest in initiatives which change lives and transform communities, and how to support sustainable growth.

We are continuing this forward trajectory and plan to both expand our portfolio and the support of our partner projects to **increase reach to 500,000 students by 2021.**

## Our Invitation to You

When you support the Mona Foundation's work, you are helping to create sustainable positive change in the lives of the most disadvantaged segments of our global community. Join us in educating children and empowering women and girls so that together we can build a better world for all our children.

**For more information** contact [info@monafoundation.org](mailto:info@monafoundation.org) or call 425.743.4550.