

**The most dangerous ways to school.
Some children risk it all for school
because they really want to learn.**



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zzpT_MFcWU0

Gulu - China

Gulu is a remote Chinese mountain village located in a national park with lots of canyons and precipices. The school is located half way a gigantic cliff in the middle of a series of canyons.

Children have to walk along steep rocky roads that have no guardrails and are only one foot wide (= 30 centimetres) in some parts.

Shen Qicai attends the Gulu Village Primary School. He rides his donkey and his grandfather accompanies him on the way to school. It takes them five hours to climb from the base of the mountain where they live to the school. The Gulu Village Primary School is probably one of the most remote schools in the world.



cliff



guardrail



Sichuan Province - Southwest China



In southwest China, children have to learn how to climb before they learn Math or Science. Why? Well because the village is at the top of the mountain and the school is all the way down the valley below.

School children and teachers walk half a mile (= 800 metres) vertically each way. They climb a set of rickety and shaky wooden ladders to get to and from school.

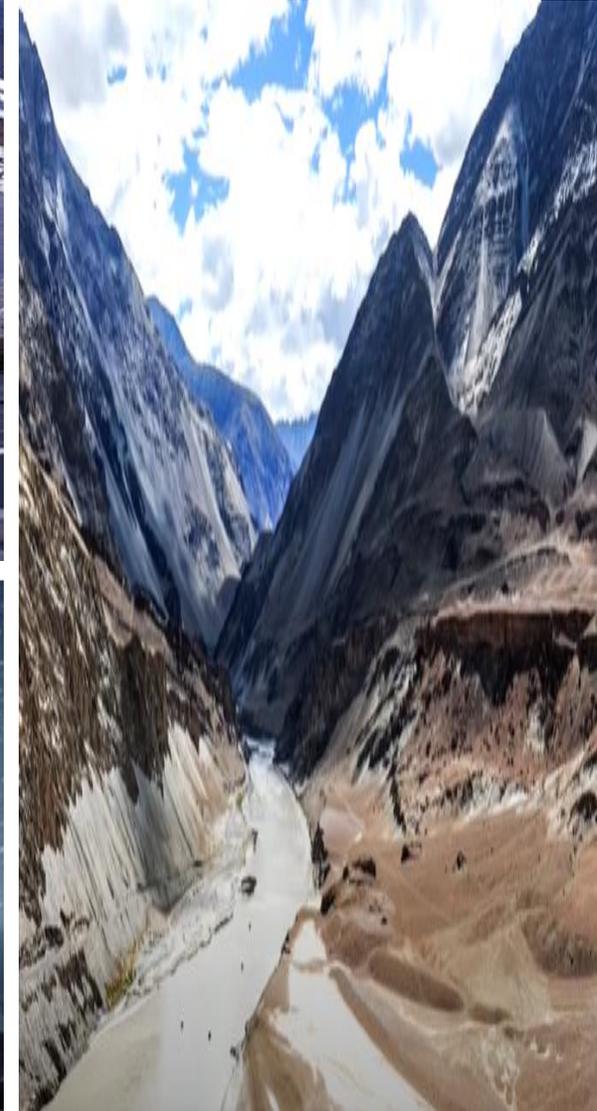
The village has requested the government to build a road around the other side of the mountain so that teachers and pupils could have a safe journey each way. But only 100 people live in the village and the road is very expensive so it's highly unlikely that the road will be built.



rickety

The Himalayas

In the Himalayas, children attend a boarding school so they don't have to make the journey every day but just a couple of times each year.



The Himalayas

When Zanskar river freezes in winter, it becomes a road for students who live in more remote areas. Only then they can make the trek to the village where the boarding school is. Children travel along the bottom of a gorge where the river runs.

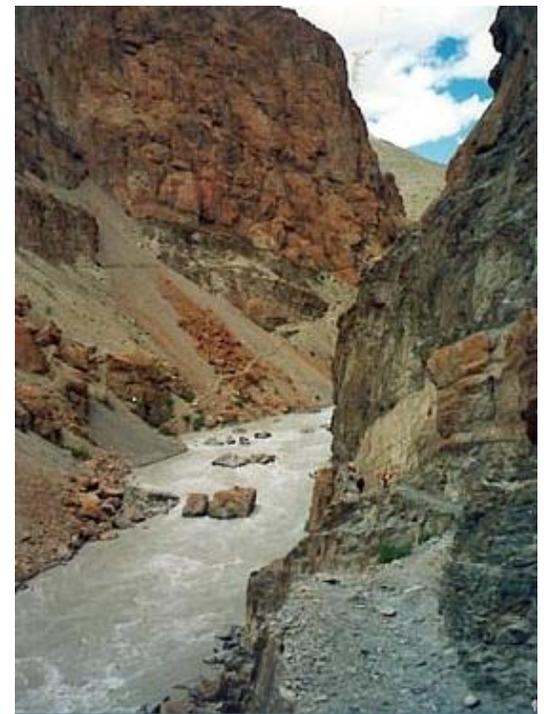
But they don't travel alone. One of their parents accompanies them. The commute is dangerous because of the jagged ice. Also it's difficult for parents to pull a sledge along the slippery hills.

The commute takes six full days along the frozen river and slippery hills. The children carry their school bags (= knapsacks) and food.

During this six-day hike along the frozen river, they run the risk of a sudden thaw. Parents and children certainly risk their lives on the way to school!



thaw



gorge



jagged ice

Indonesia



A suspension bridge collapsed after a river flooded in Indonesia a few years ago. However, one rope cable held so children managed to cross the river to get to school. These students really showed a will to learn! So after the photos became viral, some NGOs teamed up with Indonesia's largest steel producer and they rebuilt the bridge. This time they made it out of steel and mesh and not of wood and rope.



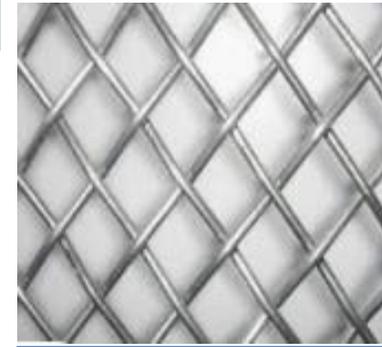
flooded



teamed up with



steel



steel mesh

Indonesia

A few miles away another group of brave children risk it all for education. A suspension bridge broke when a river flooded. But this time the NGO didn't assist them in time. So students constructed bamboo rafts to get them across the river to school. Unfortunately, this river generally floods and moves at dangerous speeds.

We all agree that a bridge would be the solution for the whole community. But for now, these children risk it all every day.



Philippines



In another rural area in Philippines, children use inflated tire tubes to propel themselves across the current of a rushing river in order to get to school.

Children paddle with their hands and feet in the dirty, dangerous waves.

When the river floods, children can't attend school or go back home depending on which side of the river they are. So they have to stay with relatives.

We all agree that a bridge would be the solution for these school children. But for now, they risk it all every day.



a paddle

He's paddling.

Colombia



This is Daisy. Her little brother travels in the bag.



wooden fork

In southeast Colombia, the roaring Rio Negro river separates a small village from Bogota.

Every day children travel on a pulley at 1300 feet (= 400 metres) over the river to get to school.

Daisy is nine years old and goes to school by means of a pulley. But her five-year-old brother is too young for that. So she puts him into a cloth bag. Then she attaches herself to the steel cable. Now she is ready to fire away. Daisy and her brother travel at the incredible speed of 40 miles an hour (= 65 km per hour) so she uses a wooden fork to control the speed.

Did you know that people have used this means of transport for centuries?



Pili, China



Only 80 children can attend the boarding school in Pili, China. The school is 200 km away from their houses and the journey is one of the most dangerous in the world. When children leave, they don't know if they are going to make it home alive.

Children have to cross four rushing, freezing rivers.

At some point the trail gets really narrow: one inch wide (= 2,54 cm) so students have to hang above a steep vertical drop.

Along this trip, none of the water is drinkable but sometimes children get so thirsty that they drink it all the same. As a consequence, they become very ill.

When children finally get to school, they feel really happy.

