

Improving Quality of Education by Focusing on Girls Middle Schools

Balochistan covers the largest land mass of all provinces of Pakistan, making up nearly two-fifths of the entire country. It accounts for 43% of Pakistan's territory but is the smallest in terms of population. Around 7 million inhabitants live in Balochistan. Due to long distances un-hospitable terrain and financial constraints coupled with tribal traditions education, particularly female education, did not take roots in the communities. Numerous efforts were made by Government and Donor organizations to promote primary female education in the rural settings, but planners ignored the importance of Middle level education since 1993. Therefore, the middle school education was left far behind (2862 Primary; 363 Middle and 137 Girls High schools).

Middle level education prepares the learner to understand and apply the concepts endured in the whole life. This level of education generates needs which helps the learner to come out of its own life and interact at a higher level of human life.

It is a benchmark and gateway for high school education and creates linkage between primary and high school education. Therefore, the middle school education needs serious attention. Improvement of education, at this level, will have positive impact on primary and high school education.

The SCSPEB based on its experience of working in the field of education, during last two decades, have developed an innovative idea to help improve the quality education at Middle level. The Society for Community Support for Primary Education, Balochistan SCSPEB with this concept approached the Foundation Open Society Institute Pakistan FOSI-P and jointly agreed to focus the sample of middle schools with feeder schools to develop and demonstrate the model, it put more focus on the girls education, therefore, in this phase the girls Middle schools are in focused. District Pishin has been focused for project interventions. Initially 5 girls middle schools clustered by 20-30 girls primary schools in Pishin would be selected. Household survey of the potential villages would be carried out through well trained and experienced team.

The project would be implemented in close coordination with Education Department at provincial and district level, by signing MoU with Government. Beside the formal MoU a clear understanding would be developed with the Minister, Secretary and Director Education. At District level a detailed orientation would be organized with District Education Department and other concerning officials.

The project goal and objectives are:

To improve the Quality of Education in selected Middle School cluster and provide conducive learning environment to Girls child of the area

The project will focus its efforts to achieve the following objectives:

- Augmentation of Government efforts directed to improve quality education in the girls Middle schools.
- Building up the confidence of the parents in the education process through Social Mobilization and involving them in the school management.
- Improving the school environment through enhancing teachers' competence, provision of instructional materials and support efforts.
- Reducing the reservoir of Primary school graduates and enhancing enrolment and competition rate at Girls' Middle Schools.

Keeping in view the goals and objectives of the project the community participation would be ensured through formation or reactivation of Parent Teacher School Management Committees (PTSMCs) and Education Council (ECs) for the selected Primary Schools, same 75-90 PTSMC members and 25-30 EC members would be trained under the project. Teachers would be capacitated on 20 days hands on practice type training; that would be conducted during vacation so that the learning time of children would not be wasted.

Effective implementation of project activities will be ensured through a strong monitoring approach. The activities would be monitored on three major levels, Grassroots Level, Middle level & Top level. The social organizer team would be the first tier for monitoring and supervision of school, PTSMC and the EC will supervise and monitor the project activities at individual school level. Learning Coordinators (LC) and the ADEOs of the education department will also conduct the monitoring of the focused school on behalf of the Government. Teacher Training team & Project Officer will also, on and off, conduct monitoring of the schools to ensure effective implementation of activities. Moreover, SCSPEB Management, Monitoring & Evaluation Officer will also monitor the project activities to ensure quality of interventions.

Activities and Achievements of other Project

Afghan Refugees Education Project (AREP)

- A rapid Education assessment Survey conducted for the year 2011 in order to get the educational Benchmarks, however, 1245 in Muslim Bagh and 446 in Mohammad Khail of age group 5-17 identified as a potential enrolment in school this year.
- 458 new registrations notified during the month of March; 190 in Mohammad Khail & 268 in Muslim Bagh, in this connection 205 Girls & 253 boys were enrolled in AREP camp Schools.
- Conduction of 43 meetings 13 with Teacher, 17 with SMC members and 8 combine meetings in both camps to maximize new enrollment/ registration and punctuality of students in Schools/HBGCs.
- 02 IPs meetings with (Wess & Taraqee) held in both camps to increase new registration in Schools/HBGCs.
- Distribution of School supplies, Study & sports material among the teachers & students in both Camps.



Releasing Confidence & Creativity (RCC)

- Program teams paid 68 visits to schools on quarterly bases to review the school update, Lead teachers / PTSMCs performance, school enrolment and materials status.
- 10 Cluster meetings held to discuss school and class room related problems.
- Managed 13 EFOs exposure visits to RCC focused schools to observe ECE environment, use of learning material, student's retention and drop out ratio, classroom records / activities planning and to assess role of parents in school management.
- To enhance linkages with Government/District Education officials, at grassroots level 3 plan-sharing & 15 review meetings held with EFOs and DEBs.
- Repair work to 50 schools ECE classes i.e. white wash, roof repair, windows, doors and floor repair through PTSMCs contribution (in kind or in cash).
- Approximately 200 WVECs capacity build on "First Aid" for the provision of immediate care to a victim with an injury of illness, through 28 WVECs trainings in 6 clusters.
- Held 50 WVECs / PTSMCs Quarterly Performance Review (QPR) to assess the Performance of committees & follow up of project activities
- Advocacy Seminar conducted in 5 focused districts i.e. Pishin, Killa Abdullah, Loralai, Noshki & Mastung to raise awareness about ECE and commitment of key stakeholders at different levels.



Improving Quality of Education by Focusing on Girls Middle Schools (IQEF)

- Signing of MOU with Government of Balochistan and Local / District Government.

Activities and Achievements of other Project

Balochistan Education Project (BEP)

- Schools identification in both districts
 - a. 6 Schools identified for Up-gradation Primary to Middle
 - b. 3 Schools identified for Up- Gradation Middle To high
 - c. 22 Schools Identified for Establishment of ECE Centers
 - d. 38 Schools identified for Provision of Missing Facilities
- 6 PTSMCS have been formed for coordination and smooth work in their Schools
- 19 Remaining Account Opening of SEP Grants to PTSMCs
- Monthly Consortium Meetings held with the partners to share the progress, the problems encountered and their possible solutions.
- Walk for Enrolment Campaign 2011 held in Hunna and Quetta & Killah Abdullah to given awareness regarding importance of education specially for girls
- Inauguration of Computer lab in GGHS Shafiq Shaheed
- Held as inauguration ceremony of DEMIS cell in Killah Abdullah to maintain district data to build linkages with BEMIS, district Education Officials were also honored by the shields.
- The house hold survey conducted to assess the enrolment in ECE classes in the selected schools



Teachers Training Wing (TTW)

- Development of teachers training modules:
 - 6 days Training Module for RCC Lead Teachers capacity building to support teachers in classroom
 - Development of ECE Module for teaching of English
 - Pashtu Translation of Module on Teaching of English
- Development of breakup of ECE Curriculum in Quarters and Months to enable teachers to manage their academic sessions effectively and complete curriculum in time
- Drafted service Rules for elementary school teachers



Links to Education Ed-Links

- Preparation for Capacity building of 300 secondary school teachers; 6 days TDP to build the capacity of teachers on teaching of English, Mathematics and Science.



SCSPEB News

- Walk for Enrolment Campaign 2011 held in Hanna, Quetta City and Killah Abdullah to highlight the importance of education especially girls Education.
- Ceremony of opening DEMIS cell in District Killah Abdullah by the Honorable chief guest Mr. Tahir Mehmood Provincial Minister Education Balochistan
- Draft Provincial ECE Plan shared with Mr. Rashid Razzaq, Additional Secretary Education and working group for finalization.
- Computer lab in GGHS Shafiq Shaheed by the Honorable chief guest Mr. Tahir Mehmood Provincial Minister Education, Balochistan.
- Commencement of new Project “Improving Quality of Education by Focusing on Girls Middle Schools”



Case Study

Due to social and political unrest, tribal conflicts in Afghanistan over the last two decades, a significant number of Afghans have crossed the border and settled in Pakistan as refugees. Muhammad Khail is one of the poorest Afghan refugee villages in Balochistan province. Muhammad Khail is home to some 6,000 registered Afghans. It is just 116 kilo-meters from the provincial capital of Quetta. The majority of the inhabitants here used to be nomads, with limited skills to meet their daily needs. The majority of the men is daily wage laborers or run small grocery shops. Their monthly average income is approximately 3,500 to 4,000 Pakistani rupees.

SCSPEB as implementing partner with UNICEF initiated a project to promote education among Afghan refugee children, and established 69 camp schools in District Killah Abdullah; now 18 camp schools in Muslim Bagh and Mohammad Khail are running successfully.

Bibi Sakina is a 13 years old girl, who was a student of Grade-7 in Mohammad Khail. She studies with boys in a boy's school and is also Grade-1 teacher at HBGC No.77 in Muhammad Khail Camp. Her family had migrated to Pakistan in 1980 from Afghanistan during war against Russian. Her father is also a teacher in High School of Muhammad Khail Camp.

The Community was not in favor of co-education resulting her father compelled her to leave the school. The SCSPEB team however conducted contentious meetings with the parents of Sakina bibi and motivated the community to send Sakina to school. Fortunately, her mother was in favor of her daughter's education and supported the team in motivating her husband to send Sakina to school.

However detailed and series of motive discussions helped, Sakina's father agreed to send her daughter to school. She has passed the exams and promoted to Grade-8. Her parents are thankful to SCSPEB team and have enrolled her younger sister to school; her sister is a student of G-4, her parents are happy for taking a wise decision. Sakina is also teaching Grade 1 at HBGC No 77 in Mohammad Khail camp. The young children are very happy with their young children. They take her sister and love to stay with her. Thus Sakina is doing a great service to her community, besides continuing her studies she is also earning to provide financial support to her family.

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