STORIES OF CHANGE

EDUCATE PAKISTAN
18 days of activism to raise educational awareness
#VISITASCHOOL

Humans of Pakistan & Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi
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Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) or the “Centre of Education and Consciousness” Public Trust was established in 2000, as a response to the profound crisis of education and multiple crises forming the nuts and bolts of the Education Challenge. ITA was born out of a growing realization that the most critical of human entitlements, the right to learning, knowledge systems, citizenship skills and a 9,000 years of living heritage is being denied to the citizens of Pakistan.

ITA's implementation is through a sector wide lifelong learning approach. The programs range from Early Childhood Development-ECD (0-8 years); school improvement (5-16 years ); non-formal catch up programs (4-14 years) technical vocational (15-30 years); college and tertiary level (17+ years) embedded in health hygiene, environmental responsibility, learning for understanding. ITA not only strives for providing quality education among children/youth but inculcate values of sustainable development and human happiness.

Nationwide scalable campaigns have been implemented within the framework of social movements triggered by the powerful assessment on learning levels (5-16 years)- Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), aligned to Right to Education (RTE), Learning for Access (L4A)/ Chalo Parho Barho - Lets read and grow; and Children's Literature Festival(CLF). Together the campaigns are placed under an umbrella, titled “Citizens' Movement for Quality Education (CMQE). ITA since its inception has reached millions of people in providing them with quality education. ITA's direct beneficiary reach only under the Dubai Cares project has been 385,500 children and 3770 schools.
Dubai Cares (DC) works to improve children's access to quality primary education in developing countries. The UAE-based philanthropic organization's programs are currently reaching over 7 million beneficiaries in 28 developing countries with the highest gap in primary education.

Dubai Cares expresses the UAE's commitment to the global community's development goals - namely, United Nations Millennium Development Goals (UN MDG) 2 and 3, of guaranteeing universal primary education and promoting gender equality, respectively. Dubai Cares is also helping to forge a global partnership for development, as indicated by UN MDG 8.

Dubai Cares has been working extensively in Pakistan, reaching out to 4028 schools and 1,035,300 beneficiaries since 2008. The education programs focused on girls education and vulnerable groups have spanned Chiniot, Multan, Muzaffargarh, Rahimyarkhan, and Bahawalpur in Punjab; Sukkur, Shikarpur and Karachi in Sindh, and Lasbela, Quetta and Qila Saifullah in Balochistan. Dubai Cares partnered with Oxfam GB and Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) in 2008 for its first project titled “Enhancing Girls Enrolment in Remote Areas of Pakistan in South Punjab”. It extended its support to ITA for an emergency program “Enhancement of Girls Enrolment and Retention in Flood Affected Areas” in 2013 and upon completion of the program, it resolved to expand its footprint across Pakistan with this third ongoing partner program, 'Improving learning outcomes, enrolment and transitions from ECE to primary education especially for girls and vulnerable groups in Pakistan'. Phase-III of Dubai Cares (Jan 2014- Dec 2016) focuses on “Improving learning outcomes, enrolment and transitions from early childhood education (ECE) to primary education for especially girls and vulnerable groups in Pakistan” in 10 districts across the country. This project essentially targets early childhood education (ECE), enrollments and retention, learning levels of in-school children (ISC) and out of school children (OOSC) and consequently mainstreaming OOSC in schools.
ITA has consistently proved its determination as a local agency with strong organization, advocacy and lobbying skills. The organization is instrumental in gaining greater buy-in and commitment from the government of Pakistan for various programs. Its involvement has ensured that Dubai Cares’ program are completely aligned with the educational needs of the region and transferred to the full ownership of the government. Through our partnership with ITA, Dubai Cares successfully launched program that establishes the framework for holistic experiential learning, support girl’s education and promote children’s transition from pre-primary to primary education. The program has also provided accelerated learning and support for out-of-school children to improve their learning levels. Additionally, the program has provided training to teachers in hard-to-access areas, through a “Teachers Without Frontier” model and generate a culture of reading to improve learning and citizenship across Pakistan’s schools.
Humans of Pakistan (HOP) is an innovative social media community led by a team of adroit photographers and storytellers. 'Humans of Pakistan' which has been inspired by 'Humans of Newyork' aims to eradicate stereotypes and labels by portraying tolerant, peaceful and progressive Pakistani intellect and values. The 'Humans of Pakistan' Facebook page audiences millions of people around the world to showcase the goodwill of Pakistani society. Also, 'Humans of Pakistan' leads many socially innovative and crowd funded development projects.

"There are many different causes in the world people look for or work earnestly for; religious, ethnic or ideological. Our case is our country, our Nation. In today's troubled times, we seek to work for a cause greater in it's reach and impact. Helping out people nearby is of great nobility, and will give one a peaceful state of mind, but in today's globalized and image conscious world, we need something that stabilizes our footing internationally, and gives us strength on a people to people level, regardless of what rulers/system may want us to think." Humans Of Pakistan
The purpose of this publication is to showcase everyday lives of only a hand few among 385,800 children and 12,880 teachers, under the ongoing Phase III of the Dubai Cares project, who have been impacted by our constant strive to provide quality and compulsory education in Pakistan. Nothing short of miracles have happened on the ground where entire communities and households have changed their lifestyles with the onset of our educational interventions in those areas. The compilation is a result of 18 days of activism in collaboration with 'Humans of Pakistan' to raise educational awareness and make a change. The stories have been collected from Lasbela, Karachi, Sukkur and Shikarpur.
4 Districts
24 Stories

Key themes of ‘Stories of Change’

- 24 Stories on Poverty
- 13 Stories on Women’s Empowerment
- 10 Stories on Child Labor
- 7 Stories on Accessibility of Schools
Social Media is a powerful tool to express change within any society in today's world. The stories have already reached millions of people not only in Pakistan but across the world through 'Humans of Pakistan' Facebook page. With all the encouragement and praise '18 days of Activism' received; Idara e Taleem o Aagahi feels more determined to persevere in its goal of providing quality and compulsory education to the children/youth of Pakistan. The '#visitaschool' activism hashtag spread like wildfire among the target audience which encouraged them to connect with people who are involved day and night in improving the education system.

Facebook Comments

Qamar Awan You guys have done a fantastic job. Thumbs up.
Like · Reply 11 · June 5 at 9:58pm

Sandra Pilla His story is inspiring, as are all the HOP features -- but equal parts heart-wrenching. Sure, I also started working at age 12 -- but in my case, fortunately, it was just to earn some pocket money and not because I had to support my family. I recognize how lucky I was, and how so many others in the world don't have such luck -- and yet they manage to remain determined and maintain a positive outlook. I believe we can all learn from their admirable example.

Moreover, I do feel strongly that we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers; life is unbalanced and everyone must play their role. Yes, God helps those who help themselves -- but we must recognize that not everyone CAN help themselves when others continue to put up roadblocks to their success. So, kudos to this young man and also to the organizations that are striving to ensure education for all!

Like · Reply 9 · June 3 at 5:04pm

Mairazam Shah Nadir You'll become inspirational example to 10% of 1000
gir's in your locality someday. Realize you're right always.
Like · Reply 1 · June 5 at 9:36pm

Karen Stout Is there a way we could get text books to the people who are unable to go to school? It wouldn't be ideal, but better than nothing. I can't imagine the hurdles these children go through. I'm thankful for the big help they get.

Like · Reply 3 · May 30 at 10:29pm

Sandra Pillars Their angelic and strong young hearts! I'm so glad they can lean on each other. And of course they should feel no remorse over how they lean on each other. Of course they should feel no remorse over how they lean on each other.

Like · Reply 4 · May 30 at 10:22pm

Mairzam Shah Nadir You'll become inspirational example to 10% of 1000
gir's in your locality someday. Realize you're right always.
Like · Reply 1 · June 5 at 9:36pm

Mahrin Hussain Salute to that NGO!
Like · Reply 1 · May 29 at 9:56pm

Mimitha TR Education should be the birth right of every child, not given as a gift by exploiting employers! If there are no laws for it in country, time to change laws@FITE
Like · Reply 2 · May 25 at 7:59pm

Simone It The adversity these young girls go through and yet do all to make their future better. Simplicity astounds me each time I read one of the stories. I just want to reach out and say to their face, If you can read one thing. You are making a difference. You were dealt a very cruel fate in life, but your perseverance is truly inspiring to people like me who are so far away from them. Wishing you all the best.

Like · Reply 87 · June 4 at 9:45pm

Page No: 07
I don't like it when people say bad things about religious leaders and generalize all of them in one category. My father is a Maulvi, teaches Quran to children and also does spiritual treatments of poor. But he sends me to school and always tells me to respect both the elders and young ones. I want to become as brave as Benazir Bhutto was and a police commissioner when I grow up. My father doesn't have a problem with my dreams. He motivates me. When I go back home, he welcomes me with the words, 'Here comes my brave police daughter'. He doesn't get any money for the work he is doing but we get Rs. 5000 every month from the government (BISP). I just wish I could continue my studies and don't become a burden on my family because my school is only till primary and to pursue further I have to join a middle school this year. I will do anything to have a middle school here in my area so not only me, but all the girls here can make their dreams come true.

Lasbela, Baluchistan
Four years ago my father stopped me from going to school because of the delinquent boys who used to tease all the girls in schools. He also prohibited my mother; who was a teacher; from working because of security conditions in Lyari and in Karachi overall. He asked her to stay at home with us and protect us while he himself was out in these areas, driving rickshaws and earning for us. But now that things are getting better and Lyari is very safe now, he has allowed me to go back to school. Though my mother couldn't get her job back because of this huge break. I am 10 years old and am studying in a camp established by ITA. I will soon be mainstreamed in the school and enrolled in class 6. I want to grow up and become a teacher myself and do what my mother always wanted for herself. She is very happy with my decision and is my biggest motivation.

Lyari, Karachi.
My father works as a blacksmith and a welder in Lyari. Most of his work is order based and these days he does not get many orders. He does not have any other skills and says it is too late and difficult to start something new. But somehow he manages the school expense of all his children. My brother is in college and all my 5 sisters are studying in school. Looking up to my brother and father, I want to become an engineer. As soon as possible, I want to take care of my education and personal expense myself and also support my family. I love my father. He has never discriminated among his son and daughters.

Lyari, Karachi
We were living in a joint family system 11 years ago but then my father left us when I was very young. After his death things started getting very difficult for us. Nobody wanted to support us and for two years my mother did not have her medicines, my sisters did not go to school, and we only get to buy new clothes on Eid when some relatives took pity on us and gift us some because of being orphan. After 2 years of misery, she stood up, moved out and started working herself. She started with sewing clothes and karhai and enrolled all of us in schools. She did everything in her strength to pay for our expenses. My eldest sister graduated from university and got a job. As soon as she got the job, we stopped mother from working because she is diabetic and stress was not helping her situation. My sister is the breadwinner of the family and takes care of the entire house now. Looking up to her, I also want to become a responsible daughter by helping my sister and serving my mother for all she had gone through for our better and secured lives.

Lyari, Karachi
I was working as a teacher when I got married. My husband is not educated but he didn’t stop me from pursuing my job, initially. After sometime, his friends from the village started instigating him that your wife walks all the way to school crossing the market’s crowded streets. They presented themselves as his friends but actually they themselves were ones who used to sit in the market and stare at me. When my husband came to me with his reservations and asked me to quit, I assertively told him that this is not going to happen. I asked him to trust me rather than listening to his friends. I said if you stop me from working, I will go to my parents and continue my job. There are already very few girls allowed to come to school because I personally requested their parents to let them come and now they trust me. What would happen to the future of these innocent girls if I quit? Later, he went to his friends and said, ‘Never again, dare to talk to my about my wife and personal life. She is my wife, has my support and she will continue her job, no matter what happens.’ I was very happy when I heard that he said these words. A supportive life partner is the best motivation for success.

Shikarpur, Sindh
I am the only sister of five brothers and none of us were going to school because my father is poor and did not have money to pay the fee. There weren't even any teachers in the government school near my house. People were using the school playground and rooms as shelter for their cattle. But sometimes ago a teacher from ITA came to our house and insisted that my father let all of us go to the government school. They renovated the school and brought a teacher. I am currently in the camp and will be admitted in class two. I want to become a teacher. I will teach in this school when I grow up because I don't want other children to go without education.

Sukkur, Sindh.
Gold business has been running in our family for ages which probably started from my great grandfather. Nobody in my family was educated. They have been using traditional methods of business. I am 16 years old and I study in 10th grade. I am working hard so I can get into the university I dream of. I want to do MBA from IBA and take my family business to international level, especially to Dubai. I am planning it all. I will do it through e-commerce website which I am currently working on. I know I am too young to talk big but I think this is my age to start planning for my career. I even chose my subjects in 10th grade after doing a lot of research. I chose computer instead of biology because it would help me more in the longer run.

Sukkur, Sindh
I had never been to school because my father is poor and could not afford the school fee, uniform or books. He was also busy with work so he couldn't pick and drop me from school. I used to stay at home all day or sometimes went with my father on his cart to sell 'Samosas' and 'Pakoras'. But some months ago, a teacher came to my house. He told my father to send me to school every day and when he heard of our situation, he said it is free of cost and is just by my house. So I could go to school! I am so happy now. I read stories from my school book to my father everyday when he comes home. It makes him happy too and he gives me sweets as a reward every night!

Sukkur, Sindh.
My mother and I sew clothes and do embroidery to buy grocery and pay house rent. My father doesn't work. He only argues with my mother and asks for money so he can buy drugs. He doesn't even try to work. My sisters, mother and I take care of the house together. I will study for as long as I can while supporting my family and will become a doctor one day. Then I know all our problems will go away.

Sukkur, Sindh
I want to become a lift-operator when I grow up. I once saw this man on TV who was pressing buttons and was going to the top floor of a tall building and then coming down. It is like a free ride, with no tickets! I will join police after I get bored from that work. My father has a cart and sells fruits. He gives me 10 rupees everyday for school. But he has to give over 200 rupees to the shopkeeper everyday to let him park in front of the shop and sometimes to the police because they bother him otherwise. Then I don’t get my 10 rupees. I will become a good police officer and arrest all the bad policemen.

Sukkur, Sindh.
Me, my father, mother, sisters and brothers - we all work. The males of the house go out and work while the women work at home. My sisters and I also go to school. Whatever I earn, my parents have never asked me to give anything at home. I like buying new clothes and shoes for myself from my money. My teacher says I can become a good teacher. When I will become one, I will stop sewing and doing embroidery because it takes more time than the money it brings.

Sukkur, Sindh
I am in 10th grade and I run a grocery store with my father. After school, I go to the shop and stay there while my father goes back home have lunch and offer prayers. I like poetry and during my free time at shop I write. When my father comes back, I read to him and he helps me with my writings. He doesn't ask me to work with him in the shop but I do it myself because if he is doing a lot for his children, why should I not do something for him? He often give me treats when I leave for home and I take it but I don't want to give the impression that I work with him for the treats. I work with him because I love my father and after I complete my education, I will just let him rest and support him for as long as I am alive.

Sukkur, Sindh.
Everyday I wake up very early in the morning, even before the sun rises and go to the dairy shop where I work. I pick up milk packets and distribute them till 6 A.M. Then I go back to home to get ready for school. After school, I have to finish my homework before evening because I have to go to the dairy shop again and deliver milk packets. I only earn 80 rupees a day but that is more than enough for me. My school, books and uniform is free. I keep 10 rupees for myself everyday and give rest of the money to my mother so that I can help my family financially. This way I get to go to school and nobody forces me to work full time. I will not always be a delivery boy, I know it. I will become an officer after I complete my education.

Sukkur, Sindh
The popular belief or misconception is that after marriage, girls' dreams end up being crushed in the kitchen making rotis (bread) but in my case it happened other way round. I got married during my bachelors in commerce but my husband and in-laws are so supportive that they pushed me to join the professional life. They don't even take any money from me so every month, I buy gifts for them myself. I started teaching at a government school. I chose teaching over commerce field because I have always liked to share knowledge with others. The government teachers have no accountability here so they usually don't come to schools and when they do, it is to mark their attendance for the entire week. When I was handed over the task or managing this school, I was very happy. I like being in charge and do my part in making these children's lives better.

Sukkur, Sindh
I work at a motorcycle spare parts shop in the evening and go to school in the morning. It is very difficult to manage work and perform well in school too. I wish I had a choice but its okay, I don't mind working. It makes me feel like an adult and the responsible one in the family. I will clear the 10th grade this year and then will go to college. I have heard that education gets even more difficult in college but I think I can do it. I am going to focus on performing well in my final exams now so that I can get into a good college.

Sukkur, Sindh
My father works in Dubai. He was already married when he married my mother and he didn't tell her. After my birth, my mother got to know about the other wife so she left him and took me to her parents' home. My father brought us back to his home but then started beating my mother on small mistakes and sometimes without any mistake. Later, my uncle (father's brother) fought with him and took us to his house. Now we have no place to live. Sometimes we stay at our uncle's place and sometimes with my grandparents. Both places are very far away from my home but my mother doesn't want to compromise on my studies. I think we will shift to my grandparents permanently. We come to school on a rickshaw everyday. She drops me off and waits outside the school in scorching heat, for my classes to end. While I am in class, she sits outside and knits clothes and does karhai which she sells in the market on our way back. My mother's strength is unbelievable. She is my rock and my motivation.

Lasbela, Baluchistan
We are five sisters. My eldest sister - 14 years old - is a year older than me and got married to my uncle's son who is just 15. My father passed away three years ago but he tied the knot of my sister before he died. My cousin doesn't work and it's been eight months since their marriage. It's sad to see my sister like that. My father used to drive a bus, after his death we sold his bus and my uncle kept all money. He didn't give us a single penny of it. We don't have much resources but I love to study so I come to school from a place far away. I want to become a teacher so that I can teach other underprivileged girls like me who don't have much resources or couldn't study because of any other reasons.

Lasbela, Baluchistan
My father passed away 5 years ago. My brothers had to leave studies to look after their younger siblings and mother. Once I said that I won't go to school and will sew clothes at home with mother but my brother got angry and said that a death by hunger we can accept but our sisters leaving school that we cannot accept. This school is only till primary and there is no middle school nearby. I will be sent away to my grandparents in Khuzdar to continue after this year. My other siblings will also join me there soon but I am not sure if my brothers will. They might have to stay here for work. I will miss them!

Lasbela, Baluchistan
We are eight siblings; 5 sisters and 3 brothers. All my sisters were studying but my uncle stopped them from coming to school. He is the eldest and decision maker of our family. He even prohibited his own sister - my aunty - from going to school. This school is till primary and I am in class three. I come here with my 3 other sisters but after 5th grade, he will also stop me from going to middle school that is in Hub Chowki which is pretty far from here. He says that girls shouldn't go this far alone. Now my sisters stay at home and do clothes-karhai work. They earn 150-200 Rs for each piece they make. We are not very poor. My father and brothers work in factories and together they earn Rs. 60,000/month. We only do this because its better than doing nothing and just sitting at home. After school I also work with them and learn the skill. As much as I enjoy the beauty of the work, I fear that I am going to do this full time and stop school after one year. I will miss studying.

Lasbela, Baluchistan
My father got my eldest brother married about a year ago. He left us to make a new home with his wife. Now, only one brother works and takes care of us (9 siblings) and parents. My father is diagnosed with Tuberculosis therefore he can’t work and all burden lies on the shoulders of my brother. I want to help but I am only in class 5th and will most likely stop schooling because my school is primary and middle school is 5 km away. I don't want to increase the burden of transport fare on my brother but also don't want stop schooling. I hope this school gets the status of middle so I can study, become a teacher and help my family financially. I want to lift some of the responsibility off the brother’s shoulders. It isn't fair on him.

Lasbela, Baluchistan
My father works in a factory called LIDA in Lasbela. He is the only breadwinner of the family and earns Rs. 9000 a month. In spite of this extremely less income, he sends all his 6 children to school. He says we (parents) can afford to sleep without food for nights but cannot sleep without your education. But problem is that my school is only till 5th grade and middle school is very far away from here. My father will not be able to afford money for my transport to middle school and I will have to stop school after 5th grade. I pray 5 times a day and ask Allah for the miracle of a middle school opening up in my town so I don't have to give up studying.

Lasbela, Baluchistan
My father got abducted and went missing 4 years ago. I was 9 years old. I don't remember correctly as I was very young but a man came to our house and said that he worked with my father. He said, “We were working in the factory when a group in uniforms barged in with guns and started capturing people. Some of us hid, some left and some they took but they didn't injure anyone.” We all cried a lot but my mother was affected the most. My uncles went to police and even wrote to the government but nobody ever found my father or his dead body. We are still healing from this tragedy but it has marked our hearts. Later, my brothers found work here in Lasbela and I started my schooling. After this incident I couldn't study and started failing because I always missed my father. I remember how he used to kiss me on my cheeks and tell me that I am his princess. But my teachers motivated me, saying that if he had been here, he would have wanted me to be happy, studying and working hard. I am now studying and will make him proud, wherever he is.

Lasbela, Baluchistan.
7 years ago, my mother was pregnant with my youngest brother when my father passed away. Since then, my mother has been working in factories to earn a living. Since I am the eldest, I have the responsibility to look after the house and my siblings. I wake up before everyone everyday and cook breakfast for mother and siblings. My mother leaves for work and I for school with my siblings which I just started. Before that, I would just stay at home and run usual house errands. I was enrolled in school when I was 8 and this is why I am still in class two. After coming back from school, first thing I have to do is to cook lunch or sometimes just serve leftovers from dinner and do homework with everyone. Then the children go out to play in the evening and I do the cleaning at home. My mother comes home late because she does overtime at factory so she is paid more. We are poor but I think educating ourselves will be our way out. If we don't, our next generation will remain poor too and I don't want that.

Lasbela, Baluchistan
I want to become a civil engineer when I grow up because I like how buildings, roads and bridges are made. Previously we were very poor and were living in Larkana, Sindh. Only my father used to work back then, but now my brothers also started working and helping my father but both brothers and sister had to quit education. I am the youngest in the family so they say they will give me what they couldn't have for themselves but I feel bad because they had to quit school. I plan on making them proud.

Lasbela, Baluchistan
It has been a wonderful experience of meeting these children in some of the remotest areas of Sindh and Baluchistan. It was surprising to meet so many talented and smart children, especially girls having the opportunity to educate themselves only because of the intervention by ITA and Dubai Cares. Seeing the efforts and hard work put by both the organizations were astonishing; especially after noticing the results of this initiative by doing a just comparison between school going and out-of-school child gave an entire new level of motivation. These comparisons in form of stories on Humans of Pakistan left an amazing impact on the readers and left us overwhelmed. The cherry on the top was when we got to know about some of our stories leading to upgrade of a primary schools to middle.

Ali Haider
Co-Founder & Chief Storyteller
Humans of Pakistan
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#VISITASCHOOL

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