Bahawalpur; September 6, 2015: The Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training, Muhammad Baligh ur Rehman inaugurated Dubai Cares Project under the Phase-III extension undertaken by Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) to renovate and rehabilitate government schools. The inauguration ceremony took place at Government Girls Primary School, Haji Muhammad in Bahawalpur (EMIS: 31220352).

Dubai Cares has been working extensively in Pakistan, reaching out to 4028 schools and 1,035,300 beneficiaries since 2008. Currently 26 Government Girl's primary/elementary schools have been identified and adopted under the Dubai Cares Project to fill in the gap for missing facilities in the district of Bahawalpur alone.

With this project, girls will secure access to quality schools—with functional enabling classrooms, working toilet blocks, boundary walls and clean water. The other elements to support learning include learning materials, ECE, primary multi-subject kits, libraries, sports and health kits, furniture and para teachers; all of which are important for enhancing children's learning outcomes and foster inquiry based approaches in a conducive environment.

While speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Minister Baligh ur Rehman appreciated the support being provided by Dubai Cares and the work being done by ITA, urging for the expansion of the project.

The Minister also stated that the government has increased spending on provision of missing facilities. He further added that for Punjab Chief Minister, Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif this is an issue of top priority.

EDO Bahawalpur, Mr. Bashir Ahmed congratulated ITA and Dubai Cares for starting this commendable project and stated that they would have full support of the district education team.
CEO Dubai Cares Visit to Pakistan
April 8-13, 2015

The Chief Executive Officer of Dubai Cares, Mr. Tariq Mohammad Saleh Al Gurg, made his first visit to Pakistan from 8th - 13th April, 2015. He was accompanied by the Country Program Officer, Nada Al Hajjri and the Communications Associate, Sara Mohammed Al Boom. Mr. Tariq M.S. Al Gurg and his team travelled to Islamabad, Sindh and Punjab to visit schools and meet high level government officials, civil society and development partner organizations.

During the visit in Karachi, Dubai Cares attended the launch ceremony of the blended learning innovative professional development program Teachers Without Frontiers (Ustaad Taa Hadd) and its Learning Chowk portal on April 10, 2015 at Avari Hotel, Karachi. After the program, Mr. Tariq and his team, along with ITA’s team met with Nisar Ahmed Khuro, the Senior Minister of Education and Literacy Sindh, at his chamber to discuss Dubai Cares ongoing initiatives in Sindh. The team flew to Lahore and met with ITA’s team at the head office, discussing the progress of various initiatives under the ongoing partner project. The team travelled to Multan where ITA hosted a discussion forum with District government officials to discuss the impact of the project in Punjab. The next day, the team visited four intervention schools in Kot Addu and Muzaffargarh, while it interacted with key stakeholders.

Learning Level Trends for the CPB Camps

Learning for Access is ITA’s large scale program with measureable impact on learning and enrollment with sustainability. Program has 12 month interventions, starting from identification of Out of School Children (OOSC) & In-School Children at risk of drop out, community mobilization to bring OOSC in the school, improving learning levels of children falling under both categories through literacy camps, mainstreaming of OOSC, continuous tracking of learning levels of targeted children and implementing whole school improvement program to make better school learning environment. The CPB camps have been successfully run in 200 schools in the first term and is currently running in 346 schools in Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan.

Learning Levels were assessed for three categories: English, Math and Native Language (Urdu/Sindhi). Each category had sub-categories and after every 15 days for the entire camp of 60-75 days, children were assessed to see if they transitioned into the next higher-level category or not. The figures below illustrate learning level trends across the districts of Sukkur, Shikarpur, Lasbela and Muzaffargarh from the 200 schools which were completed in first term.

Learning Level: Urdu / Sindhi
The children who were enrolled in ECE last year in April-Sep 2014, attended ECE program on regular basis for a period of 10-12 months. ITA provided them well-trained local teachers who taught them according to the National Curriculum for ECE 2007. Besides this, number of TLMs and play equipment was also provided to them to increase their interest and learning. Furthermore, ECE classrooms were renovated to ensure safe and protected physical environment for young children. It was completely ensured to enroll 100% children of 3-5 years available in the target location.

Within a year, around 8,000 children were benefited through the intervention and approximately 50% of total enrollment is based on girls' ratio. One of the main objectives of ECE program is to ensure successful transition of children from ECE to next grade since it is a very important step towards improved retention rate at primary level. Transition means to develop readiness in children to step into formal schooling so that they can be successful learners in future based on their ECE experience. The whole project team and school management is mutually trying to retain the children though transition from pre-primary to primary level. To date, about 60% of enrolled children have been successfully transited to class one in ITA's partner schools in Sindh and Baluchistan. It is further hoped to improve the transition rate up to 80% in coming days with more rigorous efforts engaging the community and School councils in the process.

**Teachers Without Frontiers**

Teachers without Frontiers (TWF) component III of the Dubai Cares (DC) Project conceptualized and implemented by Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) was formally launched on April 10, 2015 in Karachi.

TWF Cycle I of professional development program formally kicked off in May and continued until June. The Cycle I program was designed to screen potential trainers – TWF Fellows. From more than 500 applications 370 teachers were shortlisted and engaged in 05-day long training sessions in the 06 districts in 04 provinces. After series of deliberations
with Super Leaders (Partners), the sessions were dedicated on the prime areas of teachers' growth; they included brain sciences, basic ICT skills, teaching of content area and communication.

The transformational program of Cycle II invited 106 teachers from the 06 districts who had been shortlisted from Cycle I. The trainees were grouped into three cohorts who were convened at three different locations – Karachi, Sukkur and Swat.

The Cycle II adopts blended learning as the medium for training. Thus, first ever online Learning Management System (LMS) (www.twffellows.com) for public and private sector teachers was developed to link them virtually with their trainers. Each trainee-TWF Fellow was awarded minicomputer-tablet to access the dedicated E-Learning System.

After 18 days of face to face and 10 days of online sessions, the TWF Fellows are now being geared into the development of the training plans and material for “Teachers-initiated Professional Development” of Cycle III. The TWF Fellows will conduct training program during the Cycle III where each TWF Fellow is aimed to reach out to 100 teachers in their own districts.

Learning Metrics Task Force (LMTF)

MTF is a representative group of global stakeholders engaged in in-country consultations to broaden the learning framework for both developing and developed countries alike, from pre-primary to lower secondary as a continuum of learning metrics across 7 domains (CUE Brookings, 2013). Phase I of deliberations successfully completed in 2013 identified seven domains of learning for pre-primary, primary and post primary levels. Phase II of LMTF is underway with 15 countries (including Pakistan) working to advance the development of new standards and assessment frameworks to ensure coverage of key learning domains.

The first publication under LMTF “Mapping the Universe of Assessment Systems in Pakistan” has been completed and will be launched in the upcoming 4th LMTF National Stakeholders Meeting to be held in Islamabad by end of October 2015. This study will provide key stakeholders with a clear picture of the various assessment actors and efforts in the country, reflecting on what is working well and what is not, and setting the baseline of what is being assessed and emphasized by the national learning assessment systems. The mapping study will be useful as a research and reference guide to help partners and stakeholders obtain a common and comprehensive understanding of the current assessment systems, its strengths and weaknesses, explore similarities and differences and consider practices in relation to stated principles of effective assessment practice. It will also generate immediate next steps and set priorities for the government and private sector alike.

Children’s Literature Festival

Children's Literature Festival is a social movement sponsored organized by Idara-e-Taleem-O-Aagahi (ITA) in collaboration with Dubai Cares and several partners. It is the first ever national level systematic event that intends to reach all territories and segments in Pakistan. Children’s Literature Festival is the only festival of its kind in Pakistan that is not only exclusively for children but has been held in all 4 provinces of Pakistan including the conflict areas of the country. CLF proposes to expand reading culture for creativity, imagination and multi-sensory stimulation beyond classrooms and textbooks In other words, it provides a unique platform that drives the interest of children towards joy of reading, self expression and critical thinking.
The 4th Teachers’ Literature Festival was held in Karachi on the 26th of February 2015 attended by approximately 3000 teachers followed by the 17th Children’s Literature Festival. The Opening Ceremony was held in the Open Air Theatre of the Arts Council of Pakistan which was given the name of “Koh-i-Simorgh”.

Founder of CLF and Adviser ITA, Baela Raza Jamil in her welcome address thanked the generous supporters and resource persons of CLF and said that with each festival the CLF gets bigger and better. She said that the CLFs are a social movement to promote a culture of reading across Pakistan and to enhance their capability to think creatively and critically and that the success of each CLF is due to the support of some of the finest people and organizations of Pakistan. She further said that schools need to take ownership to hold CLF in their respective schools in order to break away from the culture of reading only textbooks and for exams.

Senior Program Officer Open Society Foundations, Nargis Sultana stressed the importance of holding such events in schools as well in order to promote critical thinking among the students. She said what started as a small event in 2011 has now become a full-fledged movement with more and more people joining in this movement. She further said that CLF is one of the few forums of Pakistan which gives hope of a better and brighter Pakistan.

A powerful and emotional moment was witnessed when the brave survivors of Army Public School Peshawar joined the Opening Ceremony along with the parents of those who lost their children in the attack in Peshawar on 16th December 2014. Almost 5000 people who were at the Open Air Auditorium at that time gave a standing ovation to the children of APS Peshawar. Well-known Ghazal Singer, Tina Sani sang “Kitno ka Lahu Tujhay Chahiye aye Arz-e-watan” as a tribute to the Ghazis and Shaheeds of Peshawar. Murals made by different schools to pay tribute to the students of APS Peshawar facilitated by prominent artist and writer, Fauzia Minallah were held by students on the stage along with peace slogans with Ali Zafar’s song “Urainge uss aasmaan mein, Rahenge aise jahaan mein” playing in the background as a tribute to the children of Peshawar and Pakistan.

Additional Chief Secretary Education Literacy Department Government of Sindh, Dr Fazullah Pecheho stressed the importance of peace in the society and said that the children are going to bring peace to the society. He said the time has come to fight all extremist elements in the society just like the way the children of Peshawar fought. He further said that in the next financial year, he is going to recommend to the government of Sindh to also include budget for the CLF in their budget. www.childrensliteraturefestival.com

A Milestone Achieved!

2.2 Million Signatures collected from Pakistan

At the recent United Nation General Assembly (UNGA) that took place 15th September-6th October 2015, 10 million #UpForSchool signatures were presented by Education Envoy Gordon Brown to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon with the message that the out-of-school children have no more time to wait.

What a wonderful way to raise our voices collectively! 10 million people united all over the world to show that they support the cause and Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi feels proud to proclaim that 2.2 million of these signatures came from Pakistan alone. This milestone could not have been achieved without the help of our esteemed partner organizations, dedicated volunteers, energetic Education Youth Ambassadors (EYAs) and hardworking staff members.
Besides the celebrations that took place at the UNGA, our Education Youth Ambassadors, affiliated with ITA under the Right to Education Pakistan campaign were also invited to celebrate the 2 Million mark. The plan was very simple: EYAs would present the 2 Million signatures collected from all over Pakistan to parliamentarians and urge them to take action to bring out of school children back to school. This exercise was conducted on a provincial level as well as in several districts across the country.

In Islamabad, on UNDP’s invitation 10 of our EYAs joined them on their International Youth Day Conference on August 12; as a platform for presenting these signatures to the parliamentarians invited at the event.

In Lahore, the EYAs had a chance to visit the office of Pakistan Education Foundation (PEF) 13th August, where they met with Chairman Standing Committee on Education, Qamar-ul-Islam Raja. Mr. Raja also signed the #UpForSchool petition and shared valuable insight about the situation of Education in Pakistan with the EYAs.

**Moving towards sustainability!**

**Punjab:**

According to an important notification issued by School Education Department through Non-Salary Budgets (NSB) transferred to the School Councils, may hire suitable individuals as “Part Time Coaches” for an indefinite time period after passing a formal resolution. This is a huge opportunity to extend the CPB camps through volunteer teachers/coaches to entire province using the NSB funds. The monthly honorariums are commensurate with their qualifications.

**Balochistan:**

Four community based forest department schools that had been negotiated for support by ITA under DC project by the Balochistan government for ECE and L4A primary classes have been formally mainstreamed within the schools portfolio of the Secondary Education Department.

**Sindh:**

The recommendations of the Karachi ECED Consensus Statement 2014 an outcome of the Regional ECED conference hosted by Education and Literacy Department Government of Sindh and ITA with Dubai Cares support in September 2014 have been included in the recently finalized Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) policy by the ECE Taskforce. This was facilitated by the Reform Support Unit (RSU). In more than 1000 "consolidated schools" of Sindh, support will be extended for establishing fully equipped ECCE classrooms. Six of the 10 Karachi government schools under DC project fall in this category. ECE teachers are also being recruited as per the Sindh Education Sector Plan 2014-2018

**ASER 2015**

The sixth Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) for the year 2015 has formally been kicked off in 114 rural district and 21 urban administrative areas across the country to assess the status of learning, access and quality of education being imparted to children.

This year, survey will be conducted by 10,000 volunteers managed by the Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi along with many key civil society and semi autonomous organizations including the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD), Sindh Education Foundation (SEF), Democratic Commission for Human Development (DCHD), HANDS and NRSP and other partners across Pakistan. ASER 2015 will be launched on 17th December 2015 in order to share the findings with all stakeholders and government with reference to post 2015 agenda and to influence the discussion on sustainable development goals globally. 10,000 volunteers are currently collecting information on all children from 3-16 years across Pakistan after completion of 3 day rigorous training. The findings of ASER 2014 survey was shared with multiple stakeholders including teachers, parents, youth, parliamentarians and government officials and similar dissemination activities will be conducted this year as well.

(http://aserpakistan.org/)
Case Studies From The Fields
Tahira had her priorities set-
Khajji wala, Muzaffargarh

By Sunair Zakir

On the very first day of CPB camps ITA team visited schools to ensure that all the required material had reached and baseline assessments were being conducted in the correct manner. This field visit like all others also left a million questions and stories in our minds. We left Multan early in the morning to reach Muzaffargarh. Other than ensuring the smooth running of CPB camps the major focus of these field visits was to interact with the kids and hear some inspiring stories.

Tahira is one of the students in our CPB camps who's the eldest in class and most eager to learn. Her father, Mazhar Hussain, does not work because of his poor health conditions and both of her elder brothers have shifted to Sialkot to work in a factory. She has two elder sisters who have never been to school but work as a stitcher to earn enough money to support the family. Few months back her family went for a wedding ceremony to another village. Her sisters found some earning opportunities so they lived there for a few months. Upon their return to their village Tahira wished to continue her school so she woke up early one day and left for school. She was excited to see her friends and teachers again. The class began with the usual recitation of Quran by a student followed by attendance. The teacher ended up taking the attendance but Tahira's name was not called out. When she enquired she got to know that the school had dropped her name from the enrolled students list because of her absence for a few months. The school head teacher told her that they cannot enroll her again since students going away for months could not make up for the lost time and eventually fail exam and end up dropping out.

Tahira had lost all hope to ever see a school from inside again when our OOSC identification began. One of our para teachers took her case up to the school and ensured that through our accelerated learning in CPB camps she'll be able to make up for the lost time and can be enrolled again in the next class. When we asked Tahira if she wanted to be a stitcher like her sisters, we got a prompt reply “Never. I want to be a doctor.”

You educate a man; you educate an individual. You educate a woman; you educate a generation. “Brigham Young”

By Liaqat Ali & Imam Zadi

This story gyrates around a 14 years old girl name as Noor Bibi. She belongs to a very backward area, village name as Sappat, District Lasbela, Balochistan. It is one of the most backward areas of the Province Balochistan. Noor Bibi is the only primary passed girl in the entire village. She is inspired, courageous and hardworking lady.

ITA was well aware about the Sappat area. The rule of ignorance is at its peak in the village. It is around 270 kilometers away from the Dureji, the ITA District office. The team was in search of an early child education teacher. They visited different houses to earn the services of a teacher but all in vain.

Finally their search ended in the shape of Noor Bibi. She looked quite sensible, motivated and courageous lady among the population of around 43 houses. Her eyes were sparkling with a new hope after meeting with the ITA team. She was asked for her services as a teacher, she accepted it with pleasure.
The ITA team faced another issue as there was not any building in the area. But the courageous community came forward to offer their services as volunteer and to help solve this issue by building a hut for the children. Although this was looked as a minor initiative but the community hoped that their struggle will bore fruit in the shape of many Noor Bibi’s in future with a proper building for school.

After some time when the team visited the school to distribute the basic required materials. They were surprised to see a self-made Iron blackboard in the hut. It was made up of iron with wooden support from back. They were using a special type of stone to write on the iron board.

This creativity impressed the ITA team and they appreciated her struggle. This seemed worthy to highlight that she did not waste her time by waiting for the materials but she took initiatives with the stuff she had. She used them as tools of learning. She did not give up but she used all the sources she had smartly and turned them into productive things. She proved that one can spread the light of education with even limited resources.

The Anita Ghulam Ali World Teachers’ Day Award 2015

The Anita Ghulam Ali World Teachers Day Award (2008-2014) is a civil society effort led by Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) to acknowledge the services rendered by extraordinary teachers. Every year on the occasion of World Teachers day ITA pays tribute to best teachers of Pakistan by announcing AGA WTD Award. This is an initiative of ITA in collaboration with all those partners who are willing to undertake this journey, committed to the cause of teachers. The ITA team sends out calls for nominations and facilitates the selection process through a panel of experts. For AGA WTD 2015, the theme for the award is “Global Citizenship Education”.

Apply now: www.itacec.org/wtd_2015.php
Last date to submit entries: 30th November 2015
Dubai Cares started working in Pakistan in 2008 with Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) and Oxfam GB. Its first project titled “Enhancing Girls Enrolment in Remote Areas of Pakistan in South Punjab” marking 185 schools and 150,000 beneficiaries, aimed to create a positive learning environment in government schools with increased awareness and community engagement. The relevance of the set of interventions was amplified during the emergency response to the unprecedented floods in 2010 that caused large scale damage in Punjab and Sindh. Encouraged by the good outcomes of the first project, Dubai Cares extended its support to ITA for an emergency program “Enhancement of Girls Enrolment and Retention in Flood Affected Areas in 2013” reaching out to approximately 300 schools and 335,000-500,000 beneficiaries. ITA not only met but exceeded the targets and upon completion of the program, Dubai Cares resolved to expand its footprint across the country for a third program, “Improving learning outcomes, enrolment and transitions from ECE to primary education especially for girls and vulnerable groups in Pakistan”, targeting 520 schools with 385,000 beneficiaries. The designing of the program was undertaken through consultations with multiple stakeholders and policy officials in Sindh, Balochistan and Punjab.

The project specifically targets early childhood education, enhanced enrolment and learning outcomes of out of school children, children at risk in school and transitions from early childhood education to primary and post primary education for especially girls and vulnerable groups in Pakistan. The project is informed by the provincial education sector plans, National Education Policy 2009, the national/global commitments towards MDGs/EFA and current debates to finalize the post 2015 development agenda, goals and targets. The scope of the project is intensively focused on Sindh, Balochistan and Punjab for all components, whilst selected elements of advocacy and innovations are being conducted nationwide.

The project started in January 2014; liaisons with provincial and district governments were established and local district teams were selected and trained. Upon beginning of the academic year in April 2014, the teams conducted field baseline surveys, identified schools, communities for the interventions after the summer break in Aug/Sept 2014. The project interventions as of December 31, 2014 span over the first half of the school’s academic year with notable achievements.
To establish quality “Early Childhood Education (ECE)” in primary government schools for holistic experiential learning and transition from pre-primary to primary education. The component will support policy and advocacy, capacity building of teachers, head teachers, parents/community and tracking learning outcomes. ECE under Dubai cares will mirror sector plans of two provinces in 04 target districts of Sindh (2) and Baluchistan (2).

There are over 180 early childhood education classrooms equipped functioning and around 201 Chalo Parho Barho (CPB) camps set up for accelerated learning; enrollment of out of school children (OOSC) has significantly increased in Sindh, Balochistan and Punjab. Each ECE classroom has at least 60 children enrolled, the results reveal that enrolment has significantly increased from August to the end of December 2014 with 62% of the target met; the remaining to be reached by May 2015. 10 course modules for one year B.Ed ECE have been prepared and reviewed in Sindh.

For CPB camps, the targets include enrolment of at least 40 OOSC children (who fall outside the ECE category) per camp and 15 in-school children at the risk of dropping out. The results show that 90% of the target enrolment of in-school children and almost 70% of the target enrolment of OOSC has been met with remaining targets to be met as phase 1 for component 1 and 2 ending in May 2015. With the incorporation of a creative curriculum to deliver quality education in camps, 15-day assessments have been conducted to assess the improvement in the learning levels of young children. Results reveal transition of a considerable number of children from the base category to higher categories of learning for all three subjects: Urdu/Sindhi, Math and English. However, the number varies across districts, reflecting a response to the differing geographical and socio-economic conditions of the districts. Alongside, para teachers, government teachers have received subject-based training sessions; students have been selected to form young leaders’ clubs for hygiene, mobilization of out of school children, attendance and creative learning initiatives. The Learning for Access approach has combined successfully soft and hard components for impacting quality, equity and access especially for girls in the 3 provinces. Four manuals have been finalized under L4A.

A unique outreach through trainers and e-enabled platforms in far flung areas of Pakistan (Need pictures)

Teachers Without Frontiers (TWF) as the third component, has an online portal designed for universal access to teachers with material being uploaded. 500 teachers and 20 Mentors are being identified to conduct blended learning sessions in April 2015.
LMTF Task Force Members and Partners will work together to support Learning Champions to develop and implement plans to improve national assessment systems, including the use of data to improve learning.

The fourth component of Learning Metrics Task Force (LMTF) has successfully conducted two strategic rotational meetings with 12 Learning Champions across Pakistan, from the education departments, IBCC and NEAS (all govt.) and the Aga Khan University (AKU). A mapping report of the assessment systems is underway and the next milestone is designing assessment tools at pre, primary and post primary levels in Pakistan.

A social movement for promoting reading, creativity and critical thinking = producing alternative texts to influence curriculum and supplementary materials

The project's fifth component is the Children's Literature Festival (CLF). It has reached out to 95,000 children and teachers, breaking all participation records. In 2014, 3 day long Teachers' Literature Festivals were held preceding the CLF attended by 12000 teachers thus far. CLF Lahore in November 2014 was the biggest to date with more than 35000 participants. CLF publications the trilingual bimonthly magazine and commissioned children's books have a wide readership.

To influence government policy at local, provincial and national levels by engaging in international and national movements and campaigns in line with Right to Education

Component 6 is focused on influencing policy through evidence based advocacy; supporting governments' through technical working groups for GPE, ECE and non-formal education, embedded in sector plans, influencing legal amendments (PPP Sindh Act Amendment 2014) and holding policy dialogues. The advocacy work has extended through ITA's flagship program, the citizen led learning assessment or ASER Pakistan, right to education (RTE) movement for implementation of Article 25 A for children aged 5-16 years and collaboration with A World At School (AWAS). AWAS has boldly embarked on initiatives to mobilize 500 Education Youth Ambassadors from across Pakistan, collecting 3 million signatures for the Up4School Campaign, contributing to the 500 Day Education Countdown campaign up to end of 2015, and mobilizing local industry as members of the Global Business Coalition for education. A regional conference was held on the Right to Education & Early Childhood Education and Development, concluding with the Karachi Consensus Statement on ECED. All these strands together are a response to the national and global challenges 58 million children (girls and boys) who are still out of school and 250 million children not learning.
Case Studies from the Field (by Farwa Fatima)

Khairunisa - A Born Leader!

Khairunisa is a fourth grader at Abdullah Bizinjo Primary Government School in a village in Sakran, Lasbela. However, I met her in an ECE classroom, bringing the children together and playing a game with them. The class teacher for ECE was absent, and Khairunisa had no class herself at that time so she took up the role and began teaching the children in her own capacity. She aspires to be a teacher and educate children in her community. However, she sadly says that ‘I know I will be married once I finish my fifth grade next year’. Upon asking her why that happen, she reported that ‘there are no secondary schools in this village and closest is two hours away on foot and my father will never let me walk till there’- the only other alternative is domestic work and marriage for this born leader. Khairunisa has the passion and focus but needs our help.

Haji Wahid Buksh is Ready for Education: A Call for Help!

A small village in Sakran in the district of Lasbela, Baluchistan has raised a call for everybody to help people set up their first school. Haji Wahid Buksh is a village which, until recently, had never been bestowed with a school. However, recently, one of the girls of the village returned after receiving a bachelors degree, and has made space in her house to teach children there. She has also encouraged her community to take an initiative to build a school; the men have successfully set up a small one room building which they hope to be functional soon. The community is charged and ready to educate its children but lacks resources. It appeals to everyone out there to help them educate their children- Haji Wahid Buksh you are no longer alone!

Annual Status of Education Report (ASER, Pakistan 2014)

ASER 2014 covered 144 rural districts and 21 urban districts across Pakistan encompassing 4,698 villages/blocks, 93,096 households and 279,427 children throughout Pakistan. Results show that 21% children (aged 6-16 years) are out of school in rural Pakistan, amongst which 11% are girls and 10% are boys. On the other hand, the proportion of urban out of school children is 6%, amongst which 3% are girls and 3% are boys. Boys outperform girls in all components of learning competencies in rural areas with reference as 46% of all surveyed boys could read sentences in Urdu/Sindhi/Pashto against 39% girls. This gender difference was the highest in Arithmetic where 45% of boys could do subtraction and only 38% of girls could do the same. Teacher’s attendance in rural government schools was 88% while it was 93% in private rural schools. Likewise, student’s attendance was 85% in government schools and 90% in private schools.

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  - Shikarpur Office: First Floor Maree Shopping Centre, Near Railway Station, Shikarpur. Tel: 072-6514456
  - Sukkur Office: B-29, Street # 2, Hamdard Society, Airport Road, Sukkur. Tel: 071-5633500

- Punjab
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PROMOTING QUALITY EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN

INSIDE

ITA organizes 5-Day Training Workshop for Government Officials from the Department of Education. PAGE No. 2

Global Action Week celebrated across all districts from 24th-30th April 2016 PAGE No. 2

Early Childhood Education (ECE) Center Displayed at CLF Sukkur PAGE No. 3

Learning for Access (L4A): Stories of Learning and Revolution PAGE No. 3

Teachers without Frontiers (TWF) PAGE No. 4

Learning Metrics Task Force (LMTF): Launch of Publications Event in Islamabad PAGE No. 5

Ms Kate Anderson's Field Visit to Pakistan PAGE No. 5

Children's Literature Festival (CLF) PAGE No. 5

ASER 2015 PAGE No. 6

Stories from the Field: Collaboration with Humans of Pakistan PAGE No. 7
ITA organizes 5-Days Training Workshop for Government Officials from the Department of Education.

With support from Dubai Cares, five days training workshop for Representatives from the Department of Education was held at various districts of Sindh and Punjab: Sukkur, Shikarpur, RahimyarKhan, Muzaffargarh, Bahawalpur and Lahore. At each location, on average twenty members of the public sector participated enthusiastically and gave their constructive inputs and feedback. The training was planned to broaden the understanding of our public sector partners on Early Childhood Education, Accelerated Learning Program and Blended Learning, and introduce them to our methodologies which later on, they can utilize in their own practices. The participants thoroughly enjoyed the training and shared that it was a learning exercise; the output of which will multiply manifold and reflect on the quality of education across the country.

Global Action Week celebrated across all districts from 24th-30th April 2016

Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) celebrated the Global Action Week (GAW) 2016 from 24th April to 30th April across all DC intervention schools of Pakistan. The theme of this year’s GAW was “Fund for Education” which aimed to increase the provision for education at every level and its outcome-based efficient spending. The GAW was designed to be a series of interactive sessions amongst participants comprising of presentations, group discussions and Q&A sessions. The key participants of the GAW were the government officials, teachers, students, civil society members and School Management Committee (SMC) members.

Young children from primary and middle schools were invited to take part in the GAW celebrations which included debate competitions, art competitions, education walks etc. Banners and placards were placed at each school to reach out to all children and encourage participation.

The Directorate of Staff Development Punjab is extremely thankful to Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi and its collaborators, Dubai Cares, for giving the education department the platform where it could create advocates for Early Childhood Education, Accelerated Learning Program and Teachers without Frontiers through this training. This training has really helped our public sector officials to know more about the innovative activity-based learning alternatives.

(Ms Yasmeen Wyne, Senior Subject Specialist and Focal Person for Establishment of ECE Classroom and Material Development at DSD)
them to think and ask questions that are of utmost importance for 'Fund for Education'. Additionally, consultation meetings were organized at each district with District Education Department in order to have useful discussion on various core factors of the education sector such as the current expenditure status, the proportion of resources spent on curriculum and the proportion spent on the infrastructure and the innovative ways of financing education in accordance with the upgraded era.

**Early Childhood Education (ECE) Center Displayed at CLF Sukkur**

What is an ECE Center?

“Early Childhood Education (ECE)” is one of the core components of Dubai Cares program which focuses on providing holistic experiential learning and transition from pre-primary to primary education in government/private schools in two provinces of Pakistan. The project factors-in various significant hard and soft interventions that effects the development of children in their early age such as the provision of Early Childhood Education (ECE) classrooms, ECE kits, training of the teachers, para-teachers and the engagement of the community members. More than 22,000 students have benefited from this program so far with more than 200 classrooms established after construction/repair work.

In April 2016, during the Children Literature Festival (CLF) in Sukkur, the first ever multi-sensory learning space (classroom) was set up by the ECE team of ITA for the ECE activities. Para teachers, District Coordinators and UC Coordinators helped to set the ECE classroom environment. The ECE Learning Space, which was a mirror reflection of the ECE program, remained a hub of intense activities throughout the festival for more than 12000 children, teachers, parents and other visitors.

**Learning for Access (L4A): Stories of Learning and Revolution**

The learning for access (L4A) is an accelerated learning program that was designed to improve the learning levels of in-school children (ISC) vulnerable to drop-out and out of school children (OOSC) ensuring their smooth mainstreaming to primary level. The objective of the project was to execute CPB (ChaloParhoBarho) camps in 546 schools of districts Bahawalpur, Karachi, Lahore, Lasbela, Muzaffargarh, Quetta, Rahim Yar Khan, Shikarpur, Sukkur and KilaSaifullah. ITA implemented the interventions effectively in 556 schools of the respective districts; more than 11,000 OOSC and 10,000 ISC have successfully completed the camp showing significant improvement in the learning levels.

With the help of ChaloParhoBarho (CPB) camp, ITA has successfully showed that interventions such as the provision and training of para teachers, subject based training of government teachers, provision of teaching learning materials, stationery, furniture and wash facilities have a significant positive effect on the learning levels of not only the in school children (ISC) but also of the out of school children (OOSC) in English, Urdu/Sindhi and Math relative to their learning levels in the base line.

The figure below shows the learning levels of English (reading) of the OOSC children cumulative of 4 districts Lasbela, Rahim Yar Khan, Bahawalpur and Muzaffargarh in the baseline, first term, second term and final term of the CPB camp. In the baseline (English), ITA assessed that out of 5364 children, 87% could not read anything, 10% could read letters, 2%
could read words, 1% could read sentences and none could read a story. However, in the final term of the CPB camp the learning levels showed a drastic increase; 42% can read words, 8% can read sentences, 40% can read letters, 3% can read stories and only 7% cannot read anything.

Similarly, the figure above depicts the improvement in the learning levels of Urdu (reading) of the OOSC during the CPB camp.

In the same manner, the improvement in the learning levels of Maths during the CPB camp is shown with the help of the following figure.

**Teachers without Frontiers (TWF)**

Teachers without Frontiers continues to fulfill its objectives of disseminating ICT skills among teachers, and educationists across Pakistan. TWF aims to not only aspire practicing teachers to develop elaborate pedagogical skills, but also inspires their teaching methodologies to be driven by technology and facilitated through blended learning. Currently, TWF Fellows are conducting trainings based on brain based learning and neurosciences, project based learning and digital literacy; living up to the spirit of the social movement! Be it the belt of Sindh including Sukkur and Karachi, the regions of Punjab including Kasur, Bahawalpur and Lahore, or the mountains of Swat and adjoining areas, the Teachers without Frontiers is making its mark.

The numbers of beneficiaries of the TWF Trainings is 2400, and on the rise as the trainings continue to attract more participants from various govt schools, and private educational institutions. Moreover, the Learners Resource Centers (LRC) established through TWF are also serving as technologically enabled platforms to the beneficiaries, ensuring a technological momentum among teachers.
Learning Metrics Task Force (LMTF): Launch of Publications Event in Islamabad

The launch of Publications event in Islamabad on 15th January 2016 marked the culmination of the year-long country level process of Learning Metrics Task Force (LMTF) with support from Dubai Cares. Jointly hosted by the Ministry of State for Federal Educational and Professional Training, National Education Assessment System (NEAS) and the Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA), the meeting was an opportunity to showcase and celebrate the achievements of the annum. These achievements were broad in scope, including school level and system level milestones. The event presented an opportunity to engender interesting conversations on assessment practices and methods that are aligned to Pakistan’s national context and the 2015 onwards development goals. The conference aimed at cultivating a sense of shared responsibility and collaboration among the Learning Champions in Pakistan while discussing possibilities of facilitating their efforts in the coming year.

Ms Kate Anderson’s Field Visit to Pakistan

Ms Kate Anderson, Project Director, The Brookings Institution, visited Pakistan on a field trip (14th-21st January 2016) to get insights on the current assessment practices in the country and how LMTF can continue in Pakistan. She visited schools in Sheikhupura and Hyderabad and met with Learning Champion partners and other important stakeholders in Islamabad, Punjab and Sindh. During the school visits, a bunch of children selected randomly on the spot for assessed using the LMTF tools. Ms Anderson was delighted to see young minds responding positively to the questions on critical thinking and problem solving.

Besides meeting the Federal Ministry in Islamabad, Ms Anderson also held meetings with officials of Punjab Examination Commission, Directorate Staff Development, Punjab Education Foundation, Reform support unit Sindh, Agha Khan University Institute of Education Development and PEACe Jamshoro and Bureau of Curriculum in Punjab and Sindh.

“Overall, this trip highlighted the challenges of learning assessment in Pakistan, both technical and political. I was extremely impressed with how ITA is working to address these challenges through building consensus, bringing together experts, and developing innovative tools to measure learning” (Ms Anderson, Project Director, The Brookings Institution)

Children's Literature Festival (CLF)

Children’s literature festival is a social intervention of ITA which is implemented across Pakistan to enhance the reading, creativity and critical thinking of the children ranging from age 4 to 18. The
roles and responsibilities of oneself and others can be best put forth and understood through a collective effort via social events.

ITA has been successful in executing CLF for the third time in Islamabad in October, 2015 by catering to more than 30,000 students, teachers and parents. In addition, CLF has been executed in Bahawalpur for the second time in December, 2015 and catered to more than 8,000 students, teachers and parents. Whereas in Feb 2016, the message was effectively communicated to the audience in the 4th CLF session in Karachi which served more than 30,000 students, teachers and parents. The first ever “Sindh District Based Children Literature Festival (CLF)” was held at IBA Public School Sukkur on 29th and 30th April 2016. Over 12,000 children/teachers/parents attended the two day festival with great enthusiasm and zeal in sizzling 47 degrees Celsius. CLF is geared to help the children to have a better understanding of themselves and the world around them in the most conductive way possible in the outskirts of the country.

**ASER 2015**

The ASER National Launch 2015 was formally launched on the 17th December, 2015 in the Planning Commission, Islamabad by Federal Minister for Education and Training, Baligh ur Rehman along with a strong panel of parliamentarians, media representatives and development partners.

This year, ASER Pakistan covered 146 rural districts and 21 urban centers. The results showed that in urban Pakistan, out of school children OOSC (age 6 to 16) are 6.2%, amongst which 3% are boys and 3% are girls. Out of the 93.8% children (age 6 to 16) enrolled in urban Pakistan, 36.9% are enrolled in government schools and 63.!% are enrolled in schools provided by non-state actors. The percentile of boys and girls in the government schools is 56% & 44% respectively, whereas it is 58% & 42% in private schools of urban Pakistan. The attendance of the children in the government schools is 88.5% whereas, in private schools is 90.8%.

On the other hand in rural Pakistan, 19.2% children (8% boys & 11% girls) of age 6 to 16 are out of school whereas, among 80.8% in schoolchildren of age 6 to 16; 76.1% are enrolled in government schools (65% boys & 35 % girls) and 23.9% are enrolled in non-government schools (62% boys & 38% girls).

Also this year ASER 2015 Launch was telecasted live on the website. Live streaming was made possible with the support of Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI). Many users of ASER Data set and members of Juba Family were able to see the launch.
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

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 NGO 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.
"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."

Lyari, Karachi.

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.

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INSIDE

ITA organizes 5-Day Training Workshop for Government Officials from the Department of Education. PAGE No. 2

Global Action Week celebrated across all districts from 24th-30th April 2016 PAGE No. 2

Early Childhood Education (ECE) Center Displayed at CLF Sukkur PAGE No. 3

Learning for Access (L4A): Stories of Learning and Revolution PAGE No. 3

Teachers without Frontiers (TWF) PAGE No. 4

Learning Metrics Task Force (LMTF): Launch of Publications Event in Islamabad PAGE No. 5

Ms Kate Anderson's Field Visit to Pakistan PAGE No. 5

Children's Literature Festival (CLF) PAGE No. 5

ASER 2015 PAGE No. 6

Stories from the Field: Collaboration with Humans of Pakistan PAGE No. 7
ITA organizes 5-Days Training Workshop for Government Officials from the Department of Education

With support from Dubai Cares, five days training workshop for Representatives from the Department of Education was held at various districts of Sindh and Punjab: Sukkur, Shikarpur, RahimyarKhan, Muzaffarhgarh, Bahawalpur and Lahore. At each location, on average twenty members of the public sector participated enthusiastically and gave their constructive inputs and feedback. The training was planned to broaden the understanding of our public sector partners on Early Childhood Education, Accelerated Learning Program and Blended Learning, and introduce them to our methodologies which later on, they can utilize in their own practices. The participants thoroughly enjoyed the training and shared that it was a learning exercise; the output of which will multiply manifold and reflect on the quality of education across the country.

Global Action Week celebrated across all districts from 24th-30th April 2016

Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) celebrated the Global Action Week (GAW) 2016 from 24th April to 30th April across all DC intervention schools of Pakistan. The theme of this year’s GAW was “Fund for Education” which aimed to increase the provision for education at every level and its outcome-based efficient spending. The GAW was designed to be a series of interactive sessions amongst participants comprising of presentations, group discussions and Q&A sessions. The key participants of the GAW were the government officials, teachers, students, civil society members and School Management Committee (SMC) members.

Young children from primary and middle schools were invited to take part in the GAW celebrations which included debate competitions, art competitions, education walks etc. Banners and placards were placed at each school to reach out to all children and encourage

The Directorate of Staff Development Punjab is extremely thankful to Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi and its collaborators, Dubai Cares, for giving the education department the platform where it could create advocates for Early Childhood Education, Accelerated Learning Program and Teachers without Frontiers through this training. This training has really helped our public sector officials to know more about the innovative activity-based learning alternatives.

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