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# Introduction to the case studies 2015 : A compendium of cases & voices from the field


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# CaseStudies2015

A Compendium of Cases &  
Voices from the Field



THE EDUCATION  
DEVELOPMENT & IMPROVEMENT  
PROGRAMME  
EDIP



Aga Khan Education Service, Pakistan



آغا خان یونیورسٹی  
THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY  
Institute for Educational Development

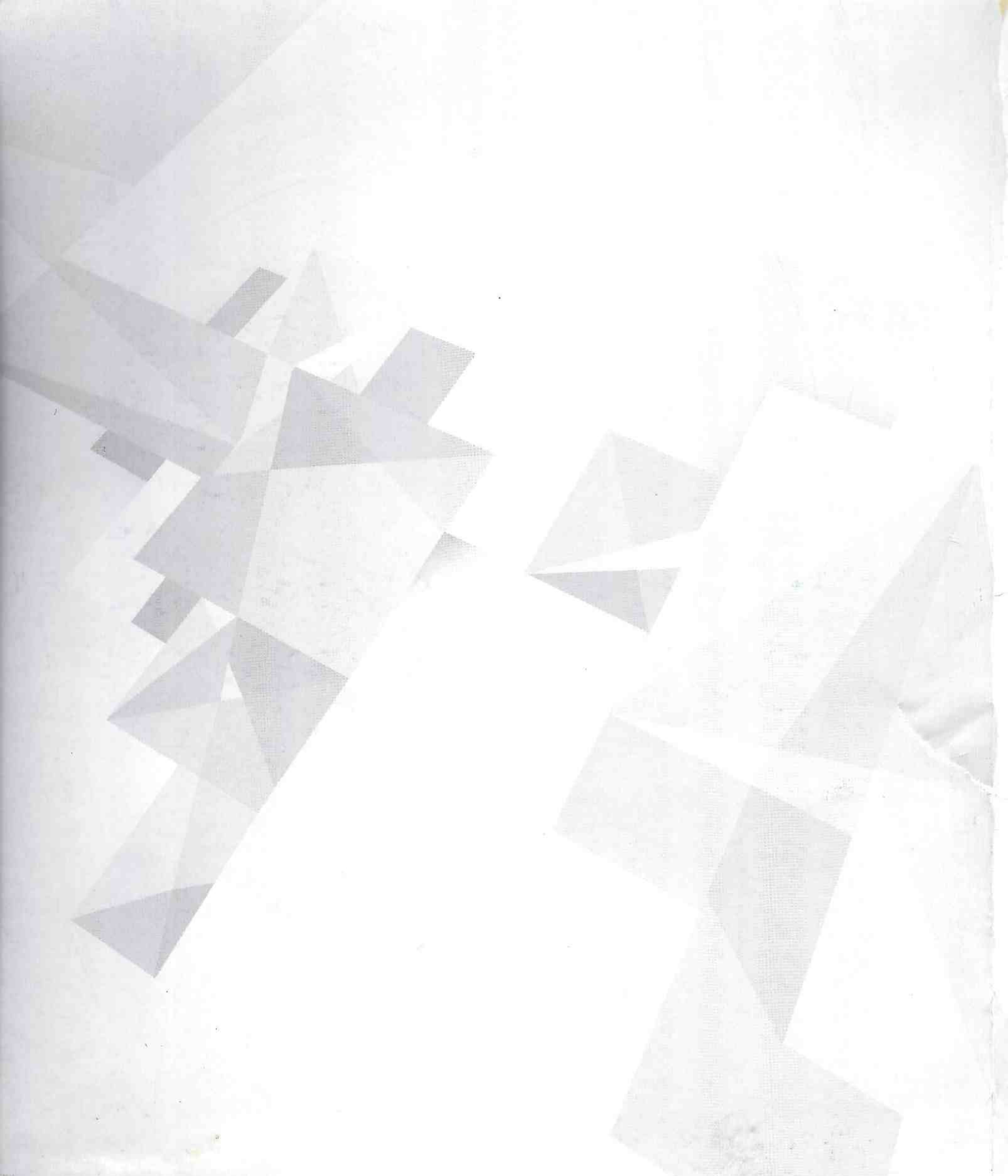


Australian Government  
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



AGA KHAN FOUNDATION  
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Australian  
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## Aga Khan Development Network

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Introduction to the  
**CaseStudies2015**  
A Compendium of Cases &  
Voices from the Field

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THE EDUCATION  
DEVELOPMENT & IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME  
EDIP



Aga Khan Education Service, Pakistan



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## GLOSSARY

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| AEOs         | Assistant Education Officer   |
| AKCSP        | Aga Khan Cultural Services Pakistan   |
| AKESP        | Aga Khan Education Services Pakistan  |
| AKF(P)       | Aga Khan Foundation Pakistan  |
| AKPBS        | Aga Khan Planning and Building Services                                     |
| AKRSP        | Aga Khan Rural Support Programme  |
| AKU-HDP      | Aga Khan University-Human Development Programme                             |
| AKU-IED      | Aga Khan University-Institute for Educational Development                   |
| AKU-IED-PDCN | Professional Development Center North                                       |
| CPE          | Continuous Professional Education   |
| CSO          | Civil Society Organizations   |
| CSRC         | Civil Society Resource Center   |
| CWD          | Children with Disabilities  |
| DDE          | Deputy Director Education   |
| DoE          | Department of Education   |
| ECD          | Early Childhood Development   |
| EDIP         | Education Development and Improvement Programme                             |
| FGDs         | Focus Group Discussions   |
| FHRD         | Female Human Resource Development   |
| FOCUS        | Focus Humanitarian Assistance Service                                       |
| FU           | Feeding Unit  |
| GB           | Gilgit-Baltistan  |
| HTs          | Head Teachers   |
| KIU          | Karakorum International University  |
| LFA          | Logical Framework Approach  |
| LLI          | Local Level Institutions  |
| LRC          | Learning Resource Centers   |
| LRS          | Learning Resource School  |
| LSO          | Local Support Organizations   |
| M&E          | Monitoring and Evaluation   |
| M.Ed.        | Whole School Improvement Programme  |
| MER          | Monitoring Evaluation and Research  |
| MIS          | Management Information System   |
| MOI          | Memorandum of Intent  |
| MoU          | Memorandum of Understanding   |
| MSG          | Mothers' Support Group  |
| MTE          | Mid-Term Evaluation   |
| NGOs         | Non-Government Organization   |
| NOWPDP       | Networking of Organization Working for People with Disabilities in Pakistan |
| PC           | Provincial Coordinator  |
| PDCN         | Professional Development Center North                                       |
| PDT          | Professional Development Teacher  |
| RBM          | Results Based Management  |
| SDP          | System Development Process  |
| SMC          | School Management Committee   |
| TE           | Teacher Educator  |
| TNA          | Training Needs Assessment   |
| ToT          | Training of Trainers  |
| VECs         | Village Education Committees  |
| WSIP         | Whole School Improvement Program  |



## AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK: AKDN

Over successive decades, the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) has made concerted efforts to catalyze social progress in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). It has achieved this by sponsoring phased development, which has spanned infrastructural development, healthcare provision, capacity building and educational reforms. It has been observed that socioeconomic indicators such as the literacy rate, state of poverty, road links provision, healthcare facilities, access to energy and cultural as well as religious values diverge considerably across the Gilgit-Baltistan region. Thus, the many communities residing in GB, despite their geographical proximity, are distinct from one another in terms of the rate of social development, attitude towards change and reforms as well as their religious and ethnic values. In implementing the Education Development Improvement Programme (EDIP) funded by Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) (formerly AUS-Aid), AKDN has undertaken a project that serves not only as an extension of its developmental efforts but also as a pioneering reform effort premised upon a sustainable model of school and community development.

### OBJECTIVES

The overall goals of the EDIP project have centered on participatory and sustainable community interventions, further supported by the following objectives:

- ❖ To enhance gender parity and access to as well as equity of education,
- ❖ To improve the quality and relevance of education,
- ❖ To strengthen governance and management in the education department of Gilgit-Baltistan.

### EDIP-LED SCHOOL REFORMS: AN OVERVIEW

In 2010, an agreement was signed between the Aga Khan Foundation, Pakistan (AKF(P)) and the government of Gilgit Baltistan, according to which AKF(P) and seven of its sub-agencies would carry out reform-oriented interventions in 109 schools of the seven districts of GB. AKF(P) led the way in securing funding for this unique Educational Development and Improvement Program (EDIP) with the support of DFAT and the Australian High Commission. Initially, the duration of this project was set as 3 Years, which was later extended to span another 2 Years.

### THE ORGANIZATIONS BEHIND THE EDIP-INTERVENTION

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| ❖ Department of Education, Government of GB                                   | (DoE)           |
| ❖ Aga Khan University-Institute for Educational Development                   | (AKU-IED)       |
| ❖ Professional Development Centre North                                       | (AKU-IED, PDCN) |
| ❖ Aga Khan University-Human Resource Development                              | (AKU-HDP)       |
| ❖ Networking of Organization Working for People with Disabilities in Pakistan | (NOWPDP)        |
| ❖ Focus Humanitarian Assistance Service                                       | (FOCUS)         |
| ❖ Aga Khan Planning and Building Service, Pakistan                            | (AKPBS,P)       |
| ❖ Civil Society Resource Centre   | (CSRC)          |



## THE PROCESS

In order to improve the quality of teaching and learning, a cluster model of school development was adopted. Theoretically a cluster can consist of four to seven schools, with one serving as the Learning Resource School (LRS) and the rest functioning as feeding units (FUs). With respect to GB, two LRS based clusters were formed in each district for the implementation of the EDIP-led school reforms.

The EDIP project was premised on the model of Whole School Improvement Program (WSIP) to improve teaching and learning.

The WSIP model has six pillars, which include Quality of Teaching and Learning, Leadership and Administration, Community Participation, Curriculum Enrichment and Staff Development, Building Accommodation Resources, Social, Moral and Spiritual Development as well as Health Education.

Each of the seven organizations involved in this project had its own mandate in helping to bring about Whole School Improvement. PDCN and AKES,P were assigned the task of improving the quality of teaching and learning in Govt. and AKES schools respectively, while Focus Humanitarian Assistance Service was tasked to work on school safety and hazard as well as disaster education.

Similarly, AKPBS,P was handed the role of constructing earthquake-proof classroom and washrooms as well as retrofitting of classrooms. CSRC was tasked with mobilizing the community to play an active role in community-related school affairs by using the services of a full-time community mobilizer.

NOWPDP had the task of creating awareness regarding inclusive education amongst the masses and the teachers, and AKU-HDP put its expertise to use in developing human resources.

## CONCLUSION

The impact of the EDIP project has been impressive, with positive outcomes noted in all six areas of the WSIP model and vis-à-vis the project objectives in particular. The cases in this compendium offer compelling insights into how the EDIP intervention has improved things in significant LRS clusters across GB, paving the way for a brighter and more progressive future for the young generations of GB. Based on the qualitative data gathered in this study, the reforms appear to have had significant impact for social development in the GB region.

# Case Study 1



## CASE STUDIES OF EDIP REFORMS IN GILGIT-BALTISTAN

### The WSIP intervention Montage:

Improving the teaching and learning environment in an EDIP-led project at the Gorikote Cluster in Astore

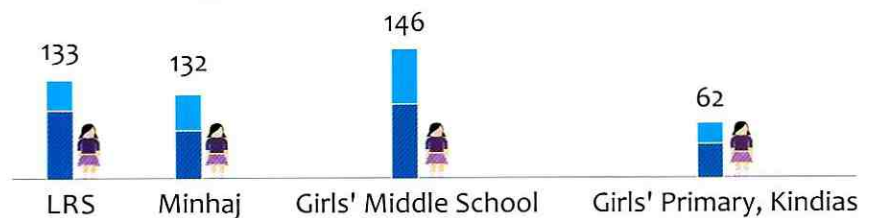
### IMPACT AT A GLANCE

#### Project- EDIP

District-Astore

Cluster-Gorikote

Student strength



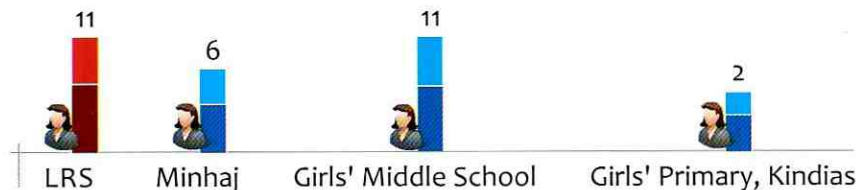
Schools in the Cluster:

High School Gorikote (LRS)

Feeding Units (FU):

- ✦ Minhaj Public School
- ✦ Girls Middle School
- ✦ Girls' Primary School, Kinidas

Teacher Strength



### BACKGROUND

The EDIP Project has brought meaningful reform to traditionally under-resourced and under served educational centres located in some of the most inaccessible areas of Northern Pakistan. Astore is a case in point. Strategically positioned, Astore is one of the most scenic districts of Gilgit Baltistan, drawing visitors aplenty to its picturesque locales during the summer months, despite a lack of infrastructural development. However, the winter months bring feet-deep snow, rendering pockets of the area snowbound and adversely affecting travel and livelihood, as well as healthcare and educational provision for the residents who inhabit the one hundred odd villages of Astore Valley. Sectarian harmony prevails in Sunni-majority Astore, despite the area also being home to significant communities of Shias and Baralevis. Such concord is admirable for in less peaceful areas across the country, such differences tend to constitute a flash point for sectarian clashes. In terms of educational provision, Astore has public as well as private schools in addition to madrassas (seminaries) imparting both religious and secular education.

## THE CONTEXT AND STAKEHOLDERS

This five-year intervention was carried out in a multi-school cluster that consisted of High School Gorikote (Learning Resource School) and two lower secondary schools, Minhaj Public School and Girls middle school as well as the Girls Primary School, Kinidas, which served as feeding units. This innovative model allowed the feeding units to gain from the ongoing support and mentoring provided by the AKU-trained Professional Development Teacher (PDC) positioned at the LRS. Other agencies involved in EDIP implementation also contributed to WSIP in their respective domains.

### GOVERNMENT HIGH SCHOOL GORIKOTE (LRS)

The present Government Boys High School in Gorikote began life as a primary school in 1836. Located near the bank of the river, the campus was relocated in 1986 due to land erosion around its original location. At this point, it was also upgraded as a Middle School, successively transforming into a High School, although the latter change in official status was not accompanied by necessary budget and staff enhancements.

The LRS facilities include a dedicated classroom for each grade level, library, computer lab, science laboratory as well as a playground. Currently, the school, which offers education in grades 6th to 10th, serves 133 students belonging to a lower socio-economic stratum. Across the grade levels, ten teachers teach these 133 students. While this represents an adequate teacher-student ratio, some of the teachers are subject specialists, who are not equipped to teach general courses. Hence, the number of teachers available for teaching general and STEM courses is inadequate within this context.

### MINHAJ PUBLIC SCHOOL (FU)

Minhaj Public School is part of the Minhaj system of education, a private school chain founded by well-known religious scholar, Dr. Tahir-ul-Qadri. Although, the school follows the Minhaj system of education, it appears that being a part of the chain does not entail supervision, assistance or monitoring from the chain itself. Established in 1998, the school was initially housed in a rented building, shifting only in 2002 to a purpose-built building constructed in partnership with the Aga Khan Education Service (AKES) and the community. There are four classrooms for all the grade levels taught at the school. Owing to the shortage of classrooms, the school is run in morning and evening shifts. Currently, there are 132 students at the school who are taught by six teachers. However this number fluctuates intermittently. Teacher retention is an issue as the teachers are generally underpaid; compelling them to seek better positions once they have gained work experience at the school. Like the LRS, this school also serves students of a lower socio-economic background.



## GIRLS MIDDLE SCHOOL (FU)

Although the Girls Middle School is a primary school, it is run as a lower secondary school on an unofficial basis. Established in 1942, the initial campus was located in the house of a local resident, with the campus shifting to a two-classroom building in 1972. The current campus with six classrooms was constructed in 2005, upon which teaching of lower secondary classes were also initiated. The 146 students enrolled at the school are taught across the grade levels by a total of 11 teachers. The school lacks computer and library facilities altogether.

## GIRLS PRIMARY SCHOOL KINIDAS (FU)

Established in 1992, the Girls' Primary School was housed in a single room in a private home before being shifted to the existing campus consisting of three classrooms in 2010. 62 students are enrolled in the six classes ranging from Kindergarten to 6th grade, which operate at the school. A single permanent teacher, in collaboration with a community teacher, teaches these learners. Like the other schools in the cluster, this school serves learners drawn from a middle and low socio-economic background. Although the school building is only a few years old, poor construction has led to cracks in the floors and peeling wall plaster.

## NATURE OF THE INTERVENTION

An analysis of the context showed that the schools in the cluster lacked infrastructural development and maintenance. In addition, untrained teachers, non-existent lesson planning, flawed instructional practices, resource paucity, demotivated learners and weak learner engagement characterized the learning environment. A whole-environment intervention was warranted so that these issues could be tackled holistically by improving the class atmosphere, learner attitudes and norms of social interactions. An added aim was to mobilize the community stakeholders for creating sustainable reforms.



## PRE-EDIP INTERVENTION SITUATION: A SNAPSHOT

An AKU-trained Professional Development Teacher (PDT) was appointed at the LRS in anticipation of implementing the planned intervention. The initial period commencing in December 2010 and encompassing April 2011 yielded useful insights into the situation. It was found that before the intervention, the situation was characterized by the following:

- ❖ Prevalence of traditional teaching methodologies
- ❖ Lack of lesson planning
- ❖ Arbitrary assignment of homework

Aqsa's bright eyes shine with the joy of learning. It is hard to imagine that a few short years ago this young girl was a reluctant learner, unchallenged by the transmission mode teaching practiced by pedagogically-conservative teachers at her utilitarian government-run school. 'I love going to school now' she confides readily as she displays her little hoard of teacher-provided resources, bright markers, chart paper, glue, which she uses on a regular basis to create displays for the classroom. She adds 'it is an amazing experience for me to develop classroom displays. Before the EDIP intervention, we never did anything like this. After the project, teacher gave me flip charts, pencils and other materials. This also helped me in improving my drawing skills'. There is a fantastic sense of ownership in her voice and excitement at the joy of being a part of her own learning, as she points out the surprisingly creative display detailing the parts of speech, which she has created for the English class.

- ❖ Inconsistent assessment practices
- ❖ Lack of on ground community involvement on the part of the School Management Committee (SMC)
- ❖ Poor or non-existent classroom displays
- ❖ Under resourced libraries
- ❖ Lack of a reading culture due to a policy of non issuance of library books
- ❖ Lack of computing resources
- ❖ ICT skill-deficient teachers

The initial PDT intervention consisted of observing lessons and providing feedback, conducting LRS-based sessions on content and pedagogy and prioritizing improvement of the classroom environment. Observation also allowed the categorization of the problems found in the context. These were found to be grouped around a triad of aspects including physical, learning and social environments.

## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

At all the cluster schools, the classroom displays generally did not showcase the art and creativity of the students, with the only wall decoration consisting of a timetable and a syllabus. In some cases, the classroom displays had little link with teaching and learning. At one of the feeder schools, students had been allowed to give free rein to their religious fervor by putting together a display in support of “Lal Masjid” and “Jamia-e- Hafza,” triggers for a national crisis in which religious radicals had engaged with government law enforcement forces in a bid against state writ. The few other displays that were found tended to be dusty and dirty.

The maintenance of physical infrastructure was also poor with ill-plastered, poorly whitewashed and pockmarked walls and broken windowpanes being features of all the cluster schools. At the LRS, which did not have electricity, the windows of the classrooms were blocked by vegetation and undergrowth unchecked by landscaping. This led to under-lit classrooms, compounded by a general lack of cleanliness and maintenance. Due to a lack of suitable classroom furniture, learners had to sit on the cold floor even in inclement weather. Additionally, restroom facilities were not available to students across all the schools.

## LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

In addition to conventional teaching methodologies premised on the now outdated 'empty vessel' view of the learners, observation showed that there was a lack of pair, peer and group work as well as formative and summative self-evaluation by the teachers at the schools. Except for chalk, duster and blackboard, teaching aids were not used in the classrooms. Assessment was tailored to low learner standards and exam papers were designed haphazardly. The exam environment also was very poor with teachers talking loudly during the examinations and learners resorting to the use of unfair means.

The libraries, in cases where the schools within the cluster had one, were not well stocked, and late books were not recalled thereby depleting the holdings even further. Additionally, books on content and pedagogy were outnumbered by religious texts. In terms of computer facilities, only the Minhaj School System possessed a few computers, which were not in working order and only one teacher across all the schools had ICT skills.

Ghulam Mustafa is another admirer of the displays. 'I enjoyed myself while working on classroom displays. Now, they facilitate me in my teaching. By showing models, charts and pictures, I can support my explanations, making the abstract more tangible for my learners'. He adds with a broad smile, 'And best of all, classroom displays bring colour to class, motivating my learners to learn more actively'.

## SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Teacher-student interaction was observed to be limited, with teachers initiating the questions, most of which did not call for higher-order thinking. Peer interaction amongst learners was equally poor, with a lack of pair and group work or collaboration with a view to academic outcomes. Learner participation in student governance only took the form of being nominated as monitors on the basis of academic performance, which gave them little understanding of the democratic process or the ethos of representation and engagement within the community.



In terms of beyond the classroom activities, barring sporadic participation in sports events or school picnics in some cases, formative events such as literary speaking events were not held. Consequently, learners had few opportunities to develop public speaking skills.

## INITIAL RESPONSE

In order to carry out capacity building, more than 20 teachers were sent to PDCN to attend professional development sessions on content and pedagogy. These teachers were nominated on the basis of their willingness and subject areas.

In addition, 45 well-attended professional development sessions were held at the LRS as well, which centered on content and pedagogy linked to the needs of the schools and the teachers. These comprised two-hour sessions consisting of an hour taken from school hours and an hour of free time volunteered by the teachers. PDT-led observation was carried out in the classes of the novice teachers. Feedback as well as demo lessons were provided to enable them to improve their praxis.

## Areas of Intervention

### Training and Resource enhancement

#### Distributing Teaching kit and other resources among the teachers

Upon the inauguration of the three-year long EDIP project, teaching kits and other resources were distributed among the teachers in the presence of the Head Teacher. The teaching kit consisted of color pencils, markers, crayons, flip charts, scissors and other related materials. Effective utilization of the teaching kits to appropriately enrich the learning environment was encouraged. In the second year, the teaching kit was issued only to those teachers who had utilized it effectively, while in the third year, teaching aids were handed over to the head teachers for onward distribution to the teachers. This allowed for the gradual transfer of ownership of the intervention initiative to the stakeholders.



## Designing and conducting sessions on low and No-cost instructional resources

Teachers were also given training in developing low-cost and no-cost instructional resources. In this context, professional development sessions were conducted in the LRS during which teachers were made aware about the importance of low-cost and no-cost teaching materials, given tips about the preparation of such materials and asked to practise designing A.V aids with basic materials they had brought in themselves. Good examples of their efforts include the work of a teacher who created a model of the planetary system with binding wire as well as that of a teacher who created an inventive mathematics kit.

## Utilizing existing teaching and learning resources

The PDT also discovered that a teaching kit donated by the UNICEF was being stored at the LRS. This consisted of different types of maps as well as materials for teaching mathematical concepts to early learners. These were handed over to the teachers for utilization in their teaching sessions.

## Establishing and utilizing computer Lab

A total of 12 computers were provided by the AKDN to the LRS, and PDCN established a computer laboratory on the school premises. Daily computer classes after school hours were scheduled, with twenty-nine teachers registering for the tutorials. Of the teachers who had originally enrolled for the classes, 11 teachers completed the course successfully.

## Improvement of social interaction

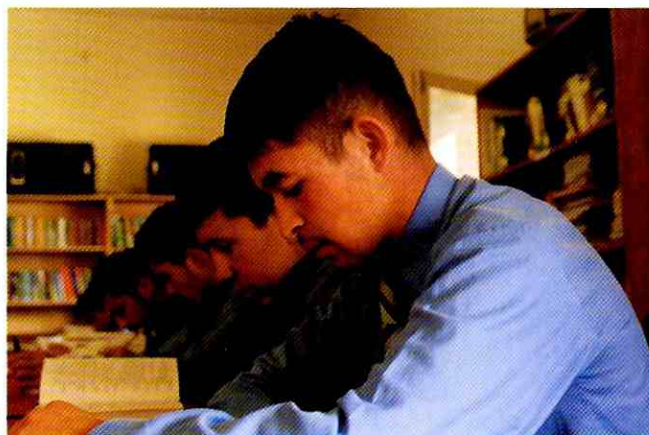
### Teacher-Student interaction

Professional development and teacher training sessions began to have an impact on teacher praxis with students, especially in higher classes. Students from grades 8th, 9th, 10th were now encouraged to question teachers. This also contributed to learner engagement with the content, resulting in better comprehension.

### Collegial relationships

The EDIP intervention also helped to transform collegial relations. In weekly professional development sessions, teachers were given group tasks, which required them to interact with a view to achieving specific learning outcomes linked to the module. As a result of this, a sense of collaboration, co-operation and teamwork was fostered amongst the teachers.

It was noted that the novice and junior teachers also began to seek help from senior and competent teachers in content as well as in pedagogy, thereby creating a community of practice that regularly engages in peer mentoring and sharing of experiences. Post-intervention, idle staff room chatter has been supplanted by collegial discussions on sharing experiences and improving practice.



Another teacher, Shahena is particularly happy with the new computer labs. She excitedly exclaims 'ICT skills will help us to use modern learning and modern technologies. My learners need this window onto the world just as much as I need new ways to increase my knowledge. The Internet is a wonderful resource for my professional development, and it helps me to connect with the world at large!'



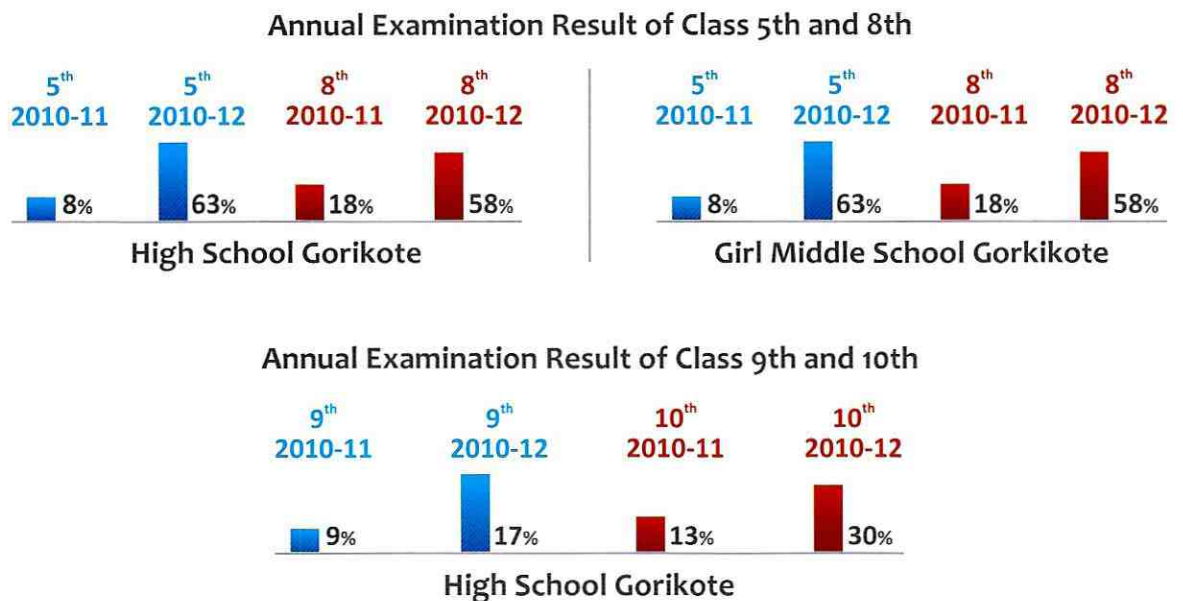
## School-Community Relations

Before the EDIP intervention, the concept of School Management Committee (SMC) existed in all four schools. However, all SMCs were inactive. The task of community mobilization was assigned to CSRC, which deployed a full time community mobilizer for Astore district. He established SMCs in all four schools and organized regular meetings. Regular Parents Days were held at the cluster schools, with a large number of parents attending the event and enjoying the performances and tableaus presented by the students. In this context, the SMCs played a pivotal role in generating funds from the community to hold the events.

## Outcomes of the Intervention

### Impact on learner outcomes

As the focus of the EDIP project was on improving student outcomes through capacity-building of teachers and other initiatives, the effectiveness of the intervention can be gauged in one way with reference to student results in the Annual Examinations. Grade 5 and 8 examinations were carried out at district level, whereas Board examinations were held for 9th and 10th grades. Although, the data is not complete with respect to each of the cluster schools due to the ongoing nature of data collection, even the partial results in Table 1 convey the impact of the intervention on learner outcomes.



In Table 1, the annual examination outcomes for Grade 5, 8, 9 and 10 for year 2011-12 show a marked improvement over the results achieved in 2010-11. However, this trend of improvement could not be maintained in 2012-13 due to frequent transfer of teachers in the Gorikote cluster. Despite an MoU between Government and AKF agreeing that the teachers of all cluster schools would not be transferred till the end of project, forty-two teachers were transferred in and out of the schools during the EDIP initiative. This badly affected student-learning outcomes as PDCN trained teachers could not continue implementing their improved instructional practices with the original learners.



## Student Governance

Student Representative Councils were established in all four schools providing students with a channel for projecting their concerns to the management and serving as a vital link between school management and student body. As the councils were elected, the students gained insight into the democratic process, the importance of making the right choices as to one's leader, accountability and leadership. These skills were seen as giving young learners practical experience in civics and providing insights as to the importance of the democratic system and the process of electing representatives in national elections.

## Learner Engagement

The transformation of the classroom environments post-intervention was particularly notable. As a result of student engagement in developing classroom displays, the creativity and proficiency of students also increased, with students producing intricate displays. This also fostered collaboration and constructive interaction between peers working together on the displays.

## Impact on teachers

As a result of classroom observation, feedback sessions, professional development sessions held at LRS as well as at PDCN, improvement was noted in instructional practices of teachers. Most prominent was a shift to student-centered teaching, with teachers seeking student involvement, making use of pair and group work activities and activating prior learner knowledge to help construct an understanding of the content. Students were also encouraged to pose questions during class, which stimulated their intellectual curiosity. A large number of the teachers also began to plan lessons, enabling them to understand objectives, learner outcomes, creative ways of conveying the content, planning activities and assessment.

## Impact on school community

The community plays a pivotal and crucial role in making schools effective. As it is not possible to involve the entire community in school affairs, the School Management Committee (SMC) plays an important role as a representative body. An active SMC can bridge the gap between the community and school and ensure the sustainability of school improvement initiatives.

With the establishment of the SMC, monthly meetings were held during which matters related to school development were discussed and appropriate initiatives approved and undertaken.

## Conclusion

This case study illustrates the strength of the WSIP model in creating comprehensive, effective and sustainable change within a community confronted with multiple challenges. Today, the schools within the Gorikote Cluster have a sense of direction and ownership, improved learner outcomes, motivated teachers, well-mobilized community stakeholders and better resources. Without EDIP and its broad vision as well as the efforts of the implementing partners, the schools of the Gorikote Cluster would have been just another statistic on the list of struggling educational centres. Instead, they now stand as models for school improvement reforms, not just for GB but also for communities across the country where schools continue to fail their stakeholders on a daily basis.

## Case Study 2





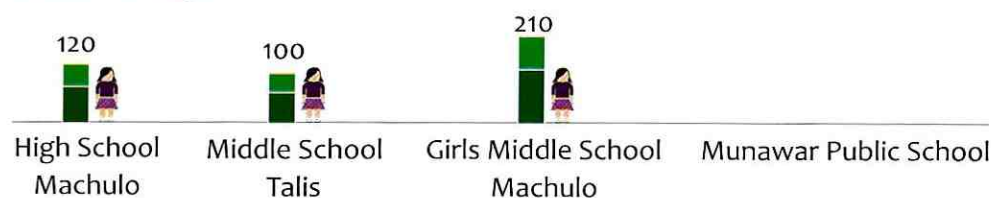
## ESTABLISHMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CLASSES IN THE MACHULO CLUSTER:

Fulfilling the potential of young children underserved by traditional educational provision

### Project- EDIP

District-Ghanche

Student strength



Schools in the Cluster:

High School Gorikote (LRS)

Feeding Units (FU):

- ▼ Middle School (Talis)
- ▼ Girls' Middle School (Machulo)
- ▼ Munawar Public School, Machulo

Teacher Strength:

- ▼ Information Needed

## BACKGROUND

Machulo is a picturesque village situated in the district of Ghanche-Baltistan. An ancient settlement nestled in the foothills at the base of the Gondogrola and Siachin glaciers, Machulo has historical links with the Ladakh region of Northern India. Located 115 km from Skardu, Machulo is situated at a shorter distance of 15 km from Khapulo, the district headquarters. The people of the area are Balti speakers. Predominantly Noor bakhshi Muslims, they are moderate and peaceful as well as fully supportive of developmental efforts, especially within education. The economy of the area is largely agrarian and tourism-based.

## FELIX FOUNDATION BALTISTAN

### Felix Foundation Baltistan Machulo

A locally based, non-profit organisation working for the development of the local community, the Felix Foundation Baltistan (FFB) is a major presence in the area. In cooperation with its Basque partner organisation, Baltistan Fundazioa (BF), the FFB finances projects in Education, Agriculture, Ecotourism, Infrastructure, Health and Gender Equality.

PDCN is closely connected with the Felix Foundation. It provides ongoing support for the professional development of the local FFB organization as well as for the professional development of teachers working at the FFB-run Munawar Public School. The teaching staff of the school avail courses and workshops at PDCN Gilgit regularly. From time to time, PDCN also sends its faculty members to Machulo to provide needs-based training and guidance to the NGO. The existing nexus between PDCN and Munawar Public School was one of the reasons for the selection of the school to the Machulo Cluster.

## The Context and the Stakeholders

Due to its remote location, the area has lagged behind other GB districts in terms of infrastructure, resources and development. As a result, the older generation of residents has grown up largely illiterate, remaining dependent on subsistence farming and porter work for visiting mountaineers. However, over the last twenty years or so, some schooling provision—government, private and community-based—has been established across the area. Issues of quality, access and governance have held at bay improvements in educational standards. The following have been identified as particular challenges within the context of educational access and quality:

- ❖ Non availability and shortage of teachers and a low teacher student ratio of 1:60
- ❖ Lack of professional development opportunities for teachers serving in the region
- ❖ Prevalence of outdated teaching methodologies in the teaching context
- ❖ Reluctance of trained teachers to work in such a remote area with harsh climactic conditions
- ❖ Confinement to the periphery of government developmental plans due to the remoteness of Machulo's geographical location

## The Machulo Cluster Schools

The Machulo Cluster consists of High School Machulo and its two feeding units, Middle School Talisand Girls Middle School Machulo, which are government-run. The third feeding unit Munawar Public School is a primary-level school run by the Felix Foundation.

## High School Machulo (LRS)

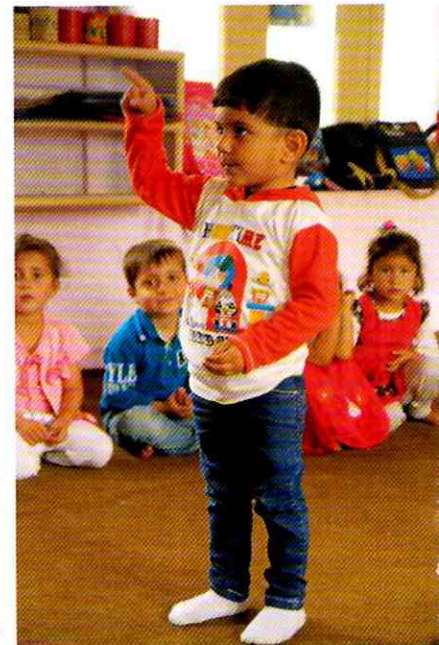
Established in 1962, the Machulo High School began its journey as a primary school, progressing to the Middle level and then operating as a High School (Year 2000), although its official status has remained as Approved Middle School. The school has a large ground and a huge building. In recent times, the Government has also constructed an adjunct building consisting of four classrooms and a large hall to house secondary level classes. Along with retrofitting the old building to bring it up to date with modern construction requirements including earthquake-proofing, the Felix Foundation has also built restroom facilities for the girls and boys.

At the time of its selection as LRS in EDIP project, the school needed significant improvements on multiple fronts. There were 120 students in classes ranging from 6th to 10th grades being taught by seven teachers in total. Unavailability of capable and professionally trained teachers has been a serious issue facing this school. Major challenges have included:

- ❖ Non-provision of teaching and instructional material
- ❖ Poor school culture and lack of collaboration amongst teachers and staff
- ❖ Appointment of a junior teacher as Principal without attendant benefits
- ❖ Demotivated and disinterested School Principal

Asfandiyar Ali is a teacher at a school run by the Felix Foundation, a Spanish NGO working for the welfare of the Machulo community. He is enthusiastic about the benefits brought to the school due to its participation in the EDIP project.

Although the Felix Foundation School had already been getting a lot of help from PDCN to build the capacity of its teachers, I feel that being a part of the EDIP project helped our school to develop more as well as to achieve a very strong concept and vision of ECED. Early Childhood Education was much needed in the community, as there were scant facilities available to teach young children in the community. And while ECED classes were already being run at our school, being a part of the EDIP helped us to gain an understanding of how to provide quality education for young learners'. Asfandiyar adds, 'what we also learnt from our experience was that better and more lasting outcomes are achieved when incoming partners work with existing NGOs to develop the community. The EDIP reforms have helped to strengthen the work of Felix Foundation, and the Felix Foundation has made a lot of efforts to support the work of EDIP partners. This has benefitted the local community immensely'.



## Middle School Talis, (FU)

Talis Village is comprised of 1200 inhabitants, and there is a co-educational middle school, which serves as a feeding unit attached with High school Machulo. Established as a shelter-less primary school in 1977, it was later shifted to a private home. In 1986 a community notable by the name of Haider Sarkardah donated the land and the government constructed the current school building. It was shifted to the current building, with a single teacher catering to over 100 students ranging from nursery up to 5th grade. In 2005, it was upgraded as a middle school, but it officially remains an approved primary school. It serves as a co-educational school attended by girls and boys from Talis and the nearby villages. When students pass their middle grade, they seek admission in High School Machulo. Therefore, MS Talis was also selected as a feeding unit within the Machulo Cluster.

## Girls' Middle school Machulo(FU)

Centrally located, the Girls' middle school Machulo is easily accessed by village residents. Up till the year 2000, the local Madrassah (religious centre) played a vital role in bringing in government teachers to provide secular education to the female students, ensuring that they could sit the matriculation examinations. Observing the success of this supplement, the locals asked for a separate building for a girls' school. The present building was constructed, catering to students from grade 6 to grade 8. The school building comprises nine classrooms with one room office/staffroom. At the time of EDIP intervention, the total student strength was about 90. EDIP improvements led to the upgrading of the school into a full-fledged middle school, and now the school caters to nine classes including three classes of the newly established ECED section. An ECED room and restroom facilities have been constructed under the project with due measures taken to prepare for natural disasters such as earthquakes. Today, 100 female and 110 male students are enrolled at the school.



## Munawar Public School Machulo(FU)

Munawar Public School Machulo is an English medium school run by Felix Foundation. The Felix Foundation is well-known for providing quality education and facilitating educational development in the locality. The school is located on two campuses. The ECED section is housed in a rented building the middle of the Machulo village, whereas the primary section is housed in a portion of High School Machulo. This school enjoys a good reputation because it partners with PDCN for capacity building and professional development of its teachers.

## Pre-intervention scenario: A Snapshot

Before the EDIP intervention commenced, the schools in the Machulo Cluster, with the exception of Munawar Public School were characterized by the following:

- ❖ Lack of access to teacher development opportunities, in-service trainings or workshops
- ❖ Lack of motivation on the part of the teachers

- ❖ Little attempt at self-initiated development
- ❖ Focus on memorization-based learning
- ❖ Lack of lesson planning and non-awareness of the importance of the planning lessons
- ❖ Limited resources

It was observed that the situation was much better in Munawar Public School, although improvement via EDIP-led reforms was actively sought by FFB. The existing school practices included:

- ❖ Professional development of teachers through PDCN trainings
- ❖ Utilization of winter vacations for up skilling of teachers at PDCN
- ❖ Development of follow-up mechanism for continuing educational development and improvement
- ❖ Evolving of a School Development Plan with input from the PDCN

### Needs assessment

A training need assessment (TNA) carried out by the PDT identified the following areas in which improvement was direly needed:

- ❖ Early Childhood Education
- ❖ Educational standards
- ❖ Learner performance in Board examinations
- ❖ Learner morale and confidence

This intervention, which was based on WSIP principles, led to improvements in many areas including teacher training, leadership development, community engagement, infrastructural resource provision and health education. However, the most significant area of its impact has been that of early childhood education. This report will focus on detailing how change came about in this area as a result of EDIP intervention in the Machulo Cluster.

### Early Childhood Education

The need assessment of the target schools revealed that early childhood education in Machulo was largely overlooked. Parents who could afford to do so would send their youngest children to schools in other better-resourced localities, which involved expense, extensive commuting and the hardships of travel in the mountainous terrain. Those families, which could not afford this luxury, were unable to send their young children to school, thereby impeding progress in formal schooling. It was realized that EDIP could create a significant impact in this area if it helped to develop early childhood education in the Machulo Cluster. This would save parents from the expense of sending children for ECED elsewhere and the young children from the danger of commuting for their schooling. It would also enable physically-disabled children, hitherto prevented from getting schooled beyond Machulo, to enter mainstream education locally. Quality early childhood education would further improve learner achievement at higher levels of schooling, thus paving the way for meaningful change in the overall quality of learning within Machulo.



## Intervention initiatives

### Engaging parents

Parents were engaged in dialogue by the PDT with reference to the importance of sending their youngest school-age children to the ECED school. Assured that PDCN trainings would equip the teachers to teach young children ably, the parents agreed to enroll their children in the new ECED classes planned under the EDIP reforms.

### Engaging teachers and heads

The next step consisted of motivating the teachers, who were wary of the extra workload teaching ECED classes would bring, to participate in the initiative. Despite the reservations of the LRS Principal, who saw ECED classes as outside of his ambit, the teachers eventually agreed to commence ECED classes.

### Meeting the physical requirements for the ECED classes

Existing areas in the Machulo Clusters were identified and redesignated as space for ECED classrooms. In one case, the ECED section was housed in a nearby area with easier on-foot access to the school for younger learners. Permission from the Government Department of Education was gained to commence the ECED classes.

### Capacity Building of Teachers

PDCN based trainings for the capacity building of the Machulo Cluster teachers were held. These included subject-specific and generic modules such as:

- 🔑 Innovative pedagogy,
- 🔑 Pedagogical leadership
- 🔑 Inclusive education
- 🔑 Mentoring
- 🔑 English language
- 🔑 Early Childhood Development
- 🔑 IT and subject matter workshops

Additionally, one teacher from each school in the Cluster also secured a Diploma in Early Childhood Education, thereby supporting the commencement of the ECED classes in Machulo.

### LRS based trainings

Weekly professional development sessions were conducted for the benefit of the teaching staff. These were contextualized to the needs of the teachers participating in the trainings as well as to the needs of their specific learners. These weekly sessions served to improve teachers' pedagogical skills and content knowledge. Teachers learnt how to construct low-cost and no-cost teaching resources in the classroom, which could make the lesson interactive and interesting for students.

### Resource provision for ECED

Library books, Internet facility and play equipment were some of the resources provided to the schools in this context. ECED specific resources, such as materials for activity-based learning, were also provided to make learning meaningful for the young learners.

Ghanzafar is equally enthusiastic about the transformation in the ECED sector brought about by the EDIP reforms. He notes, 'ECED was little understood or provided for in the local schools. Most young children stayed at home or commuted to neighbouring communities for such schooling. Today, the EDIP reforms have transformed our young learners. They are more confident and happy. They eagerly attend ECED classes at school where they are carefully groomed by well-trained and friendly teachers. Other trainings have brought about an improvement in the health and hygiene of the young learners'. Ghanzafar also talks about the impact on the parents. He recalls how 'parents were initially unwilling to send their young children to school because of the lack of ECED provision. Now, having seen the positive impact on the development of their children, they want to enroll the younger siblings of these children in the ECED classes as well'. Ghanzafar notes that 'ECED classes also prepare the young learners for more formal schooling. This makes them perform better in senior classes. Without EDIP reforms, none of this would have been possible. We are very grateful for this intervention, which has transformed our community so positively'.



## Awareness sessions for parents on ECED

As parents were major stakeholders in the change process, sessions were arranged to sensitize them to the need of quality education and effective learning. PDCN facilitators were brought in to conduct sessions for SMC and the community as to the importance of ECED. In addition to creating awareness amongst the mothers, a session was also conducted by the gender coordinator as well as by the community mobilizer of the PDCN. Through these, over 500 participants were made aware of the health and hygiene and educational needs of their children. Parents were invited in small groups for school visits so that they could observe ongoing ECED sessions. The aim was to get them to share their observations and experiences with people in the community, thereby winning over others to the idea of ECED and the EDIP reforms.



## Intervention Outcomes

### Pedagogy

- ❖ Regular lesson planning
- ❖ Prevalence of interactive teaching
- ❖ Setting up of theme-based learning corners in classrooms
- ❖ Development of Activity-based learning

### Increased Professionalism

- ❖ Increased professional awareness
- ❖ Improved collegial dialogue
- ❖ More motivated teachers and engaged teachers

### Change in Stakeholder Perceptions

- ❖ Improvement in parental perceptions of schooling arrangements for young children

### Stakeholder Mobilization

- ❖ Increase in the motivation of the School Leadership
- ❖ Greater interest in the maintenance of the premises by the school leadership
- ❖ More active supervision and greater interest in School activities by the government Department of Education representative

### Linkages Between Home And School

- ❖ Regular parent-teacher meetings
- ❖ Improved self-esteem of ECED teachers
- ❖ Frequent interaction between teachers and parents

### Health Education

- ❖ Improved health and hygiene of students

### School quality

- ❖ Transformation into a Model School for ECED

## Conclusion

Early Childhood Education is the first formal stage in a learner's trajectory. If learners are failed at this stage, it is likely that their future journey will be a challenging one. Introducing formal ECED at Machulo has been a transformative learning experience for all stakeholders including the EDIP implementers. They have observed first hand the impact of creating a learner-centered educational space for young learners hitherto overlooked by the educational providers. Today, Machulo ECED schools serve as models for young learner education in GB and similarly placed communities elsewhere. From the areas of impact identified above, it is clear that the impact of the EDIP reforms in this regard has been encompassing, affecting teachers, school leaders, learners and community members alike.

# Case Study 3



# The Transformative Power of Environmental Education vis-à-vis Key Stakeholders:

## A Case Study of an EDIP Initiative at Eidgah

### IMPACT AT A GLANCE

#### Project- EDIP

District-Astore

Schools in the Eidgah Cluster:  
FG Boys model school (LRS)

Student strength

556

Combined Enrolment at all schools in Eidgah Cluster



Feeding Units (FU):

- ✦ FG Girls Middle School
- ✦ FG Boys Primary School
- ✦ FG Girls' High School, Chongrah

### BACKGROUND

Astore, a newly formed district in GB is situated to the South East of Gilgit Town, with headquarters in Eidgah-Gorikote. Due to the beauty of its terrain in spots such as Rama, Dewasai and Dambabaho, the area is a magnet for domestic and international visitors. The community is ethnically diverse, with sub-communities representing several major sects of Islam. The area also has great significance from a defense point of view as it borders Indian-held Kashmir. The Eidgah and Chongrah areas situated across the Cluster schools have a population of around 7000 residents spread across 600 households.

### CONTEXT AND STAKEHOLDERS

Within the WSIP model underscoring the EDIP reforms, environmental education forms a part of the sixth pillar, namely Social, Moral Development & Health Education. The purpose of concentrating on environmental education was to contribute to the implementation of existing educational and environmental policies recommendations and curriculum enrichment. In view of attaining these objectives, a series of meetings were conducted with the head masters/mistress and teachers of the respective Cluster schools. The idea was well-received in all the four schools and work on the initiative began soon thereafter.

### ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The pristine beauty of the Northern regions of Pakistan has been well-documented. In recent decades, the ingress of modern living in these previously secluded areas has introduced environmentally-detrimental practices such as the pervasive use of plastic bags without suitable disposal. With the rise of the modern culture of consumerism, there is also an increasing tendency to deplete natural resources without much thought as to the impact on the environment. Hence, Environmental Education with its emphasis on conservation and protection is much needed within communities such as those of Eidgah and Chongrah



Within the context of implementation, the WSIP model emphasis on environmental education is supported by both the National Environment Policy 2005, which encourages the integration of environmental education “at all levels of curricula and syllabi from primary to university levels” and Islamic guidelines on the matter. Thus, it was decided that the Eidgah Cluster Schools would carry out student led awareness-raising campaigns within the community to mobilize change with regard to protecting the environment. The objective of educating the young learners about the environment was to instill in them a sense of responsibility about their surroundings as well as awareness of practices, which led to environmental degradation. The young are more receptive to new ideas and their potential to act as change agents is also greater.

## THE EIDGAH CLUSTER SCHOOLS

The Eidgah cluster consisted of the Learning Resource School (High School Eidgah) and two feeding unit schools Girls High School Chongrah. A total of 556 students are enrolled across the schools in the Eidgah Cluster.

## INTERVENTION INITIATIVES

### Plans for a Cleanliness Walk

In line with the National Curriculum Document (NCD) and National Education and Environment Policies (NEPs) objectives, a walk involving students and teachers, which would focus on collecting litter from the town streets was planned. The aim was to create awareness as to civic responsibility amongst the townspeople. To link it to academic outcomes, students were to be asked to reflect on the activity, its purpose and what they had learnt from it. Unfortunately, this was met with resistance by the official in charge of granting permission for the activity, who voiced the belief that such activities were a waste of time.

### Celebration of World Environment Day

To celebrate Environment Day on 5th June, students, teachers and head teachers were asked to take part in cleaning the school and its grounds. Initially reluctant, many teachers joined in the activity once they observed the enthusiasm of the other teachers and students in participating in the cleanliness drive. When the same event was celebrated in the following year, participation by all stakeholders was far greater and more enthusiastic. Waste disposal bins were placed strategically to discourage littering and messages on cleanliness displayed in the corridors.

### School Project on Environmental Education

To teach learners about environmental pollution as part of their general science studies, the teacher designed a project-based assignment in which the learners would go out into the community, creating awareness about protecting the environment through a door to door campaign, clearing up plastic bags from the streets and then writing a report on their experiences. Reusable bags were returned to the shopkeepers as a way to recycle rather than to throw away the bags. Permission from the parents was secured, and the learners completed the project in groups. Their efforts were widely appreciated, and the students reported much

When environmental education was begun at Eidgah under the EDIP reforms, few of the stakeholders could have predicted the transformation and lasting impact of the intervention. As Neelum, one of the teachers at the school points out 'learners who took part in environmental projects such as cleanliness walks and clean-up drives at the earliest stages of the EDIP project have thoroughly grasped the lessons of environmental education. To my surprise, young children I made aware of environmental conservation and led in projects have adopted environment-friendly practices. Our schools is one of the cleanest in the area, and I have observed the learners to be very careful about not littering or allowing anyone else to litter the school grounds or classes. They also tell me that they take care of their environment at home and community in the same way'. 'Another benefit', she adds, 'has to do with the increase in the confidence of the learners. Before they were very shy and unable to make eye contact or to talk upon any topic. As a result of the project work, the students are very confident and can easily discuss a variety of topics. The intervention has not only made these young people aware about the importance of the environment but it has also created the vision and will in them, to understand global issues and to recycle and conserve where they can'.



enthusiasm for their work amongst the community members. In addition to community engagement vis-à-vis environmental awareness, the learners also gained much in terms of practising their communication skills and building up their confidence through presenting their ideas

### Student Representative Council's(SRC)contributions to environmental education

The SRC played a pivotal role in arranging events such as painting competitions on environmental themes, essay competitions and clean-up drives. Such events have inspired students to keep their surroundings clean and to link the impact of their actions with the impact on their environment.

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### Cleanliness Walk sponsored by Department of Education)

Enthused by the eco-friendly initiatives taken up by the schools, the new Director of the Department of Education (DDE) suggested the holding of a Cleanliness Walk. Consequently, a Cleanliness Walk was organized by the Education Department in collaboration with the District administration, where in the DDE, head teacher, teachers, students and district administration officials worked together to pick up litter and remove waste from the town centre. On the following day, the head teacher gave a talk to the students in which he reinforced the purpose of the activity and the importance of recycling to prevent waste creation.

### Student picnic at Rama

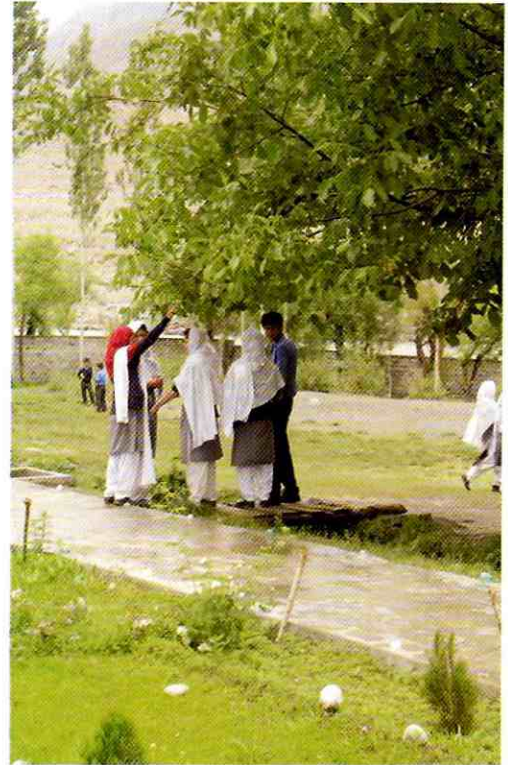
Environmental education has brought about an impressive change in student thinking. In addition to keeping their environment clean, they like to learn new things about their

Fatima, one of the many students who have taken part in the environmental projects is equally enthusiastic about the impact of the intervention. She says that 'environmental education has taught us that we are responsible for taking care of our surroundings and preserving the natural beauty of our environment. Through clean-up drives and environmental walks, we have learnt that we can make a difference to our community through our actions. Today, my friends and I are careful to keep the classes and the school grounds clean as well as to make sure that our homes and streets are equally clean'. She adds, 'celebrating World Environment Day and doing projects on environmental themes have been great activities. My friends and I can see how what we do in our surroundings has an impact on the world. Therefore, we are more careful about conserving the environment. We see it as our duty to protect the environment for the future'.

surroundings even when they undertake recreational activities. When students went for a picnic at a famous tourist spot in Rama, they spent much time in exploring the area and learning about the herbs and plants as well as the trees in the environs. Back in their classes, the students reflected on how pollution-free the area had been and how the forest played a role in preventing the air from becoming polluted. This shows an increased awareness of the link between theory and practice of environmental education.

## Impact of the Intervention

- ❖ Head teachers, teachers and students participate regularly in a variety of environment-friendly activities.
- ❖ There is also an increase in project-based work within environmental education.
- ❖ Students have become very enthusiastic about participating in environment-related activities. The written and verbal reflections of students evidence a deep level of appreciation for such activities and concern for taking caring of the environment. They are quick to prevent environmentally-unsound activities amongst peers, family and community members. This shows their potential to catalyze and sustain change in this area.
- ❖ At the community level, the response to these initiatives has been largely positive, with most community members showing enthusiasm about their children's participation in the school initiatives. At the district, administration and Deputy Directorate levels, there has also been a positive interest and participation in campaigns and activities related to environmental education and awareness.



## Conclusion

The natural surroundings sustain communities in every sense of the word. A healthy environment is key to a healthy population. In this context, the role of EDIP-led reforms in creating an awareness of the environment, key environmental issues and personal civic responsibility vis-à-vis protecting the environs has been pivotal to shaping the outlook of the young learners. The ripple effect of the efforts is likely to spread across the community and beyond in time to come.

# Case Study 4





## TRANSFIGURING PEDAGOGICAL LEADERSHIP: DEVELOPMENT OF A SCHOOL LEADER

### The Case Study of F.G. Boys High School Shigar, Skardu

#### Project- EDIP

District-Shigar

#### Student strength



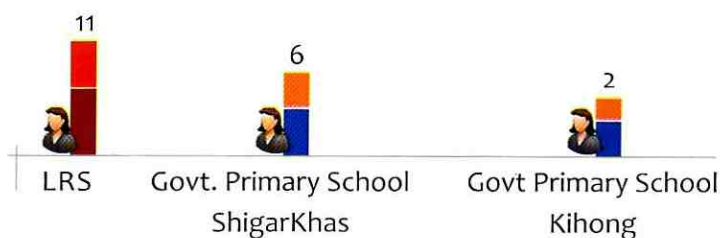
#### Schools in the Shigar Cluster:

Government High School (LRS)

#### Feeding Units (FU):

Govt Primary School ShigarKhas  
Govt Primary School Markunja  
Govt Primary School Kihong

#### Teacher Strength



## BACKGROUND

Numbering amongst the nine districts that constitute the Gilgit-Baltistan region, District Shigar, which is situated in Baltistan, attracts tourists from all around the world because of its natural beauty, high peaks (of which the famed K-2 is one), rich culture and friendly community. The total population of Shigar valley numbers almost 80 thousand, and its literacy rate has been estimated as 42 % for males and 20 % for females. Although Shigar has many good quality learning institutions, a need was felt to improve educational provision further by providing access to the latest in pedagogical innovations and whole school improvement through EDIP-led reforms.

## THE CONTEXT AND STAKEHOLDERS

### Learning Resource School

High School Shigar, which was selected as the Learning Resource School (LRS) for the Shigar Cluster, has been playing a leading role in providing not only good quality secondary education to students in the district but also professional support to the 18 government schools in geographical proximity. It has 372 students enrolled across grades 6 to 10.



From the historic point of view, LRS Shigar is also very popular because it was the first primary school of the region. Established in 1902, it was upgraded as the first Middle school in 1948 and later on designated as the first High school of the region in 1967.

The feeding units in the Shigar Cluster include the following:

- ❖ Government Primary School, ShigarKhas
- ❖ Government Primary School, Markunja
- ❖ Government Primary School, Kihong

## The Selection of High School Shigar to the EDIP-project

The Head Teacher of the LRS Shigar is an active, motivated school leader, and he is enthusiastic about the holistic development of his school. The School Management Committee at LRS Shigar, headed by a visionary chairperson, also plays an active role in the development of the School. Upon learning of the EDIP projects, these stakeholders made a concerted bid to become a part of the EDIP reforms by requesting AKU-IED, PDCN to consider the inclusion of High School Shigar in the project cluster within the region.

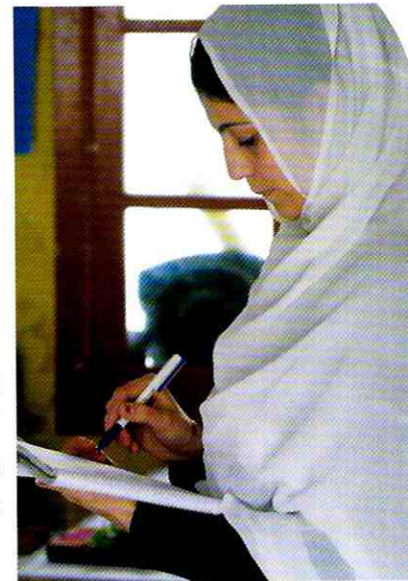
Following the successful outcome of this bid, LRS Shigar began its journey of WSIP improvement. While ongoing evaluation evidenced positive outcomes across all the six areas of WSIP at Shigar, this cases focuses particularly on the dynamic transformation of the Principal as an ideal school leader in the wake of the reforms.

## Pre-intervention Scenario: A Snapshot

While the Principal, Feroz Aliwas overwhelmingly dedicated to his work, his style of leadership was rather autocratic and authoritative. An excellent manager and administrator, Feroz ruled the school with an iron fist, so to speak. He would speak quellingly to any teacher who failed to take a class, not pausing to consider even genuine reasons for the lapse and caring little for the offending teacher's self-esteem. While he was generally fair in his dealings with the teachers, most of the teaching staff hesitated visiting him in his office, even when they had concerns over issues that required his attention or intervention. Decisions regarding school matters were taken on his own without any attempt at building a consensus or even consulting the concerned teachers. As a result, teachers at the school felt little ownership of initiatives that were passed down from the top. His behavior with students was equally stern. Feroz seldom hesitated to punish any student who failed to attend school, irrespective of mitigating circumstances such as mishaps or emergencies. While his enthusiasm for school reforms was laudable, it was fairly evident that the reforms would not be sustainable unless he changed his style of leadership.

## Intervention

Following PDT-led needs assessment of school improvement needs, the Principal was taken into confidence regarding the many areas requiring improvement, which had been identified through the exercise. When the PDT shared his concerns that Feroz' autocratic leadership

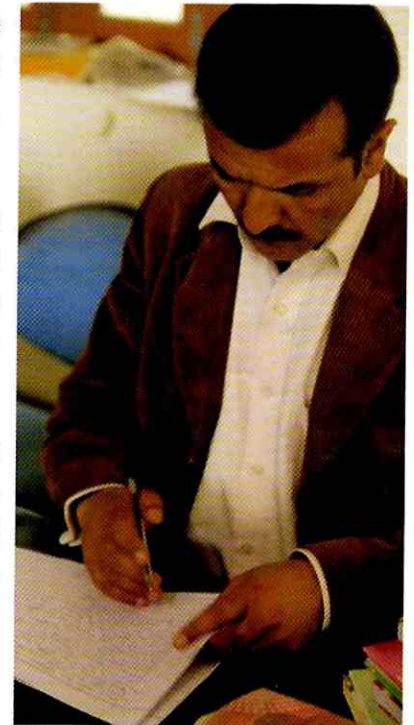


As he stands in the school grounds, greeting the chattering students congregating for the morning assembly, Feroz the Principal of LRS Shigar, owns to being a 'changed man in the wake of the EDIP reforms'. Before, Feroz would have been keeping a vigil at the window of his office, observing the students gathering for this morning meeting from afar, on the lookout for the slightest infringement of uniform or discipline. Now, he greets most of his young charges with a smile and a kind word, assaying only the gentlest of admonishments for tardiness or an askew uniform. His learners look happy to see him, shyly exchanging polite greetings before lining up for assembly. Things were not always like this. As Feroz calls, 'Before EDIP, despite 27 years of service in education, I would speak harshly to my students, disciplining them strictly and meting out corporal punishment to the worst offenders. But after receiving trainings at PDCN, I realized that learners needed to be motivated and spoken to with softness and empathy to activate their learning'. This was not the only change in Feroz. As Feroz notes, his leadership style also changed with trainings from PDCN, and he learnt 'to build consensus amongst his teachers before taking a decision with regard to school matters. Communication was not very good between the teachers and myself, and tried to change this by holding regular meetings with the staff so we could deal with school issues together. The EDIP reforms also showed me that sometimes teachers were reluctant to take classes because they were ill-prepared rather than because they were lazy. I stopped dealing harshly with teachers who skipped classes or were late. Once I had learnt that their main problem was a lack of training in lesson planning, I worked

would serve as a barrier to EDIP reforms, the Principal was somewhat taken aback. It was the possibly the first time anyone had spoken to him so honestly and candidly regarding the drawbacks of attitude towards teachers and students. The needs assessment had also identified several instances of Feroz' autocratic attitude and heavy-handed management.

To his credit, Feroz soon rallied, acknowledging that he could be autocratic and that he would do what he could do to change, as he profoundly wanted the EDIP reforms to succeed in the Shigar Cluster.

- ❖ The first step as part of the EDIP intervention was to sign up Feroz for an educational leadership course at PDCN. The course, by his own confession, broadened his vision and exposed him to the many styles of leadership available to a school leader. It also gave him a theory-based understanding of pedagogical leadership, stakeholder needs and approaches to building consensus.
- ❖ In order to encourage Feroz to develop a more democratic attitude, he was encouraged to participate in role-playing sessions in which he could enact the characteristics of a 'servant leader' so as to boost engagement, increase trust and build better team relationships in the school.
- ❖ Another challenge for Feroz was to let go of his desire to micromanage everything for fear of having some careless staff member overlook things that needed to be overseen. Through trainings, he learnt to devolve responsibility so that the teachers did a number of tasks without having to constantly check back with the Principal.
- ❖ Feroz was taught to reflect on his practice. Thinking about what he was doing and the purpose of what he was doing as well as its effect on teachers, students and other stakeholders made Feroz a more thoughtful leader. This enabled him to develop empathy and to think about things from the perspective of others.
- ❖ Other trainings helped Feroz get into the habit of practising shared decision making and building consensus amongst his team. He also learnt to encourage feedback from the teachers and developed an 'open door' policy, so that teachers could share their concerns with him more easily.
- ❖ With respect to students, Feroz developed a more empathetic attitude. He learnt to counsel those who were frequently absent or tardy, helping them to tackle problems at home or issues that prevented them from attending school. Even punishments meted out matched the proportion of the offence and avoided damaging the learners' self-esteem.



together with the PDT to provide them with support in this area. The outcome was transformational. Now, my teachers are always prompt in taking their classes, having prepared the day before for the lesson to be taught. The trainings I have received have shown me that communication and consensus-building as well as an empathetic approach are vital to good school leadership. I must lead, not simply drive my teachers and learners to achieve the best possible outcomes for this school'.

## The Impact of the Intervention

### Providing access to the teachers:

This involved establishment of an 'open door' policy so that teachers could share their concerns with the Principal. This not only empowered the teachers but also allowed Feroz to learn about problems before they actually escalated beyond redress.



### Delegation of Tasks:

Feroz made a point of delegating certain tasks requiring only that the outcomes and major issues were communicated to him. Such an approach built up the teachers' confidence and increased their trust in the Principal. For instance, disciplinary committee meetings had always been presided over by Feroz himself, but now he put together a team of his most responsible teachers to deal with the cases that came up. He would intercede only if his team was unable to deal with the matter themselves. School activities were also another area in which the Principal had exercised absolute discretion. Again, Feroz delegated the task of vetting school activities and supervising implementation to another set of teachers, asking only that they take responsibility for their decisions and follow carefully-laid procedures to avoid untoward outcomes.

### Weekly staff meetings with teacher-led agenda:

These meetings were run as brainstorming sessions so that the school team could come up with new ideas, share feedback and build trust. It also enabled the Principal and teachers to think of the learner needs and address these as quickly as possible.

### Changed Decision making Practices:

Decisions were no longer made unilaterally. Consultations with key stakeholders was carefully built in so that there was greater buy-in and better implementation for the changes and actions that needed to be taken. If the team disagreed on something, Feroz was willing to consider options and alternatives before reaching a shared decision.

## CONCLUSION

The cumulative effect of these changes has led to the transformation of High School LRS into an institution founded upon teamwork, trust and stakeholder engagement. The Principal, teachers and students alike have become allied in the development of the school. This case highlights the importance of pedagogical leadership and its transformational power. Feroz Ali has developed the ability to listen, pay attention to feedback, create consensus and to delegate responsibility. As a result, the teachers and students have matured in many ways and readily take on responsibilities, shrugging over the infantilisation that can occur as a result of over supervision and autocratic management. Infact, they practise self-accountability beyond even the stringent standards set by Feroz himself. A parallel consequence of the change in pedagogical leadership style has been better implementation of EDIP reforms and greater buy-in from school stakeholders and community. The WSIP transformation at LRS Shigar has drawn new admissions, and the Principal has made concerted efforts to accommodate the new students, efficiently managing material and human resources, motivating and facilitating staff and using financial resources cleverly. Where needed, he has provided resources, such as school uniforms for several students unable to afford these, out of his own pocket. Today, Feroz Ali stands as the ideal change leader, whose confidence, openness to new ideas, reflectivity, empathy and decisiveness are evidence of the many successes of High School Shigar and the EDIP reforms.

Shams Hussein, one of the teachers at LRS Shigar corroborates what the Principal has pointed out. 'Before the EDIP reforms, we rarely met with the Principal. Our communication was very formal, and consequently, problems and issues could not be dealt with on time due to the top-down flow of information'. Shams adds, 'Now we have weekly meetings in which the Principal consults us before taking decisions on school matters. We can also share our problems with him, thereby eliminating the need for undue disciplining of teachers. Shams adds that 'an added benefit of increased and more collegial interaction with the Principal has been an increase in the confidence and firmer understanding of school practice amongst teachers. By observing the Principal's new and more effective style of leadership, we are all learning positive things about how a school is run successfully and how teachers and learners need to be engaged for better outcomes'.

# Case Study 5



## Empowering the Women of Karimabad vis-a-vis participation in community reforms: The Mothers' Support Group in action within the Karimabad Cluster

### IMPACT AT A GLANCE

#### Project- EDIP

District-Hunza, Karimabad

Schools in the Karimabad Cluster:  
F.G Boys Model High School (LRS)

Feeding Units (FU): BE community PS Gaimash    G.B Govt Middle School\_Brashal  
F.G Primary School Brashal

### BACKGROUND

The inhabitants of Karimabad, which is the capital of Hunza in Gilgit-Baltistan and the spiritual hub of the Shia Ismaili Nizari community, have a deep love of learning. This stems from the edict of their spiritual leader Prince Karim Aga Khan to educate themselves to the farthest extent supported by their means. Hence, the vision of the Karimabad community is largely progressive and development-oriented.

#### Pre-intervention Scenario: A Snapshot

Although the EDIP-led reforms in the Karimabad Cluster had a deep impact on all WSIP areas, it was the change in terms of community mobilization, especially that of the female members, which has proven to be of the greatest prominence. Despite their love of learning, the community members of Karimabad were unable to play a participative role in school management or development prior to the commencement of the EDIP reforms. The exclusion was not deliberate but had more to do with the unawareness of the community as to the role it could play in school development as community stakeholders. To an extent, the schools were happy not to have the community members delve too deeply into school management or affairs, as it freed the former from the pressure of scrutiny over their performance. This case, in particular, will focus on mobilization of the female segment of the community and their involvement in school development.

The sustainability of any intervention depends on community participation and uptake. In the Karimabad Cluster, the CSRC community mobilizer played a pivotal role in forging connections between the community and the schools by mobilizing the School Management Committees (SMC) and establishing the Mothers Support Groups (MSG). Since it was not possible for the partner agencies or the community mobilizer of the CSRC to approach each and every member of the communities when needed, two committees were formed, with one representing the fathers or the male members and the other consisting of mothers of the children enrolled in the schools.

Empowering these committees was another tremendous task for the EDIP because without financial, moral and departmental support of the DoE and partner agencies, they were helpless to play an effective role in either the government schools or in the communities. PDCN made particular efforts in this regard, taking authorities of the Government Education Department (DoE) into confidence and encouraging the latter to play an effective role in strengthening community participation in each project school. While the EDIP reforms helped the Student Management Committee to develop immensely in terms of its role as well as scope, it was the formation and engagement of the MSG in particular that was most impressive in this case given that the platform mobilized members of community traditionally circumscribed to the domestic domain.

## The Intervention

### Establishing the Mothers' Support Group

Given that the earliest socialization of a child begins at home with the mother, the involvement of mothers in community and school linkages was considered essential. In uniting the mothers of Karimabad, Hunza through the platform of EDIP and empowering them, the Aga Khan Foundation's unit of CSRC and PDCN played a significant role. In the initial phase, the CSRC Community Mobilizer met the community members especially mothers residing in the area and then constituted a representative committee titled the Mothers' Support Group (MSG).



### Providing trainings to the MSG

After the formation of the MSG, AKDN arranged multiple sessions for the group members, raising awareness of their roles and responsibilities at homes as mothers, in the community and in schools as members or chairpersons of MSG. Sessions were also organized on other useful topics such as gender equity and equality with particular focus on discussion of parental treatment of children on the basis of gender. The session members learnt about the equality of the sexes and gained exposure to the achievements and contributions of women in developed societies.

As an adjunct, sessions on “Inclusive Education” were also arranged to discuss the treatment and mainstreaming of the less able children. MSG members learnt that disabilities were not a barrier to equal access to educational opportunities, and they also learnt how to take care of such children at home and in the schools, with special emphasis on their educational and socialization needs. These sessions were task-based, and the Community Mobilizer followed up each task in the succeeding session for better internalization of the themes taken up.

Once the group had been formed and provided orientation, emphasis was laid on ensuring the effectiveness of the MSGs while working with teachers and community members. Since these efforts were volunteer-led, the MSG lacked political or social clout to assert their authority in the communities or in the schools. In this regard, PDCN played a significant role, by addressing large gatherings of community members and educating them as to the importance of the

Lal Shahzadi, a seasoned Mother Support Group member at Karimabad stands as a good example of the impact on gender parity that the EDIP reforms have helped to materialize over the course of the last five years. She speaks expertly, detailing the transformation of herself and fellow mothers from stay-at-home figures to active members of the MSG. 'I can honestly say that our thinking has changed with the awareness-raising and trainings. Now, we know that we can be agents of change in the community and in our children's future. We don't have to depend on the men to be responsible for everything. We hold weekly and monthly meetings during which we discuss any problem regarding the children, their performance or related to the school. During the weekly meeting, we also check on teacher attendance and get in a substitute teacher, if any regular teacher is absent'. She adds, 'and, if there is a problem, we try to take care of it. For instance, learning about inclusive education, we motivated parents to send in seven girls who were disabled and staying at home because of their physical impairment. We hired a community teacher, as there was a teacher shortage at the school. We also hired a sanitary staff member to help the girls get to and fro from restroom facilities as well as from the school to their homes, if parents could not collect their children on certain days'. The pride in her voice is clear, and she talks enthusiastically about 'how from all the trainings, we learnt how to raise girls as well as about health and education'. Lal Shahzadi continues, 'we are very committed to our work. For instance, on occasions when the cleaning staff has taken the day off, the mothers take it in turn to visit the school and do the cleaning themselves'. The EDIP reforms have taken hold strongly, and the women of the Karimabad MSG, like those of other EDIP sites, serve as a good exemplar of female mobilization and attitudinal change.

mothers' role in better academic outcomes and socialization of children. This was supported with examples of other interventions where MSG members would informally monitor the quality of academic supervision of children by their parents. If parents were found wanting in this regard, MSG members would step in, counseling the parents to demonstrate more responsibility towards their children. This was highlighted as the hallmark of community interest in the welfare of the children and their schooling needs.

## Providing trainings to the MSG

Once mobilized, the MSG developed a strong sense of purpose and ownership of the school reforms underway. Growing in confidence, it undertook a number of initiatives, which led to resource provision, improvement in student outcomes and behavior as well as improved performance of school managers and teachers. The efforts of the MSG included the following in terms of actions and impact:

- ❖ Launching of campaigns by the MSGs to purchase ECED resources for classes at school.
- ❖ Arranging the services of educated teachers from the community to meet gaps in teacher strength at school
- ❖ Increase in vigilance of teachers and Head Teacher in discharging their responsibilities due to monitoring by proactive MSGs
- ❖ Improvement in student punctuality due to active supervision by MSG
- ❖ Improvement in student hygiene, attitude and behavior due to MSG intervention and influence

## Conclusion

The creation of MSGs in the Karimabad Cluster has proved to be an effective social experiment, proving that interventions like the EDIP reforms stand a better chance of succeeding and becoming sustainable if they are supported by the active engagement of key stakeholders such as mothers. Because their children are enrolled in school, they have the greatest stake in the success of the school and attendant reforms. Additionally, they are in a better position to socialize the children at home and reinforce what they are learning in the schools, shaping their attitudes and behavior. On its own, the creation of the MSG is also laudable due to the inherent mobilization and empowerment of a segment of community often overlooked in patriarchal societies. The establishment of such a forum links directly to the EDIP goal of creating gender parity and whole community improvement, and it gives voice to those who are frequently consigned to the periphery and rendered voiceless. Indirectly, it also creates strong role models for young children and other community members who are accustomed to seeing mothers confined to the domestic domain alone, thereby aiding the development of a more progressive and gender-balanced community.

## Case Study 6





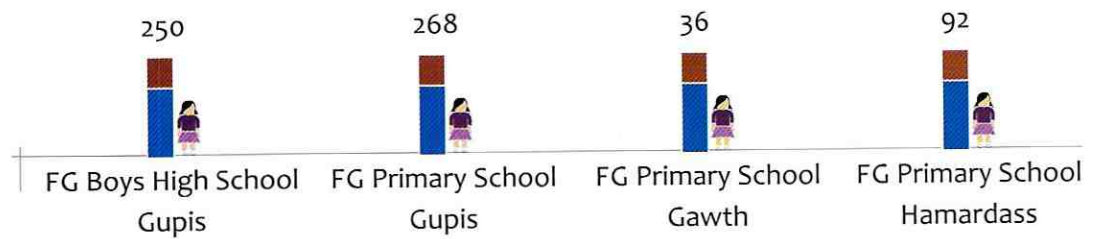
# ACTIVE SMCS AND SUCCESS OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT REFORMS: LESSONS FROM THE GUPIS CLUSTER

## IMPACT AT A GLANCE

### Project- EDIP

District-Ghizer

Student strength

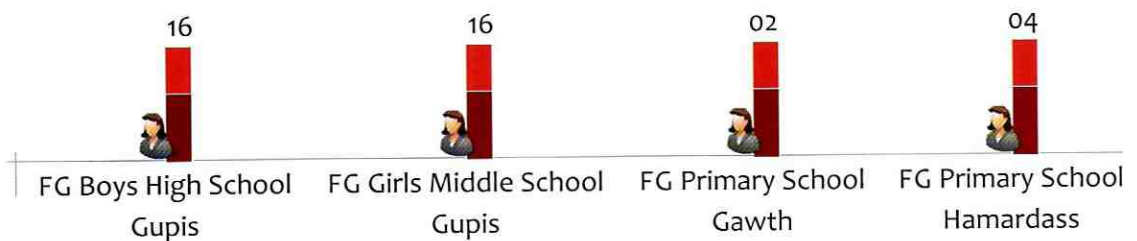


Schools in the Gupis Cluster:  
FG Boys High School Gupis (LRS)

Feeding Units (FU):

- FG Girls Middle School Gupis
- FG Primary School Gawth
- FG Primary School Hamardass

Teacher Strength



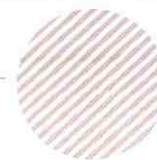
## BACKGROUND

The Gupis cluster is located in the Ghizer District of GB. This cluster consists of four government schools including F.G Boys High School Gupis, F.G Girls Middle School Gupis, F.G Primary School Gawth and F.G Primary School Hamardass.

## THE GUPIS CLUSTER

### F.G Boys High School Gupis (LRS)

Established in 1892 as a primary school, FG Boys High School Gupis evolved in stages, attaining a middle school status in 1955 and secondary school status in 1972 respectively. The school has a marvelous but partially maintained building surrounded by a large boundary wall. The building houses the head teacher's office, staff room, nine classrooms, a small examination hall and a computer laboratory flanked by the head teacher's residence and hostel facility for students from remote areas as well as out-of-town teachers.



At present, the school runs classes from 4th to 10th grade with both science and arts sections. Currently over 250 students are officially enrolled there. Majority of the students enrolled in the school belong to the lower socio-economic stratum. The school has 16 teachers including the head teacher. Among them 13 are regular teachers and three are community teachers who are hired and subsidized by the local community through the School Management Committee (SMC). There are also five supporting staff members in the school. Previously, the medium of instruction in the school was in Urdu. However, keeping in view the emerging need to learn English as well as the cooperation and contribution by the parents, the school has now opted for English as medium of instruction introduced on a step-by-step basis from Grade 4 and reaching up to Grade 7 this year.

## Girls Middle School Gupis (FU)

F.G Girls Middle School (GMS) Gupis was established in 1982 as Primary school and upgraded to a lower secondary in 2010. The number of students enrolled in the school is around 268 comprising 225 girls and 43 boys. The school has sixteen teachers including the Head Teacher and two supporting staff members. Among the senior are regular teachers, and the remaining six are community teachers who have been hired and subsidized by the local community through the School Management Committee (SMC). English has now become the medium of instruction, with adoption of the medium beginning in primary section and reaching up to Grade 3.



## Primary School Gawth (FU)

F.G Boys Primary School Gawth was established in 2007, and it is situated in the remote and underdeveloped village of Gupis valley. The school has 36 students, two teachers and a physical education teacher in the school. The school building comprises two classrooms and a toilet block. The school runs classes from ECED to Grade 5.

## Primary School Hamardass (A Feeding Unit of LRS Gupis)

F.G Primary School Hamardass Gupis was established in 2007. In terms of facilities, the school has three classrooms and a toilet block. At present the school runs classes from ECED to 5th. The strength of students enrolled in the school is around 92. The school has four teachers including the Head Teacher. Among these, two are regular teachers and the remaining two teachers are community teachers who have been hired by the local community through SMC on a voluntary basis. English has now been introduced as the medium of instruction.

## Pre-EDIP Intervention: A Snapshot

A PDT-led needs assessment suggested that amongst the many areas requiring improvement in the Gupis Cluster, it was the lack of coordination between school and parents, which was of significant concern. The sustainability of EDIP reforms depended on community involvement and participation. It was observed that if these factors were not addressed, then intervention

impact in terms of teacher development, infrastructural development and resource provision was likely to lose momentum and become diluted over time. The following factors characterized the gap between the schools and the parents:

- ❖ Parental involvement in their children's education began with and ended with getting them admitted to the schools. It was widely perceived that it was the school's job to take care of everything else. At home, children were engaged in domestic chores as well as in helping parents out by working in the fields, herding cattle and collecting firewood. There was negligible focus on academic activities at home.
- ❖ The School Management Committees (SMC), which were symbolically present in all the four EDIP schools, did not play the role their purpose and ambit suggested, leaving their potential to bring change and support change within schools largely unfulfilled.
- ❖ Thus, despite the considerable efforts of teachers and management in schools, the academic development of most of the students enrolled in the institutions was poor and lacklustre.
- ❖ The gap between school and community had also created a culture of responsibility shifting, with parents blaming the schools and the schools blaming the parents for the poor performance of the learners.

## The Intervention

### Mobilization of the Community: Home-school linkage

Based on the analysis of the data collected during Pre-EDIP phase and negotiation/consultation with PDT colleagues, Head teachers and like-minded teachers, it was decided across the Gupis Cluster schools that the home-school relationship would be developed on a priority basis.

### Negotiating with the SMC

After a series of discussions with the existing SMC, active members of the community and in collaboration with the Civil Society Resource Centre (CSRC) team, the School Management Committees were reorganized in the target schools. The new SMCs consisted of new members as well as members from the previous SMCs as a nod to maintaining group harmony.

### Conducting Workshops for SMC development

Soon after the formation of the SMCs in collaboration with CSRC team, awareness-raising workshops on SMC roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis school improvement were held. The workshops highlighted the many areas in which SMCs could play a pivotal role such as identifying school age children still not enrolled, tackling absenteeism, and providing the school with extra human resources where needed. At the end of the orientation session, the SMC members agreed to cooperate fully with their respective schools for overall school improvement.

Observing Yasmin, it is easy to see why the Gupis SMC is such an active and engaged one. Like fellow members, she exudes confidence, and during the discussion, terms like 'community mobilization', 'record keeping' and 'rights and responsibilities' trip off her tongue with ease, a testament to the effectiveness of the training and knowledge she has gained from the CSRC sessions. She recalls how, 'before EDIP, we as a community were completely unaware of how to interact with the teachers with reference to our children and their studies. Now we have regular meetings at the schools, and we keep an eye on teacher attendance as well as student enrolment. We encourage parents to get their children enrolled in school. During exams, we go door-to-door to motivate parents to ensure that the children are studying and not watching too much television'. Another SMC member, Qasim adds, 'The CSRC training has been fantastic, and it has encouraged female members of our community to participate in the SMC too. Female participation in SMC activities has risen from 20% to 50%. Together, we monitor everything at school, from the allocation of new furniture in the classroom and construction of the exam hall to the stocking of the library'. Yasmin chips in, 'it matters a lot that we are all playing a role in the future of our children, and we are very grateful to EDIP reforms and AKDN support that have made the transformation of our community possible'.

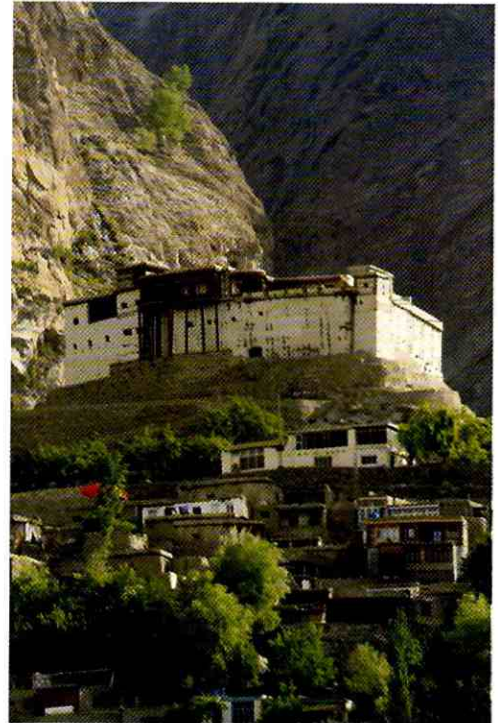


## PDCN sessions for SMC development

Additionally, some of the SMC members were also sent to attend the orientation sessions arranged by AKUIED-PDCN Gilgit for SMCs. The Chairpersons and selected SMC members who attended these sessions shared their learning with their respective SMCs later on.

## Regular Meetings of SMCs

Mandatory SMC monthly meetings were scheduled in all schools. This created opportunities for close interaction amongst SMC members and parents as well as school management. Issues such as provision of teaching staff, student attendance, completion of home assignments, provision of uniform and books to underprivileged students were also discussed during the meetings. The meetings also allowed for the discussion of EDIP goals and progress in implementation.



## Holding of Celebrations/ Community Events

In order to bring parents and other community members together on a common platform, different events were celebrated at the target schools to create a sense of community and sense of shared concerns. These included:

### Celebration of Independence Day:

The students from all cluster schools participated in the event and presented different items (speeches, national songs, drama, dance, debates). A large number of people including parents, local officials and services veterans also attended the event. Chairperson SMC used the event as a platform to share the background, progress and overall goals of EDIP in detail.

### Teacher Saalam Day:

Teacher Day was celebrated to recognize the important role played by the teachers in the educational and social development of the students. The occasion was celebrated with speeches and poems presented in honour of their teachers by the students.

### Celebration of Mother's Day:

The number of participants in the event was around 35 comprising 25 mothers and 8 SMC members. The DDO and Head teacher also attended the celebrations, sharing insights into the importance of the role of mothers in the moral, social and academic development of their children. The event enabled the developing of linkages with parents.

### Annual Parents' Day:

A large number of parents, community members and position-holder students from LRS Gupis attended the Annual Parents' Day Two hundred participants attended the event. Addressing the gathering, AKU-IED-PDCN reiterated the nature and purpose of EDIP and explained the role of each partner organization of EDIP in detail, motivating parents and community stakeholders in playing an active role in the education of their children.

## The Impact of the Intervention:

### The Tangible Results of Community Participation

Discussions with SMC and the celebration of different events across the target schools helped to create a shared interest in school improvement and to reduce the gap between home and school. As a result, the SMCs of the LRS and its feeding units unanimously decided to address pressing concerns of their respective schools.

### Provision of teachers by SMC

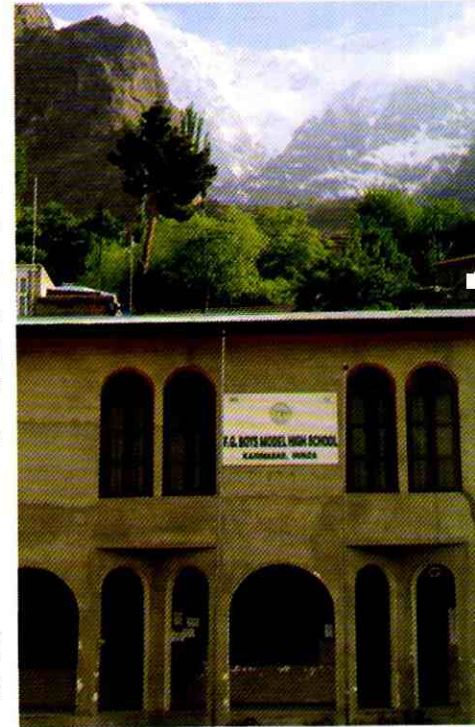
After discussion, provision of teaching staff in LRS, GMS and PS Hamardass became a priority. The SMCs of the respective schools decided to send a delegation to the higher authorities to ask for the fulfillment the sanctioned strength of their respective schools. They also decided to provide community teachers on a needs- basis to fulfill the staffing requirement of the schools. The SMCs of LRS and GMS hired three community teachers respectively by charging a reasonable fee from the students enrolled, whereas SMC PS Hamardass identified and took onboard two volunteer teachers. The induction of community and volunteer teachers contributed significantly to the school improvement process in the Gupis Cluster.

### Identification of schooling needs in the Gupis Cluster area

To achieve the goals of EDIP, a survey with the purpose of identifying non-enrolled school-age children in the locality of the EDIP target schools was carried out with the help of the SMCs. The survey revealed that most of the children who were still at home were at the ECED level. This was another challenge for the SMC because ECED facilities did not exist in the EDIP target schools. To meet the challenge in collaboration with the community, the SMCs of Girls Middle School Gupis and PS Hamardass decided to initiate ECED classes in their respective schools on a community-led basis by hiring additional community teachers for the purpose. The enrollment in the ECED classes in GMS and PS Hamardass rose to 32 and 29 learners respectively.

### Ensuring the provision of textbooks, uniforms and school supplies by parents

The initial data collected soon after the commencement of the intervention revealed that in PS Gawth and Hamardass most of the students attended school without textbooks, uniform and other basic necessary materials for learning. In collaboration of SMC members, parents were persuaded to arrange these items so that the learners could learn more effectively. Under the direction of the SMCs, summer and winter camps led by senior students of the locality were also arranged for students during vacations.



## Construction of Classroom on Self-help basis by the SMC

Needs assessment also showed that there was a need for a girls' school at secondary level in the locality. Two classrooms were needed in the existing facility to enable the holding of senior classes for girls after they had completed Grade 8. To address this issue, the SMC worked hard to construct a classroom on the school campus on a self-help basis. In view of their efforts, EDIP resource provision was extended to provide for the construction of the second classroom that was needed for the further schooling of the girls.

## Conclusion

As a result of the coordination, collaboration and community mobilization, core issues of the schools in the Gupis Cluster were addressed. It was the dedication, motivation and determination of parents, community and predominantly the SMCs, which not only led to the enhancement of the school infrastructure but also to the academic development of the students enrolled. The improved home-school linkage helped to keep the parents informed about the performance of their children and school, which led to overall school improvement. This case provides support for the idea that home-school linkages are pivotal to school improvement.

## Case Study 7



## AN INTERVIEW WITH HEAD PDCN:

### Infrastructural Development and Retro-fitting under the EDIP reforms A Legacy Of Change in Kashrote

An interview with DrMola Dad, Head PDCN

#### Could you give an overview of the need for retrofitting and making the infrastructure at LRS Kashrote safer against future disasters?

EDIP reforms were aimed at bringing about whole school improvement in 59 schools across the seven districts of Gilgit-Baltistan. There were two main reasons for paying special attention to retrofitting and infrastructural strengthening in LRS Kashrote. The first was that the area had been inundated badly during the floods of 2010, leaving the school buildings damaged. Cracked floors and walls had left the building posing a potential hazard to the students who continued to study there after the floods. It did not make for a very conducive study environment either. The second reason that we chose to focus particularly on retrofitting and improving the infrastructure at this site was due to the results of the FOCUS (AKF's disaster-management arm) hazard assessment carried out at the commencement of the reforms across the sites. The assessment used a system of color-based grouping to indicate the extent of damage to the buildings and potential to withstand natural disasters. While a number of sites falling within the green and yellow groups were deemed to require no work in the foreseeable future, LRS Kashrote was another story. The FOCUS team and AK Planning and Development engineers deemed it to fall within the red-coded disaster zone, requiring immediate repair, improvement and strengthening. The school itself was located in the heart of Gilgit in a densely populated area, thereby raising more concerns for the safety of the building.



#### What were some of the major initiatives undertaken to improve the infrastructure and to train the stakeholders?

With retrofitting measures, we increased the earthquake-resistance capacity of the LRS buildings. We overhauled the buildings, reinforcing the walls with iron rods and treating the roofs with cement and local materials. All measures were carried out while preserving the original character of the buildings. We made sure that, post-improvement, the buildings did not look out of place in the local setting.

FOCUS and AKF Planning and Building Services, Pakistan (AKPBS, P) engineers also held awareness-raising sessions with the community members. Selected teachers were trained as Master Trainers and risk management specialists. These Master Trainers then provided training to students, teachers and the SMC to create awareness of what to do in case of disasters. Additionally, the trainers were provided with special tools to assist in excavation incase of earthquake and the accumulation of debris.



## Could you talk about the impact of these future initiatives in view of stakeholder lives?

Because the retrofitting was also carried out at other schools in addition to Kashrote, we must look at the impact in terms of the broader context. The retrofitting processes themselves drew much attention from the locals, and at many sites such as Kashrote or Gupis, we found the locals to be fascinated by the construction. They would frequently visit the site just to see what materials were being used as well as the construction techniques. Their curiosity was not aimless. As an SMC member at Gupis pointed out, the visitors were waiting to gather enough funds before disaster-proofing their own dwellings. So one aspect of the impact was creating awareness and will amongst the community members to adopt such construction approaches and retrofitting over time. Another aspect was the impact of the measures in enabling other WSIP foci to be more effective. Inclusive education was one. At one site, a toilet block was constructed with disabled access, special pathways and ramps. This encouraged the parents to send less able-bodied children to the school, thus enabling them to gain an education whereas earlier they would have been just kept back at home. This initiative in particular got a lot of positive feedback from the community.

The EDIP reforms in this particular area also motivated the Government Department of Education to take an interest in retrofitting and disaster-proofing. In this context, AKU played a pivotal role by facilitating AKPBS, P engineers to train the Government Department engineers vis-à-vis the structural components of the school and retrofitting processes. The training was carried out on PDCN premises by AKPBS, P trainers. In this way, we were able to see that reforms were having a trickle down effect, thereby making the impact of EDIP reforms a more permanent one.



# Case Study 8

## AKES, P



## PROFILE OF A SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL LEADER:

### The case of an EDIP-intervention led Girls' Primary School, Hunza, Gilgit-Baltistan

Fehmida Riaz\*, Principal of the Government Primary school located in the suburbs of Hunza, set herself a difficult task when she set out to transform the teaching and learning environment of her school. The first question confronting her was 'what changes do I need to make as a Principal in order to be a successful school leader?' This was an intriguing question, especially when one considered the challenge-fraught teaching context of this school. The Government Primary School, which Fehmida had joined almost two years ago, educated 80 female students from socially and economically



constrained backgrounds. Along with her dedicated team of four teachers, Fehmida faced many challenges in educating her young charges including a lack of parental interest in the education of their children, the poverty of the families and lack of supervision from the department of education. However, she felt that her school was fortunate in being selected to be part of the cluster for implementation of the EDIP project. The support and mentoring as well as resource enhancement that the EDIP project had provided to Fehmida and her team had given them the direction and tools to articulate their long-held passion for quality teaching and learning in their respective practices. The school had gained a reputation for achieving record enrolment, producing sound academic results as well as for maintaining a conducive learning environment.

Fehmida saw her work more as a vocation than a simple job, and she set an example for her teachers by arranging extra coaching and classes for struggling learners after school hours. Seeing the Principal volunteer her free time to do this, rather than resort to delegating the work, the teachers were more than happy to join in. Fehmida also involved the Mother's Support Group (MSG) and School Management Committee (SMC) in making regular visits to the homes of these learners' parents as a way to monitor the home situation and to motivate the parents. She understood that parents were also likely to perceive visits from the SMC or MSG members as less threatening than if Fehmida or one of her teachers were to carry out the checks.

Fehmida was also a firm believer in shared decisionmaking and saw it as key to grooming future school leaders. Indeed, her teachers revelled in the fiat to share their ideas and suggestions with Fehmida, sometimes even persuading her address issues that required immediate action. As one of her teachers Gul Zahra confided, Fehmida had created an environment where 'nobody considered her as the boss rather see[ing] her as a friend/colleague and shar[ing] ideas and problems without hesitation'.

One of the most popular steps Fehmida undertook to increase interaction amongst herself and the teachers was setting aside time for daily debriefings. She saw it as vital to 'reflect on the day's work and experiences at school'. The staff members usually had meetings and informal discussions before going to the classes and during break time. During these sessions, they informally reviewed students' performance, which not only gave them the road map for improvement but also provided them with the opportunity to reflect on their teaching techniques and future planning. Thus, collegial dialogue and sharing of expertise, experience and ideas promoted reflective dialogues about school improvement. As another teacher, Aasia added, 'we always reflect on our weaknesses and successes and think of ways to improve in certain areas. In this way, we get more ideas to improve our practice in the school.'

Fehmida was also keen to maintain contact with the community through the SMC and the MSG, who made frequent visits to the school to discuss learner issues and plan possible interventions for student benefits. Understanding the value of innovation, Fehmida keenly participated in professional development activities and encouraged her teachers to do the same, so that they could grow professionally and infuse their practice with new ideas that could stimulate effective learning. She was keenly aware of the value of a programme like EDIP and hoped that the reforms would remain sustainable once the project had ended.

The success of Fehmida's leadership of her school, teachers and learners can be traced back to her firm belief in self-accountability of a teaching professional. Once enabled to do so through trainings, school leaders develop a better understanding of the needs of their school. These bold and confident school leaders see student performance as linked to their own performance. Today, Fehmida asserts that 'it is my responsibility to create a culture of sharing ideas frankly and to reflect on our own performance first and then discuss students' performance. I believe that as teachers, without judging our performance, we cannot bring changes in student performance'.

It is a testament to the success of the EDIP intervention and Fehmida's progressive leadership that her teachers think of themselves as change agents rather than as mere employees. As one of the teachers, Diba, avers, 'I want to serve the community so I work hard in planning and teaching. I spare time and prepare students for other co-curricular activities as I want them to be successful'. The teacher's statement here shows a sense of community as well as commitment. In observing Fehmida, who has abandoned her office to comfortably huddle around a table in the staffroom and listen to her teachers and staff members plan the next day's activities, one is reminded of the words of leadership expert, Walter Bennis, who defined leadership as consisting of the ability to 'speak up, be a leader, set the direction – but [also to] be participative, listen well cooperate'. If more schools had leaders like Fehmida, education in Pakistan, especially in underdeveloped regions, would improve beyond what is presently conceivable.



## Case Study 9

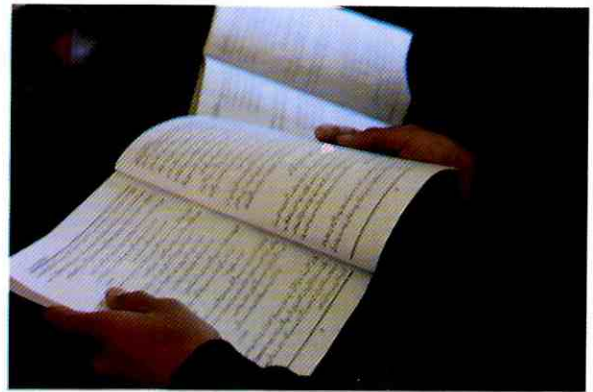


## EVOLVING PRACTICE: Lessons from the field

In a little rural hamlet in Gilgit-Baltistan, the children pour excitedly into Shaista Batool's mathematics class, quickly settling down as Shaista briefly reprises the previous day's topic and puts down a word-based problem on the board for the learners to solve. This is a treat for the students who vie with one another to solve the problem first. The camaraderie is evident, as is Shaista's enthusiasm for helping her students learn. This is a class of learners and teacher at ease with the subject. It is hard to believe that earlier in the year, this was not the case. Word-based problems had become a particular bugbear for Shaista and her nonplussed students alike, who could understand numbers on their own but not numbers lurking stealthily amongst English words.

When Shaista, a mid-career, experienced mathematics teacher working within a Middle School run under the aegis of the Aga Khan Education Service found herself struggling to teach her grade 5 students word-based math problems, she felt at a loss. She noted that in her eight years of service she had received many mathematics trainings 'but [she had] not gained any support for teaching word problems!' With years of training and experience behind her, she believed herself to be a competent teacher and fairly well-versed in applying tried and tested strategies to teach difficult concepts with ease. However, this situation had begun to challenge her self-belief.

She recalls that she knew 'it was time to act and to get help, because my learners counted for more than any ego I may have had'.



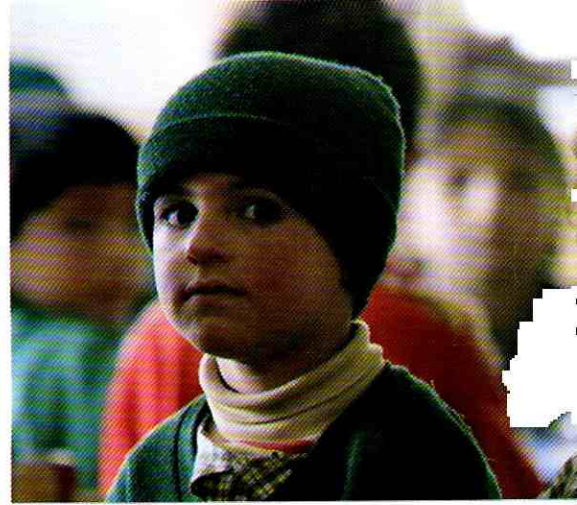
The collaborative and collegial atmosphere that had evolved over the years at her school gave her the confidence to approach Mumtaz Ali, the resident professional development teacher, and seek help. Mumtaz had been appointed to this EDIP-governed LRS specifically for providing professional support and developmental mentoring to teachers at the LRS and the other schools in the cluster. Mumtaz suggested that they conduct action research to investigate the problem and to address the challenge of improving her practice in this area.

Together, they agreed upon a two-week intervention during which Mumtaz would observe her lessons and provide support, first producing a detailed analysis of how she taught word-based problems, learner responses and areas of difficulty. The analysis suggested that the problem was to do with Shaista's use of less effective teaching strategies and the unfamiliar language in the text of word problems. The situation was compounded by the fact that Shaista's learners were ESL learners in a context where the first language is usually not the national language (Urdu) but rather the regional tongue spoken at home. Thus, they had to negotiate not one but three languages in their mind while forming an understanding of the word problems in class.

Mumtaz then helped Shaista use literature-supported strategies such as rewording, circling the numbers, and assigning work in mixed ability groups to ensure peer scaffolding. Next, Mumtaz supported Shaista's development in this area by co-planning and co-teaching classes, as well as giving demo lessons so that Shaista could observe him modelling the strategies with the learners. Between these sessions, Shaista reflected on what she was doing in class as well as

what was working and what was not. This consolidated her growing pedagogical knowledge. These efforts proved transformational. She grew more confident in her use of the strategies, and the use of peer tutoring enabled Shaista to ensure that learners scaffolded less confident learners, thereby consolidating class learning and understanding more holistically.

Today, Shaista has gained enough expertise in teaching word-based problems to volunteer for mentoring fellow teachers whenever they experience similar challenges. She remains appreciative of the help extended by Mumtaz Ali, who collaborated with her so that she could develop a research-based, reflective understanding of her problem as well as of the strategies taught. This case serves as another example of the far-reaching impact of EDIP reforms and support provided therein.



# Case Study 10

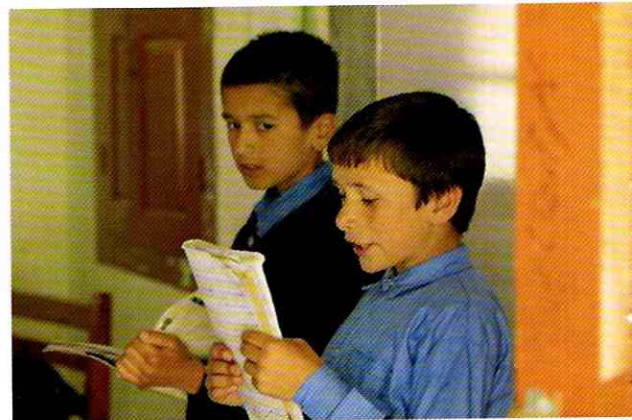




## Project-work as a Developmental Strategy to Strengthen Student Communication Skills:

### EDIP-Led Instructional Innovation in Gilgit-Baltistan

If there is one thing that really inspires Sherdil and SajidGhouri, teacher educators working on the EDIP program, it is the potential to influence the minds and futures of young learners through introducing innovations in teacher practices. During regular classroom observations at seven of the EDIP-led schools under their purview, they noted that learners were generally shy and unable even to respond to simple questions posed by the teachers. Morning assemblies too were a big hurdle for the reticent students, as they stood tongue-tied when called upon to introduce themselves to their peers or give impromptu speeches.



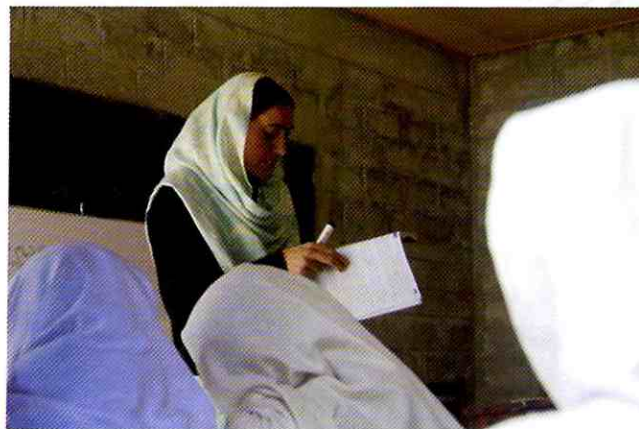
Sherdil recalls, 'We were concerned at the poor communication skills of the learners. Most of the learners were quite intelligent and capable, yet they found it difficult to articulate their ideas or present their work!' The EDIP-led improvements on the WSIP model seemed to have hit a stumbling block when it came to student communication. Together, Sherdil and SajidGhouri looked at ways to improve the situation. When they read up on this particular challenge in student learning, they found that literature supported the idea of project-based work as a stimulus to interact and communicate. This struck a chord, for the teacher educators realized that most of the assignments given to the learners were conventional in nature rather than project-based.

'We hit upon the idea of designing a project-based learning exercise that would encourage learners to collaborate and interact, exchange opinions and views as well as learn to evaluate and build consensus as the project evolved. We foresaw the nature of the task as helping the learners' communicative abilities to develop and unfold,' SajidGhouri explains.

It was an idea that was received with enthusiasm by the Heads of the seven EDIP schools. Essentially a research project, the assignment would require learners to choose a theme from one of their key subject areas and develop a project around that. They would be expected to design a questionnaire, survey a sample of people, gather the data and analyse it with the help of their teachers. The final step would be presenting the data before an authentic audience. With the Diamond Jubilee of the LRS in Ghizer coming up, the Heads and the teacher educators agreed that the students could showcase their final projects before the 1000 people expected to attend the event. This would ensure exposure and the opportunity to respond to the questions of the project stall visitors.



Prior to the setting of the assignment, the teachers were given awareness-raising sessions on project-based learning and the nature of the project envisioned. The next step was sharing this with the target learners of Grade 8. Sessions were held with students to allay their apprehensions and answer their queries about the project. During ensuing sessions, the students selected Social Studies, English, Chemistry, Home Economics and Science as areas in which to carry out the projects and rationalized the themes selected for their project work. The themes chosen included population growth rate, local cuisine and indigenous machines, which were all linked to topics relevant to examinations as well as practical life.



SajidGhouri enthuses, 'Project-based work turned out to be a transformative experience for our learners. With completion of each stage of the project spanning topic selection, questionnaire design, data gathering, analysis and finalization of the project, the learners grew more confident and articulate. They consulted teachers, reflected on what they were doing and why, and they built group consensus on what had to be done.' Sherdil adds, 'the outcome was excellent. Our learners gathered plaudits for their poise, subject knowledge and confident response. The experience has set the precedent for more project-based work in EDIP-focused schools, boding well for future sustainability of EDIP learning reforms'.

This experience suggests that research-based innovations are key to the ongoing rejuvenation of instructional practices and building up of student creativity and knowledge. Without the support of EDIP teacher educators, such an effort would not have survived germination, let alone extended realization. EDIP resources are truly making a difference to the lives of the future generations.



## Case Study 11





## A 'trial-by-fire' no more:

### The journey of Entry-level teachers and their Mentor at Ghizer LRS

Mustafa, the resident Professional Development Teacher (PDT) assigned to the Ghizer Cluster LRS was proud of the journey the school and its stakeholders had made since EDIP- began at the cluster schools. The EDIP intervention begun in 2011 had helped to set the school onto a progressive trajectory. Teachers were being upskilled through onsite trainings with the PDT as well as at the PDCN. Enrolment was strong with 400 female and male students taught across the grade levels by a robust staff of 18 teachers. A Learning Resource Centre (LRC) had been equipped with 20 computers and provided with holdings of more than two thousand five hundred books. A proactive Village Education Committee (VEC), which dealt with administrative issues related to the school, made the implementation of school reforms effective.

Yet, there was one weak link that Mustafa worried about deeply. Regular reflective briefing sessions with the schoolteachers had revealed that the novice teachers were floundering. Observation showed that their pedagogical awareness and expertise were weak. As a result, learner comprehension in their classes was seriously affected. A lack of lesson planning knowledge, weak understanding of learner needs as well as a poor repertoire of pedagogical skills and strategies characterized the instructional practices of most of the novices.



Observation, experience and study had taught Mustafa that reform sustainability was linked to sustained support. 'The time,' he recalls 'was ripe for testing these theories within the Ghizer Context'. Mustafa felt that a research-based approach to tackling this issue was needed. In his words, "what had been broken so badly could not be fixed in a day. This had to be a journey of self-exploration and self-development. The novices had to understand their practices under the guidance of a mentor."

The novice teachers were excited. One of them, Shahnaz, recalls how 'we all felt a huge sense of relief that someone understood our situation. We had been reluctant to approach senior colleagues for help, and because we had not complained, everyone assumed we were doing okay, when we weren't'. Farah, another novice teacher, chimes in, 'when the PDT suggested investigating our practice under his guidance as a mentor, we finally had hope of surviving the profession with the right help'.

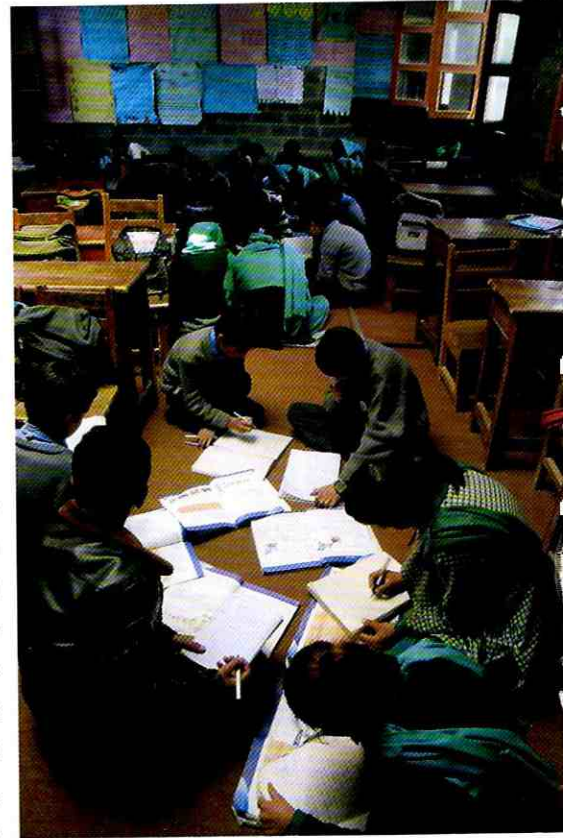
Classroom observations helped to identify the main problems. Mustafa began to work with the novice teachers on the first phase of the action research cycle by creating a meta awareness of lesson planning and learning theories. The reflections of the novices show that by the end of this phase, they were more aware of the features of guided practice and interactive teaching. The next step was co-planning, which consisted of learning to design warm up activities for an effective lesson. Alive to the importance of reflection, Mustafa made extensive use of thought-provoking questions regarding the best way to make lessons more activity based. Rather than

lecturing, Mustafa used clues and hints to help the novice teachers incorporate activities for guided practice and application in line with the set objectives. warm up activities, guided practice tasks and application task. Once the novices had begun to be confident of the pedagogical knowledge they were acquiring, Mustafa moved to the co-teaching stage where he scaffolded the teachers by co-teaching lessons developed by them. Mustafa says, 'Metaphorically, this was rather like hand-holding, but it had to be done so that the teachers could become confident enough to apply what they were learning'.

The strategy seemed to work, and soon the teachers were ready to plan their lessons individually as well as to teach in view of their newly-gained knowledge. Mustafa observed their teaching using a classroom observation tool and conducted pre and post observation conferences to support the novices in their teaching. Hina, one of the participating teachers, recalls how 'the action research project, with its cycles of investigation, observation, reflection, collaboration and application helped all of us to evolve as teachers within a short span of time. From floundering in our classes, we were learning to punch above our weight. Indeed, we were learning to hold our own in our classes'.

Post-intervention classroom observations showed that the learners were responsive to the changes in the instructional practices of their teachers and enjoyed the variety of activities built into their daily lessons, as well as the interactive nature of the class. Extended wait time and insightful questioning enabled the learners to contribute to class discussions, and the opportunities to showcase their knowledge helped them to grow as learners. The EDIP project made it possible for the PDT to implement this intensive mentoring model, and the consequent improvement in the practice of the teachers was matched by Mustafa's own development as a mentor.

It is a model of professional development that he is passionate about. He enthuses, 'my dream is to see such a model used by mentors and novices in all schools within the region. While workshops and trainings are key to upskilling, a support model such as this, which incorporates collaboration and reflection, is the way forward to ensuring that the impact of the EDIP project vis-à-vis teacher development remains sustainable'.



## Conclusion

The cases discussed in the compendium have provided many interesting insights vis-à-vis EDIP reform implementation in the GB region. The EDIP project showed that the educational managers, teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders could be mobilized effectively through WSIP-based reforms, which were led not just by funding or resource provision but also by capacity-building of the stakeholders. As key tenets of the project, capacity-building and stakeholder involvement proved to be pivotal to ensuring the sustainability of the reforms in the post-project period.

Some of the major challenges identified by EDIP implementers included the following:

- ❖ Frequent transfers of trained teachers
- ❖ Lack of meaningful buy-in on the part of some community-based teachers in the Learning Resource Schools
- ❖ Professional Development Teachers were spread too thinly over their respective areas
- ❖ Attrition of trained teachers thereby endangering reform sustainability
- ❖ Unrealistic stakeholder expectations vis-à-vis EDIP-led resource provision
- ❖ In some instances, communication challenges between strategic partners in government departments

The implementers also provided a number of important recommendations based on their experiences in implementing EDIP across the WSIP spectrum.

- ❖ Creating better correspondence between training content and classroom challenges through the incorporation of PDT observation-based findings and experience of on-ground realities faced by trainee teachers in schools
- ❖ Deputing more than one PDT in each Cluster for more effective reform implementation
- ❖ Holding quarterly rather than annual meetings of PDTs at PDCN for the sharing of experiences on projects and better professional learning
- ❖ Planning better coordination amongst the seven partner organizations in the EDIP projects through timely sharing of respective plans as to the project
- ❖ Ensuring ongoing follow-up of Centre-based sessions to ensure the sustainability of professional development trainings
- ❖ Tailoring of the somewhat broad and encompassing Whole School Improvement Project (WSIP) model to make targets achievable within the set period.
- ❖ Collaborating with existing NGOs for better reform implementation
- ❖ Forging more active linkages between school staff and community members
- ❖ Clearly establishing the roles and responsibilities of respective partners and regular follow up through MoUs signed with government agencies
- ❖ Providing computing technology, web cam and Internet access for PDTs to enable collegial collaboration, consultation and learning
- ❖ Instituting a teacher career ladder to encourage professional development and self-led improvement in teacher practice

The selected cases showcase exemplary transformation of professional development, teaching practices, school leadership as well as curriculum enrichment. Teacher development translated into pedagogical expertise and learner-centred teaching, effective use of available resources as well as transformation in teacher thinking and teaching philosophy. Through PDCN trainings, school leadership too evolved, thereby enabling the school community to experience the

benefits of enlightened, engaged and empowering school leaders. With the encouragement of stakeholder reflectivity, stakeholders learnt how to reflect on their work, thus creating space for personal and professional development.

With regard to community participation, mobilization of the SMCs and MSGs ensured that the WSIP reforms would not lose momentum once the project had concluded. With greater understanding of their roles, rights and obligations, these community groups were in a unique position to foster a culture of accountability amongst school leadership, teachers, learners and fellow parents alike. Additionally, they developed the ability to engage in constructive dialogue with government departments with respect to getting support for school improvement and resource provision. A parallel development was that of greater gender parity with increased representation of women within community groups, fostering female empowerment through engagement in goal-driven community efforts.

Environmental education and initiatives such as clean-up campaigns and recycling efforts also created impetus amongst stakeholders to take care of their surroundings and to understand the impact of their actions on the environment. This was an important step in the direction of the social development of the community. Emphasis on health and hygiene practices at school as well as within sessions held for community members highlighted the importance of awareness-raising for the prevention of easily avoidable ailments. Such sessions also proved useful in contributing to the holistic development of the community members, who learnt not only about diseases and hygiene but also about taking care of disabled children and ensuring their access to education and opportunities available to able-bodied peers.

The fact that the reforms were being led in an area geologically vulnerable to landslides, flooding and earthquakes meant that creating a safe school environment was of paramount importance. In this regard, retrofitting of physical infrastructure and conducting of awareness-raising sessions on staying safe during floods and earthquakes were some important measures undertaken to creating a more secure physical environment. In view of intersecting community interests and efforts, the transformations cannot be viewed in isolation. Rather, it has been the case of each improvement having a ripple effect in other areas. For instance, improved learner outcomes garnered greater parental and community engagement in the reforms, and this in turn had an impact on better resource provision in schools via community group involvement. In parallel, more active SMCs also created a sense of accountability amongst school stakeholders and so on.

Without EDIP provisions and AKDN efforts, such transformations of the school clusters and local communities would not have been possible. The reforms were designed and implemented to effect community mobilization on a broad scale, with the ultimate aim being to sustain reforms in the post-project period through the efforts of the mobilized and empowered community stakeholders themselves. Five years into the EDIP reforms, the communities in the EDIP clusters have changed substantively in terms of thought, action, reflection, collaboration and sense of direction. Whereas, they were inclined to rely on the government to effect change, today, they are more inclined to lead change themselves. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to attribute a large part of this transformation to the EDIP intervention and AKDN efforts. Alongside the impact of the intervention, a greater understanding of the challenges confronted during implementation has also developed. Insights into these as well as recommendations from stakeholders can prove useful for future projects and reforms.







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