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August 2003

Health action schools Pakistan: Towards school improvement

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Recommended Citation

Pirzado, P., Team, H. E. (2003). Health action schools Pakistan: Towards school improvement. *Impact: Making a difference*, 398-398.

Available at: http://ecommons.aku.edu/book_chapters/31

HEALTH ACTION SCHOOLS PAKISTAN: TOWARDS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

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Abstract

Health education and promotion is a key determinant of quality education particularly in primary schools in Pakistan. This has been affirmed by an action research project entitled Health Action Schools (HAS) headed by Dr. Tashmin Khamis, based at Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED). The HAS project began initially as a three-year (1998-2001) action research project using the Child-to-Child approach in partnership with Save the Children, UK. The objective of the project was to develop prototypes of health-promoting schools in different social and educational contexts in Pakistan.

Initially the HAS project was launched in five pilot schools from various social and educational backgrounds in Karachi. The primary focus of the project was upgrading teachers' skills through continuous training and classroom support, which would contribute to improving children's health knowledge and self-esteem. Results of the pilot project show that the HAS project met success in the area of teacher development, and has contributed towards improving children's health knowledge and skills. Following the successful pilot, the HAS project expanded nationally and regionally through outreach and expansion activities.

Lessons learned from the HAS project have influenced policy and practice and led to the development of health education curriculum and materials and the establishment of a Child-to-Child resource centre at AKU-IED, which aims to support teachers in providing health education.

This poster presentation aims to present the processes and outcomes of the HAS project. The HAS project has contributed remarkably towards schools improvement, and major achievements and challenges of the project will be presented through the findings of the HAS Final Evaluation supported by pictures from schools and training sessions.