



CREATING ALTERNATIVES
SAHE Community Based Schools for Girls

A Case Study from Pakistan

Dr. Fareeha Zafar
Society for the Advancement of Education (SAHE), Lahore – Pakistan
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1. Introduction

More than 120 million school-aged children are denied their right to go to school the majority of these are girls. The gender gap is greatest in South Asia, thus girls from South Asia comprise the majority of children with no access to basic education. Pakistan is a country with the widest gender gap in education. The UNDP report for 2003 put Pakistan at 120th place, out of 146 countries, in terms of the Gender Development Index, with literacy and enrolment in education among the factors used as a basis for this ranking.



Of the other South Asian countries, India was placed at 105th place, Bangladesh at the 121st place, Sri Lanka at 70th place, the Maldives at the 68th place and Nepal at the 199th place. Most Muslim majority countries in the world, including Malaysia, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Iran, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco finished well ahead of Pakistan in terms of the advancement of women in the health, education and economic spheres.

Table 1 : Gender Disparities Profile

Indicators	India	Pakistan	Bangladesh
Female population (millions)	436	64	55
Adult female literacy (as % of male)	56	47	52
Female primary enrolment (as % of male)	81	61	82
Mean years of schooling (female as % of male)	34	23	29
GDI (2001)	0.574	0.469	0.495
Gender Gap in GPER, 1998-2001 (UNESCO 2003)	19	22	Zero

Source: *Human Development in South Asia 2000 and Human Development in South Asia 2003*, Mahboob ul Haq Human Development Centre, Islamabad.

Educational attainment is one of the three components¹ of the Human Development and Gender Development indices. A comparison of the two for Pakistan shows that the HDI is 0.590 while the GDI is 0.574 indicating large gender disparities. The gender gap in gross primary enrolment ratio (22) is also the highest in Pakistan.

Pakistan presents a shocking profile of educational deprivation of women and girls. More than 50 percent girls enrolled in primary schools dropout before grade 3. The differentials between primary school enrolments of boys and girls in South Asia range from two percent in Maldives to 31 percent in Nepal, within Pakistan alone this difference varies from 11 percent in Punjab to 21 percent in Balochistan. Despite the improvement in Pakistan's literacy rate since its independence (1947), its overall literacy rate of 51.6 percent (59% for males and 35% for females) is still far behind that of most of the countries in the region.

¹ The other two are life expectancy and income

The literacy rate may have risen generally, however, with the increase in population the number of illiterate Pakistanis has more than doubled since 1972, while the number of illiterate women has tripled.

Table 2 : Increase in Literacy

	1972	1981	1998	2003 (estimated)
Overall Literacy	22 %	26 %	44 %	51.13 %
Male Literacy	30 %	35 %	55 %	62.49 %
Female Literacy	12 %	16 %	32 %	39.27 %

Overall female literacy rates have more than tripled despite a rapidly growing population. However, despite these gains:

- 40-50% rural girls are out of school
- Only 37% of all teachers are female teachers
- About 64% or 27 million women are illiterate

Approximately 60 percent of the total population is illiterate and women form sixty percent of the illiterate population. Gender disparities in educational attainment are even greater in the rural areas. Only three per cent of rural 12 year old girls continue in school, compared with 17 per cent of boys. Less than one per cent of girls remain in school in the 14 year old age group compared with seven per cent of boys.² While men complete an average of five years at school, women receive on average only two and a half years of education. Recent reports (2002) give the overall participation as 62 per cent (boys 92 per cent) at the primary, 37 per cent (boys 64%) at the middle and 37 per cent (boys 45%) at the high school level.

Commitments to Dakar and Millennium Development Goals include the attainment of gender parity in primary and secondary education by 2005, gender equality by 2015 and free UPE of good quality by 2015. The UN Literacy Decade 2003-2012 is focusing attention on policy change, flexible programmes, capacity building, research, community participation, monitoring and evaluation.

Government's response to international goals includes the National Plan of Action for EFA (2001-2015) with UPE targets of 100 percent enrolment of boys by 2010 and girls by 2015. The critical year for Pakistan is 2005 when it hopes to achieve a participation rate of 90 percent for boys and 68 percent for girls in primary education. It is already evident that these targets are not going to be met.

A similar situation exists with regard to Goal 4 of the Dakar Framework of Action which requires a fifty percent improvement in adult literacy levels by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults. Current trends show immense shortfalls in the government program of opening NFBE schools and vocational/trade centres to achieve its target of 86 percent in adult literacy.

This paper examines concepts of access and quality in the context of gender, efforts to promote girls schooling by government, and the situation regarding girls' education in the Punjab as

² The Female Front (Daily Dawn, January 31, 2002)

background for the case study of the SAHE community based school initiative in the province.³ The approach, design and structure of the intervention, its scale and costs, assumptions, risks and factors enabling the success of the programme are examined. The immediate and wider impact of the practice, the process adopted, issues of scaling up, and lessons learnt are presented as the positive outcomes of the innovation.

2. Background

Recognition of the issue of gender disparity and the need to close the gender gap by the government is imbedded in a set of reforms and action plans emerging out of national and international agendas and programs. International commitments to CEDAW and CRC, Education for All, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and Millennium Development Goals are reflected in all national plans and programs. At another level, identification of the underlying causes of gender inequality with directions for possible strategic interventions provided through action-oriented research conducted by international/ national institutions is emerging. Since the Jomtien Conference on Education for All (1990), Government has increased its efforts for improving the enrolment rate of girls by involving communities, private sector and funding agencies.⁴



Access to quality primary education has emerged as the key social indicator for measuring development, change and progress in countries at the lower end of the human development scale. One of the largest obstacles to the achievement of Education for All is gender discrimination and ensuring gender parity in achievement in basic education. The limited success of previous quantity based education programmes necessitates the promotion of equality in education through quality education.

A gender-based examination of the five dimensions of quality include what the learner brings to education; the content of education; teaching and learning processes; the learning environment; and learning outcomes.⁵ Improved analysis of girls' education has led to a much better understanding of the impact of the broader environment in which learning takes place on girls' participation and achievement in basic education with implications for formulation of suitable strategies.⁶

Quality learning outcomes link directly to quality curriculum development and learning materials as well as teaching processes, areas in which gender issues feature prominently. In assessment of learning outcomes, too, gender can come into play as there is sufficient evidence to indicate that

³ Society for the Advancement of Education (SAHE) Community Based Schools Programme – CBSP.

⁴ The Economic Survey of Pakistan 2002-03

⁵ Derived from Guidelines for the Gender Review of Education proposed by UNICEF in 2003.

⁶ Conducting A Gender Review In Education: Guidance Note And Tool, UNICEF: Education Section, Programme Division, New York. 2003

many of the means of assessment carry inherent biases, particularly against girls. And, classroom practices can reinforce negative gender relations and discriminatory early learning practices.

2.1 The Gender Bias

In Pakistan, as in many countries, the subordinate status of girls derived from traditional customs and practices denies them equal access to education. Work and time consuming chores, early marriage, frequent pregnancies of mothers, and large households comprising members of a joint family system, old and young, also keep girls out of school. Economic constraints and cultural practices direct parental choices to favour sending their sons to school and not their daughters. Poverty has emerged as a major constraint in ensuring girls education. Abolition of school fees has not reduced expenditures incurred on transport, school funds, exam fees, school uniform, textbooks and other materials. In addition, the opportunity costs of sending daughters to school among the poor in particular, cannot be underestimated.

The undervaluing of formal education for girls which may, in some cases, be simply a matter of convenience, tends to be expressed in terms of the concern for the sexual safety and protection of girls by the family. In highly traditional societies, where the girl's sexual safety is paramount, their attendance in school can vary tremendously according to the proximity of the school. While this applies to both urban and rural areas, in Pakistan, the issue assumes critical proportions in the latter. Furthermore, far from being safe havens for learning, schools are often sites of intolerance, discrimination and violence. Girls, more than boys, are reprimanded on 'appropriate' attitude and coerced into following stereotyped behaviour patterns.

2.2 Defining Access

Despite the considerable increase in the number of schools for girls, there is still a shortage in the context of easy access for girls in rural areas. Even in the Punjab, the most developed province of the country, hundreds of villages do not have a girls' school.⁷ In rural areas the average government school, especially the small primary school, has only one or two teachers providing multi-grade and multi-age teaching. Many primary schools are running in community donated or rented buildings of poor quality. And, the absence of essential physical facilities such as boundary walls and toilets adds to the reluctance of parents to send their girls and female teachers to work in such schools.

Parents prefer to send girls to school provided there is a female teacher (World Bank, 1995). As such, shortage of qualified women as potential teachers in rural areas is a major constraint in enrolment of girls. As the most crucial factor in the education system and female teachers play a pivotal role in ensuring girl's enrolment and attendance especially in upper primary grades. Even where there are teachers, the high incidence of teacher absenteeism, especially in rural areas affects the quality of education available. Shortage of teachers for mathematics, science and more recently for English, now a compulsory subject from grade one, is common. In addition, programmes for pre and in-service teacher training that exist are of poor quality and not accessible to teachers in rural areas. And, government's efforts in education have been limited to increasing the quantity of schools as opposed to the quality of schooling.

⁷ Based on the surveys conducted by SAHE in two of the selected districts for setting up community based schools for girls.

The curriculum (syllabus, textbooks, teaching methodology, assessment/examination system) is of poor quality and not sensitive to gender. The contents of the curriculum do not relate to the lives of girls and women. This discourages participation of girls particularly in government schools.

The nexus between poverty and education are reflected in the data which shows that 42 percent of the population living in households with illiterate heads is poor, compared to 21 percent of those in households with literate heads. Net primary enrolment rate is 59 percent for the non-poor, and 37 percent for the poor, and particularly low among poor female children in rural areas. However, government is not the only provider of education and in Pakistan private schooling has emerged to fill the gap for those at least who can afford to pay for the education of their children including girls. The situation reflects widespread discrimination in access and opportunity with serious social implications. Providers catering to the deprived and poor sections of society include non-governmental organizations and religious organizations.

Table 3 : Gross Enrolment (I-V) for the year 1999-2000 (% age)

Region	Public Schools	Private Schools	Deeni Madaris	Rest*
Punjab	56.74	35.31	5.6	2.35
Sindh	63.24	29.70	4.5	2.56
NWFP	69.13	21.26	8.0	1.61
Balochistan	67.69	12.22	17.58	2.51
FATA	60.47	21.05	16.33	2.15
FANA	60.77	14.21	23.84	1.18
ICT	57.65	25.53	10.81	6.01
All Pakistan	60.73	30.3	6.89	2.18
<i>Female enrolment as a %age of the category</i>	<i>36.0</i>	<i>42.6</i>	<i>6.6</i>	<i>44.4</i>

* Pakistan Literacy Commission, Education Foundations, Cantonment & Garrison Schools

Source: Provincial EMIS, NEMIS, FBS, Pakistan Literacy Commission, Curriculum Wing, MOE

The private sector is the mostly rapidly growing sector with approximately 36,096 private schools in the country. Follow up surveys have shown that there was at least 15 percent underreporting in the private school survey. While more private schools are located in urban areas, in terms of gender private schools have less of a bias as compared to public schools.

Table 4 : Provincial Comparison - Number of Private Schools and Enrolment

Region	Institutions	Enrolment	Enrolment	
			Urban	Rural
Punjab	66.4 %	61.7 %	65.0%	35.0%
Sindh	17.9 %	22.8 %	95.5%	4.5%
NWFP & FATA	13.3 %	12.8 %	47.0%	53.0%
Balochistan	1.5 %	1.8 %	79.6%	20.4%

Source: FBS Survey 2001

Programs and campaigns for raising literacy levels in Pakistan show partial success. The most recent intervention includes the setting up of approximately 7000 Non Formal Basic Education centres mostly through NGOs/CBOs as has been the practice since 1995 when the Prime Minister's Literacy Commission was set up. The Pakistan Literacy Commission reorganized as a Literacy Cell in the EFA Wing is responsible for tracking literacy/non-formal education. The

National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) and the Rural Support Programmes at the national and provincial levels are partners in this effort.

2.3 Government Efforts to Promote Girls' Schooling

Pro-gender equality policies of the government are stated in quantitative terms such as schools for girls and female teachers. In the 1990s, the Social Action Programme (SAP)⁸ was the major initiative to improve social indicators especially in girl's education. The impact of interventions linking education of girls with food incentives such as giving girls attending school free tins of *ghee* (cooking oil)⁹ or other food items and the current School Nutrition Programme of the government (Tawana Pakistan) is limited to the duration of the project. The Punjab Middle Schooling Project (PMSP) and the Girls Primary Education Project (GPEP-I & II)¹⁰ targeted girls and attempted to address gender gaps. However, it is difficult to find evidence of the lasting influence of these projects on the quality of education. In the absence of a holistic approach based on systemic changes the impact of all initiatives has been short lived.

Girls' education is being addressed as part of the effort to accelerate achievement of universal primary education, improve the literacy situation, address child labour through education both formal and non-formal and as a development imperative. The policy framework developed by the Ministry of Education seeks to advance gender equality in education and eliminate gender disparities by 2015. Thus, most targets of Pakistan's Education for All Plan and Education Sector Reforms are focused on gender.

At national and provincial levels, collection of gender disaggregated data, coeducation, more schools for girls, incentives for girls, preference for female teachers, gender sensitive curricula and inclusion of women in school councils are some of the specific actions, recommended at different times for correcting the gender balance. In addition, targeted programs have been initiated for the elimination of gender disparities, public private partnerships, including for school up gradation.

All aspects of school education are the exclusive mandates of the provincial governments according to the Pakistan Constitution. Each prescribes its own policies, rules and regulations framework consistent with any guidelines or national policy formulated by the Federal Government in consultation with the provincial governments.

The Constitution of Pakistan states that the state shall '*remove illiteracy and provide free and compulsory secondary education within minimum possible period*' (Article 37-B, Constitution of Pakistan, 1973). In addition, Article 25 of the Constitution states that: "*All citizens are equal before the law and entitled to protection of law, and that nothing in the article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the protection of women and children.*"
The Constitution thus supports efforts towards ensuring gender equality and equity in education.

There are in addition several laws and conventions which stipulate provision of education as a basic right for all citizens including girls and women or which can impact on access to education.

⁸ Largely funded by the World Bank

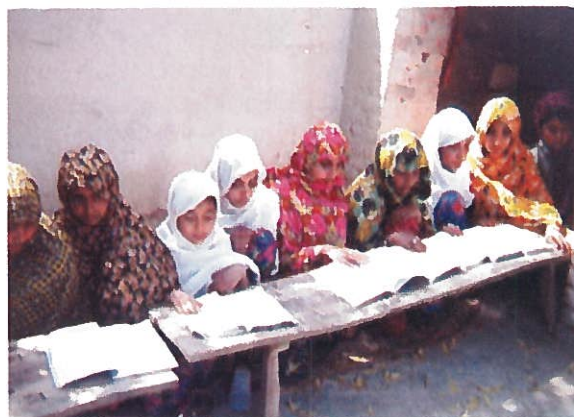
⁹ World Food Programme

¹⁰ All three were projects funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB)

¹¹ Since 2000 government accelerated the process of designing policies, plans and sector reform programs with the purpose of ensuring implementation of commitments made at international and national levels. ¹²

3. The Punjab Province

Entitlement to developing and implementing legislation is indicated by province specific conditions and requirements within the broader parameters defined by national policy documents and plans. The Punjab Province was the first to promulgate the *Punjab Compulsory Primary Education Act* in 1994.¹³ Punjab specific reform programs stemming from national programs include (i) Punjab Education Sector Reforms Program (PERSP) 2003-2005 (ii) Provincial Plan of Action on EFA (2003-2015) Punjab (iii) Punjab Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2003) (iv) Plans for Women's Development.



Improving both access to and quality of education for the achievement of universal primary education is recognized by government, and forms an integral part of the design of projects currently being implemented.¹⁴ In comparison with the other provinces the Punjab is better placed with regard to literacy, enrolments and gender parity.

¹¹ These include:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1949
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1990
- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1995
- Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (C-182), 2001
- The Worker's Children (Education) Ordinance, 1972
- Employment of Children Act, 1991¹¹
- The Bonded Labor System (Abolition) Act, 1992
- Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929, amended under Muslim Family Laws Ordinance 1961 as Marriage Act.

¹² National Educational Policy 1998-2010
Education Sector Reforms Action Plan 2001-2004
National Education for All (EFA) Plan 2000-1015
Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) 2002
National Policies and Action Plans to Combat Child Labor (2001)
National Plan of Action for Women (1998)
Gender Reform Action Plan (GRAP) 2004

¹³ The act defines a child as a person whose age at the beginning of the school year is not less than five years or more than 10 years.

¹⁴ These include programmes for Universal Quality Primary Education in Literacy and NFE; Girls Primary Education Project-II; Adopt-a-School Programme; Community Participation Project (CPP); Punjab Education Sector Reform Program (PESRP); rehabilitation of existing girls' primary schools; district capacity building, monitoring; improving access and quality in government primary schools through NGOs; Education Sector Reforms (ESR) direct support to the 34 districts of the Punjab.

Table 5 : Female Literacy, Female Gross Participation Rate and GPI

Region	Literacy Rate	Female Literacy	Rural Female Literacy	GPR (5-9 Girls)	Gender Parity Index
Punjab	46.56	35.10	24.78	43.83	0.60
Sindh	45.29	34.78	12.23	29.97	0.60
NWFP	35.41	18.82	14.69	18.73	0.37
Balochistan	24.83	14.09	7.94	19.29	0.41

Source: Population Census 1998

However, the situation remains far from satisfactory. More than half the girls of school going age have never enrolled in the Punjab.¹⁵ Thus, approximately 27 million have never been to school. In the 5-9 age group alone out of 11 million 6.8 million never enrolled.¹⁶ Out of 34 districts the situation is somewhat better in 13, that is, in just over one-third of the districts. But, in the majority less than half the population is literate.

- The 5-9 years population is 11.23 million of which 5.41 million are girls
- The out of school in 5-9 age group are 4.56 million of whom 2.74 million are girls
- Rural 5-9 age group who are out of school are 2.59 million of which 1.8 million are girls.
- Children (5-14) engaged in labour are 3.3 million in Pakistan and 1.94 million in Punjab 1996.¹⁷

In some districts of southern Punjab such as Lodhran, Pakpattan, and Multan the participation level of girls even in urban areas is below fifty percent. In 15 districts less than one-third of rural girls are enrolled at the primary level. The rural-urban gap is widest in areas of overall low literacy levels and reaches phenomenal proportions in the district of DG Khan where it is 63 percent. Such disparities require special measures to provide justice in particular to rural girls. (See Table 6)

3.1 Provision of Education

Education at the primary level is delivered by government, the private sector and by civil society organizations. In 2002-03, the total enrolment in Grades I to V of public and private schools is 86.6 percent, for girls it is 76.46 percent. Net enrolment is lower at 61.3 percent, and with less than fifty percent girls of the relevant primary age group in school, the gender gap is more.

Public Sector: The major provider of education is the government with sixty percent of all primary schools being in the public sector.¹⁸ In the Punjab, strategies for ensuring provision of equal access to quality education for girls includes stipends at middle and secondary schools, free textbooks and free nutrition facilities to girls' in primary schools. As yet there is no evidence that the retention of children at the primary level has improved or that completion rates have increased. Low literacy levels lead to wider rural-urban literacy gaps adding to the disparate situation. Also, enrolment does not mean that students will complete five classes. In the Punjab the mean number of years of schooling in 1999 was 4.3 in the case of boys and 1.8 for girls.¹⁹

¹⁵ Education Management Information System (EMIS) data.

¹⁶ Low Literacy Rate and Development (The News, 28th Jan. 2002)

¹⁷ FBS/MOL/ILO

¹⁸ Data for 2002-03

¹⁹ Figures taken from the Pakistan Human Condition Report, CRPRID, 2002

Table 6 : District-wise Ranking of Participation Rate of Rural/Urban Girls (5-9 years) & Rural-Urban Gap – 1998

<i>S. No</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Rural Girls (%)</i>	<i>Urban Girls (%)</i>	<i>Rural-Urban Gap (%)</i>
1.	Gujrat	72.37	77.65	5.28
2.	Sialkot	72.28	76.35	4.70
3.	Jhelum	69.51	74.90	5.41
4.	Rawalpindi	64.18	80.10	15.92
5.	Chakwal	56.49	71.24	14.75
6.	Mandi Bahauddin	56.35	70.82	14.47
7.	Toba Tek Singh	53.51	63.92	10.41
8.	Gujranwala	53.24	60.01	6.77
9.	Narowal	52.15	62.50	10.35
10.	Faisalabad	50.43	64.97	14.54
11.	Lahore	47.98	66.19	18.21
12.	Hafizabad	46.76	63.39	16.63
13.	Sargodha	44.73	60.45	15.72
14.	Sheikhupura	43.06	58.82	15.76
15.	Attock	41.32	61.70	20.38
16.	Mianwali	37.84	61.43	23.59
17.	Sahiwal	34.73	57.56	22.83
18.	Okara	33.46	56.18	22.72
19.	Khushab	33.16	56.23	23.70
20.	Kasur	33.00	57.85	24.85
21.	Jhang	31.55	55.10	23.55
22.	Vehari	31.39	52.38	20.99
23.	Khanewal	30.49	54.82	24.33
24.	Bahawalnagar	30.44	52.56	22.12
25.	Multan	29.96	47.84	17.88
26.	Layyah	28.57	56.77	28.20
27.	Bhakkar	25.99	54.75	28.76
28.	Pakpattan	24.03	48.37	24.34
29.	Lodhran	22.90	45.10	22.20
30.	Bahawalpur	22.75	54.51	31.76
31.	Rahimyar Khan	20.68	61.53	40.85
32.	Muzaffargarh	16.56	56.21	39.65
33.	Rajanpur	13.20	51.86	38.66
34.	Dera Ghazi Khan	10.63	73.53	62.90

To improve access, all primary schools have been designated as coeducational, yet they continue to be designated as boys or girls schools. Fewer girls are studying in boys schools as compared to the enrolment of boys in schools for girls, an indication that while coeducation may be acceptable in some communities it is still to emerge as a desired option. Some micro studies cite this as a reason for the dropout of girls at the upper primary level.

Private Education Options: The Punjab province has the highest number of private schools many of which are co-educational. With forty percent schools in the private sector, inequality has increased.²⁰ Clearly the fee structure of these institutions does not allow children especially girls from poor and even low income families to get admission. Variability in quality is a hallmark of private schools, and the quality of small private schools in small towns, villages and communities is mostly of inferior quality. And, children move between government, private and even NGO run schools depending on their perception of the quality of education and incentives on offer.

Civil Society's Focus: Civil Society is also providing educational options to lower income groups and the poor. NGOs are managing schools giving formal primary education at low costs. Their fee structure is minimal ranging from the equivalent of US\$ 1-3 per month, which clearly does not cover all the expenses entailed while scholarships are also provided to include a segment of poor children within the catchments of the school. For the disadvantaged especially girls, such schools have emerged as a preferred alternative to public schools. With some exceptions, the not-for-profit schools are a marked improvement over the public and run of the mill private schools.

However, many more NGOs are involved in providing non-formal education alternatives. The Pakistan Literacy Cell at the federal level and the Department of Literacy in the province are providing direct grants to organizations for implementation of literacy and NFBE programmes. Some of the initiatives include:

- ECE, NFE, and Literacy centres under Education For All Program
- A Literacy and Vocational Education Project under ESR
- The Ujala Project for girls in the age group 10-20 years
- NFE & Quality Education projects for addressing child labour
- UPE, Health and Literacy projects
- The Punjab Rural Support Programme (PRSP) – home based NF schools

The non-formal/literacy programs initiated by the government lack a coherent policy framework with uncertainty of resource availability and delay in allocation of funds and materials leads to poor service delivery. The short duration of these programmes, most of which aim to provide primary education within three years, a multigrade system, lack of continuity in the same area/community, and absence of systematic documentation accounts for their exclusion from most government reports. Research on program size, as a determinant of the capacity of organizations, shows that provision of education by NGOs remains minimal.²¹ Nevertheless, as

²⁰ According to the data for 2002-03, 40% schools are in the private sector.

²¹ The largest number of formal schools set up by an NGO is 270; NF centres set up an NGO is 550 under the umbrella strategy and 300 as a single operator; taking the one-teacher one class model of community schools providing education to primary level the number of schools managed by an NGO is 180; number of government schools an NGO is strengthening is 400. The number of adopted schools by any one organization is 167; women's literacy centers managed by an NGO are about 130; teacher training/resource centers set up by NGOs range from 3-5 depending on the degree of management involved and no organization has more than three sub-offices. (A Report on the Status and Role of Education NGOs in the Punjab, Society for the Advancement of Education (SAHE), 2003)

literacy initiatives the contribution of NGOs, especially in promoting girls education and in mainstreaming children into government schools, has been critical.

3.2 Quality of Teachers, Curriculum, Syllabi, Textbooks

Teacher education is a key factor in improving the quality of basic education. The decline in teacher education and support has contributed among other factors to deterioration of quality and the situation is more serious in the case of rural primary teachers. The inadequacy of general education and teacher education programmes places a great responsibility on In-Service Training (INSET) for improvements in the pedagogical skills of teachers, but these have failed to reach a significant proportion of teachers in rural areas. Their flawed design with short training, no follow up and traditionally trained master trainers has had little impact on the quality of teaching. Most INSET programmes have also not been successful in creating effective curriculum/textbook changes, new teaching techniques and assessment methods. The onus is on the teacher to cope with the change with little support from the education department and government training institutions. Given the poor quality of training programmes in general, gender takes a back seat. Similarly, innovative teaching methods and activity based/child centered approaches will not work in the presence of a textbook centered curriculum, a heavy syllabus that leaves no provision for innovation and rote learning based assessment systems.

Interference in teacher appointments from local interest groups has opened the system to graft and rent seeking leading to high levels of teacher absenteeism accentuated by the absence of an effective supervision system. For schools located in poor communities particularly in rural areas the selection of local female teachers becomes critical. Potential local teachers especially women, are either poorly trained or untrained. They need to be retrained, provided continuous mentoring, monitoring, and teaching-learning support materials for effective performance.

3.3 Supervision and Monitoring

Lack of supervision and monitoring of learning in the classroom is hampered, in the case of female supervisory personnel, primarily by the absence of dedicated transport. In general, very little supervision and guidance is actually carried out, so that the impact of these activities on the teachers own teaching competencies, is minimal. In a recent survey in the Punjab, it was found that the few children, who complete the primary cycle, learned only around one third of the required content of the curriculum.

3.4 Demand for Education

There is a huge social demand for education even from the illiterate sections of society. In major cities about fifty percent of the children from low-income to poor households (monthly income around US\$ 60) send their children to private schools. In urban areas, private schooling has become the norm to the extent that there are attempts to revitalize public schools by adoption and upgradation through public-private partnerships. The limited outreach of such interventions and presupposition that quality of education will improve regardless of the credentials of the parties involved should be viewed with caution. Without a holistic approach to education improving its quality at the primary level is not likely. The creation of alternative structures at the district, tehsil and community level for the management of educational programs, continuous pedagogical support, relevant teaching and learning materials, and finally, regular monitoring and evaluation is required to ensure delivery of quality education.

4. The SAHE Community Based School Programme

The Community Based School Programme is derived from SAHE's experience with the Pakistan government's non-formal basic education multi-grade programme in which girls were to be prepared for taking the government primary examination within three years and the non-formal education model of BRAC, Bangladesh. In March 1998 SAHE set up 20 schools in one district selected for its comparatively low female literacy level. Today the number is 180 with schools three districts.



4.1 Aims and approach

The programme was conceived as a learning experience in reducing gender disparities in education to improve the quality of primary education in existing government schools as well as those run by NGOs/CBOs and the private sector for marginalized, rural and poor communities. Aimed at creating educational opportunities for girls in poor, disadvantaged communities, facilitating human resource development at the district and local levels, and increasing access to employment and empowerment of women the programme has a holistic approach for achievement of its educational and developmental objectives.

Communities selected for implementing the programme were poor and mostly illiterate, with no opportunities for educating girls provided by government, non-formal or private providers. The few schools constructed under the Social Action Programme in the early nineties are not functioning. Access to government resources such as dysfunctional primary school buildings was made possible by advocating for quality education as a basic right at district, provincial and national levels. Extending training opportunities to government formal and non-formal school teachers was part of the strategy for building acceptability of the CBS programme.

The programme also aims at building organizational capacity at different levels. In the districts, teams of young educated persons are formed for the delivery, management, and promotion of education; and, in the selected communities, Village Education Committees (male) and Women Village Education Committees have been constituted and trained for the supervision and management of education in their community. The capacity of NGOs/CBOs in other districts working in non-formal education and literacy programmes has been built through training and support materials.

Furthermore, providing the general public, government, research institutions, and international agencies empirically verified reports, studies and evaluations on the state of education and initiatives taken by various agencies and wider dissemination of key finding through consultations, conferences, publications and a bi-lingual newsletter are part of the CBS programme.

4.2 The beneficiaries

The specific group targeted under the CBSP includes girls between the ages of 5-10 from poor communities and households in rural and peri-urban communities of high poverty, low literacy districts. The families of school children and communities where they live, educated women employed as teachers from poor and low-income communities, and young women and men graduates employed as education promoters and teacher trainers from the districts are part of the critical mass. In addition, local NGOs especially those working for education in the district; government primary school teachers, school children and their families; non-formal basic and primary school teachers, school children and their families; untrained teachers of small private schools; and District Education Departments are addressed by the program. At a broader level the experience is shared at the provincial, national and international levels with a wide range of stakeholders.

Table 7 : District Education Data

	Pakpattan	Vehari	Lodhran
Literacy rank(total districts-34)	28	24	31
Literacy rate	34.7%	36.8%	29.9%
Female literacy(+10 age group)	36%	28%	28%
%5-9 out of school	64%	60%	68%
5-9 Age Group			
Total population	200,703	330,026	199,103
Attending school	70,225	129,491	62,903
Completed school	1,959	3,469	1,285
Never attended	128,519	197,066	134,915
Total females	104,121	158,734	95,531
Attending school	43,874	54,965	24,888
Completed school	1,114	1,428	465
Never attended	59,133	102,341	70,178
Rural females	83,666	134,227	81,954
Attending school	20,103	42,128	18,765
Completed school	696	1,128	394
Never attended	62,867	90,881	62,795
Number of Schools			
Primary	718(308 girls)	1,454	740 (414 girls)
Middle	55 (33 girls)	141	58 (43 girls)
High	64 (13 girls)	111	48 (all boys)
Community Model	6 (all girls)		10 (all girls)
Maktab/religious	na		11 (boys)

Source: Census of Population 1998 and District Departments of Education

Rationale for selection of districts

After piloting the programme in one district it has spread to three districts extending in a continuum along the northern side of the River Sutlej the southern most tributary of the Indus River. Their location is also one of a springboard to expand the schools and technical support of the teacher resource centre to the southern and western semi-arid resource poor and socially backward districts of the Punjab with the lowest literacy rates. Social development in these districts is weak, with few district based organizations working for education, a situation not conducive to attracting donor agencies and government programmes.

4.3 Scale and costs

There are at present 180 schools with the same number of teachers, all female; and 5800 girls enrolled in the schools in three districts. A teacher starts with a class, the equivalent of a school in a community, and takes the same class up to grade five. The schools are located in space/building provided or arranged by the community and the programme provides for all other costs. The teacher's salary ranges between US\$ 25-35 per month, free books and other teaching/learning materials are provided to teachers and students. Training of community mobilizers, teacher trainers, teachers, mentors, district personnel and communities directly connected with the schools is part of the programme. In addition, government and non-formal teachers in the district and in other districts are also provided training. The district and head office costs for managing and running the programme and a research and evaluation component, the Education Watch are also part of the CBS programme. The annual expenditure is approximately US\$ 165,000.

Cost for One year for a CBS with 35 children

Teachers salary:	Rs.24,000
School expenditure:	Rs.13,650
Materials and books:	Rs.24,500
School kit:	Rs. 2,500
Teacher Training:	Rs. 3,000
Promoters training & review:	Rs. 720
Monitoring:	<u>Rs. 2,100</u>
Total:	<u>Rs.70,470</u>
District Support Units:	Rs.10,300
Lahore Support Unit:	<u>Rs.14,000</u>
Total:	<u>Rs.24,300</u>

Cost for 1 year for One CBS with 35 children: Rs.94,770 or approximately US\$ 1580.
Per child cost: Rs.2700 approximately per year or US\$ 45 annually

4.4 Key characteristics of the approach

4.4.1 Evolutionary approach to programme development

An evolutionary process has been followed in school expansion, overall programme design and selection of teaching learning materials. Schools were opened in the first district in 1998 with the number of schools increasing to 80. The programme was expanded to the second district in 2003, and to the third district in 2004. At present the number of schools is 180 to be increased to 200 by the end of 2005.

4.4.2 Selecting disadvantaged districts, communities and girls

Project activities have been expanded to districts that are amongst the poorest and most disadvantaged in the Punjab. In several communities the main livelihood of the people is based on providing labour for seasonal agricultural activities. Communities are selected on the basis of their distance from the district/tehsil office restricted to a radius of 30km; there being no school for girls; the number of households being at least 50 with two girls of school going age in each household who were not going to school; availability of a local female matriculate (10 years of schooling) as a potential teacher; interest on the part of the community to have a girls' school and to provide space for the school; and, readiness on the part of the majority of parents to pay a small

amount as school fund, buy stationary and exercise books for their children and ensure their attendance.

Children are admitted to school on the principle of one child per household. Since the communities are among the poorest in the region the chances of a child from a comparatively better off household being admitted are few. In the initial years, although mostly girls were admitted, 25 percent boys could be enrolled under special situations or as a strategy for starting a girl's school. With acceptance of the programme, this practice has been discontinued as even at the primary level it was leading to girls dropping out in the higher primary grades.

4.4.3 Taking the Community Along

The programme is designed to close the gender gap by setting up girls' schools where none exist. Mobilizing communities to take ownership of their schools such as assuming responsibility for the continuation of school by providing space including in some cases construction, ensuring the safety of the teachers and girl students, school materials etc, is key to its implementation. In some cases, this has led to opening a CBS in an existing dysfunctional government school building in collaboration with the district education department. A withdrawal strategy allows for a CBS closure when the government school becomes functional, though this has not always worked owing to community preference for the CBS program and lack of faith in government education.

4.4.4 Designing for Quality

Each CBS consists of one class of 30 children, that is, one grade with one teacher to ensure that learning takes place. The same teacher takes the class up to the next grade the following year. If there are enough children in the community and another teacher is available then another CBS is opened.

In rural areas with illiterate families and no support for the few educated women at the community level, the need for a Pre-primary class as a lead in period for parents, teachers and children has been found to extremely effective in ensuring retention and quality. The duration of the CBS programme is thus five and half years, with 6 months pre-primary class using modules and manuals developed by SAHE.

With government bringing in the concept of multiple textbooks, the curriculum of the CBS has been revised. For class I & II textbooks and workbooks developed by Oxford University Press have been selected and for class II, IV & V, the government curriculum/textbooks with supplementary materials developed by SAHE are used. The OUP syllabus is being introduced gradually. Only in grade five will the government prescribed textbooks continue to be used to facilitate the girls to take the government primary examination at the end of the primary cycle. This is also necessary if children wish to be mainstreamed into the government system.

A key component is the training of teachers of the CBS who start as novices. There are presently 180 schools with one teacher for each school. The same teacher takes the children up to grade five in five and a half years. Teachers receive regular trainings after every three months leading to three trainings in an academic year per teacher. According to the Teacher Training plan each teacher will have had 17 trainings at the end of the five and a half year cycle. Teachers who have stayed the entire duration of the primary cycle have received 85 days of pedagogical support. The training component is managed by a Teacher Education Support Unit at SAHE's head office. The District Teacher Support Centres are responsible for followup, providing classroom support and in facilitating monthly pay day training to teachers. Schools are divided into clusters with a group

of mentors selected from amongst the teachers of the cluster responsible for assisting especially the novice teachers in their teaching. A continuous training and teacher support system has been created ensuring regularity and motivation which has acted as an incentive for teachers to pursue their professional development.

4.4.5 Creating Effective Management Systems

Establishing an effective management system is recognized to be essential for the functioning of the CBS programme. The programme is headed by a Coordinator at the SAHE head office working closely with the Regional Coordinator who coordinates the work of the three districts and is based at the Regional Office in Pakpattan District. Each district office of which there are three, i.e. Pakpattan, Lodhran, Vehari, is headed by a District Coordinator (DC) who is the overall in charge of CBSP at district level. His/her primary responsibility is to develop plans, strategies, and to ensure the implementation of CBSP objectives. The District Coordinator also interacts with the district education department and other relevant institutions and organizations. The DC has a team of Education Promoters, two in each district.

As the number of communities and schools increase, school clusters headed by a cluster in charge are formed for better supervision, monitoring and teacher/school support. At the community level, Village Education Committees (VECs) comprising the men and Women Village Education Committees (WVECs) are responsible for the schools in their community.

The management structure has the flexibility to respond to emerging needs and situations. With the expansion of the programme additional systems have been created with increased professional support from the head office to the regional office. Regional coordination has been crucial for inter-district support and learning including a shared understanding of the different components of the programme and has helped in creating a common organizational culture based on a participatory approach at all levels. In-house professional strength, support for autonomous decision making, presence of a large number of female personnel, and transparency/accountability ensured through regular reviews are hallmarks of the programme.

4.4.6 Structure for Pedagogical Support

A critical component of the CBS program is the Teacher Education & CBS Program Support Unit at Lahore SAHE responsible for the pedagogical aspects of the programme. It identifies appropriate books and materials for the CBS and for teachers, designs and delivers trainings to the teachers, develops manuals and other materials for the district teams and teachers. It also develops the annual assessment tests and conducts periodical followup at the school level. It provides professional support and training to the District Teacher Support Centre. The Support Unit assists in conducting training of trainers, education promoters, district coordinators, material development for training and assessment, follow up visits and monitoring of the program in the three districts. Classroom observation and demonstration lessons by the Lahore team have led to a marked improvement in ensuring that the training gets to the classroom and children. In addition the unit also conducts the training of government teachers in the districts as well as training of teachers of other NGOs and private schools in the project area as well as in other districts.

There is one Teacher Support Centre (TSC) located at Arifwala in District Pakpattan which is responsible for teacher support, quarterly assessment of schoolgirls, and quality monitoring of the CBS. It also assists the teacher mentors who are cluster based and in pay day trainings. The TSC has been set up as a model for other districts, government, NGOs and private sector to replicate if

they so wish. It also functions as a resource centre for CBS teachers and other teachers from the three districts. It is equipped with computers, resource library, as a learning centre, audio video aids etc. The TSC conducts classroom based interventions through school and teacher observation through filling in checklists for qualitative plus quantitative improvement on regular basis, giving demonstration lessons in classes, co-teaching, and conducting feedback sessions with teachers.

4.4.7 Integrating the gender and rights approach

The gender and rights program at SAHE creates gender sensitivity and child rights awareness in the district teams, teachers and communities. Teaching, learning and training materials developed for the CBS are reviewed for their gender correctness. As all teachers are women, addressing their concerns and changing their attitudes in the classroom are critical for the success of the program.

4.4.8 Education for social development

A vital component of the CBS program is the education/training of young women and men from the districts to create local human resources critical for the implementation of development activities. Moreover, the rapid out-migration from districts and indeed out of the country requires continuous training to fill the gap created by the shortage of educated and skilled persons. Additionally the gap in the curriculum of the formal education system has to be met through specially designed targeted programs.

4.4.9 Broadening the quality education agenda

The CBS experience, trainings and materials are resources shared with teachers of government, private and NGO schools. The process has helped to expand the quality agenda beyond the CBS and in advocating for change. The SAHE Education Watch program critically looks at the CBSP as well as other interventions in the education sector. The CBS experience has provided an opportunity for examining a wide range of issues from policy to strategies to programmatic questions. With few institutions engaged in empirical enquiry, it has been possible to broaden the search for educational solutions if only to highlight or examine the systemic constraints hindering change for consideration by government and international agencies.

4.5 Conditions for the success of CBSP

The assumptions on which the CBS programme was based were realistic. For example, the assumption that communities and parents were interested in educating girls and that only if a school was present in the community there would be no problem in finding potential students. It was also supposed that an educated girl with at least ten years of schooling was available to teach in the community. Other interested parties such as enlightened community members were seen as having specific roles, the most important being providing space for the school and continued support for the initiative. The availability of young educated men and women eager to take responsibility for managing the programme and for training teachers was also presumed.

Access to successful innovations in South Asia and Pakistan from which the programme could learn and select strategies has been a positive feature in designing a successful program. The breakdown and poor quality of public education, shortage of schools for girls and failure of government to follow up on commitments to communities in conjunction with unaffordable private schools are among key factors contributing to the CBS initiative. Although finding appropriately qualified staff at the district level has not been easy, in the absence of professional opportunities for women, availability of female teachers and programme personnel has not been

too problematic. The critical role that individuals play in successful innovations cannot be understated and the CBS programme has been fortunate in this regard.

4.6 Enabling factors

So far, the project has thus progressed in the planned direction. The expertise of the Teacher Education Program at the head office has provided the support required by district units and community based schools. As the schools have expanded, the role of the TEP has increased. At the district level, availability of a local matriculate girl, parents readiness to educate girls and allow their daughters to work as teachers, access to local female personnel to run the programme, participation of the community and building a collaborative relationship with the district government have enabled the program to move ahead.

The role of women in CBS is prominent and the males interact with teachers through them. Women arrange meetings with teachers in school premises. Their responsibilities include keeping a watch on teacher's performance, regular check on irregularities and dropouts and fund raising for schools. Women are of the view that CBS is much better than government schools. It always has less dropout rate. They say that CBS teachers always discuss changes in syllabi with them. They are happy with CBS provision of free books and bags to their children. They also said that they have witnessed a positive change in their children's personality and they also have learned new words and terms from their children.

4.7 Impact of the CBSP

The Community Based Schools Program has been catalytic in its impact. It has attracted other programmatic interventions to the three districts where it is operational. At the broader level, the CBSP has increased the demand for girls education from neighbouring communities and districts. The non-formal education programmes of government including the education component of the Rural Support Programmes have been redesigned to include aspects of the CBSP. Insights gained from the CBSP shared at the policy level are beginning to influence, for example, government teacher training programmes. And, effectiveness of interventions connected with different aspects of the CBSP, have formed the basis for advocating for quality education and literacy programmes for the poor, influencing policy at several levels including with other civil society organizations. Linkages with related development areas, such as education, health and nutrition, women's development/gender, and poverty have also been strengthened.

The influence of the program can also be assessed from the changes that have taken place in programmes of other organizations. The national non-formal programmes of the government have selected some features of the CBS program such as the need for a five year primary cycle for the 5-9 age group of children. While for the 10-14 age group it is possible to provide literacy in three years. Additionally, the adult literacy programmes of the Literacy Commission are proving to be more successful in the communities where the community schools are functioning. The Sarhad Rural Support Program has adopted the concept of the community as a stakeholder from the CBS program. As a consequence of interaction with the community based teacher training program the critical role of the teacher for quality education has been realized by non-governmental organizations. And, replication of the SAHE community based schools model by other NGOs such as the Rural Support Program in the Punjab is in evidence.

The capacity of government primary teachers and field staff of the district education department has been built under the CBS training program. This has provided a basis for cooperation and

collaboration with the district education department and a preference for training by SAHE rather than by the Directorate of Staff Development which is the major training institution of the government in the Punjab.

Improvement in teachers qualification, job opportunities for women, use of facilities of the Teacher Support Centre by government teachers, drawing attention to minimum standards and changes in programmes of District run non-formal programmes are other indications of the success of the programme.

Thirty teachers of the community schools have already improved their educational qualifications while others are in the process of doing so. Opportunities for education and training are keenly sought by the staff of the regional and district offices. The inclusion of a large number of women in the program has created an environment whereby families that were initially reluctant to send their girls to teach in the schools and for training now approach the regional office for jobs for their daughters.

4.8 The process followed

The inclusion of local persons in initiating a program cannot be underestimated. The CBSP began by hiring local young men and women to engage communities in a dialogue on girls' education, in approaching parents, in identifying potential female teachers and testing them, as well as in interaction with district education officials to locate communities where there were no schools for girls. As a first step, teams of surveyors - one male one female - went into villages and urban slums to identify communities where favourable conditions existed for setting up girls schools. Selection of communities was a lengthy and intensive process with repeated interactions and meetings with community members to ensure that stipulated requirements for establishing a school for girls could be met with. Testing and selection of local female teachers was another key step as was agreeing on a suitable site/location of the proposed school. During this process which took about three months, the village education committee comprising the men was formed. The next step was the selection of girl students, one from each household between 5 to 9 years old, a process fraught with issues of parents knowing the correct age of the girl child, rejecting children younger and older and not enrolling boys. Once the girls began going to school the mother's role gained recognition, and as her interaction with the female teacher increased it was possible to form the women's village education committee. As a consequence of these procedures, a consensus school policy document emerges.

The program was designed for girls to complete primary school in five years, but owing to the three years literacy program of the government it took time before the community was convinced of the efficacy of a five year program. Later a six months Pre-Primary class was added to develop a teaching culture and to prepare the children for Class One. This strategy had become necessary for working with untrained teachers and illiterate communities. The earlier decision to follow the government syllabus and textbooks with additional material support has been replaced by more interesting and useful books through a phased approach.²² The new books are extremely child friendly and are accompanied by workbooks and additional story books. With the textbook being the prime teaching-learning material used by teachers and students this has made a significant difference in the learning achievements of girls. The government textbook is followed only in Class Five so that the children can sit for the government primary exam.

²² The books being used are produced and published by the Oxford University Press in Pakistan.

Parents were encouraged to buy books and other learning materials for their girls during the first few years of the programme, with 25 percent initially and later 50 percent children being provided free books. Gradually this has changed, and now all teachers and children are provided books and bags free of cost. The result of this strategy is a significant reduction in the dropout rate.

Collaboration with the district Department of Education is considered an essential part of the process to ensure acceptance of the CBSP and for its wider impact. Providing information on the programme such as location of schools, inviting district education authorities to the trainings, and training government teachers and field staff are part of the procedure developed.

4.9 Unanticipated consequences of the intervention

The empowerment of women has emerged as a key contribution of the CBS program. Women in leadership roles, greater involvement in planning and budgeting, female teachers improving their qualifications and mothers learning from daughters is taking place. The teachers, women's committees and mothers are playing a vital role in managing, decision-making, increasing enrolments, reducing dropout and making certain that girls complete the primary cycle. As social mobilizers, especially for interacting with mothers, teachers have played a vital role and a pool of eight teachers who have been working in the CBS program for a number of years has been formed for this purpose. Some changes can be seen in the health and nutrition of the children as the mothers are paying more attention to their girls.

The CBS programme is providing critical research questions and issues for advocacy, policy reformulation and planning for interventions in poor communities. It has strengthened the Education Watch program which specifically focuses on influencing policy based on ground realities through collation of information, conducting surveys and identifying successful models for replication in addition to networking with other organizations for an analysis of government programs and projects. Sharing the data and analyses at the provincial and federal level and with a broader level with civil society, government and donors has provided for wider dissemination. The Watch program is also providing input into the assessments and evaluations of other educational programs conducted by SAHE personnel. Partnering with noted institutions such as the Agha Khan University-Institute of Educational Development and recognition for its conceptual and programmatic insights on education in Pakistan in general and on the Punjab in particular, is a direct outcome of the CBS experiment.

Another unexpected outcome of the CBSP is the setting up of a middle school by three communities with local support and donations from friends of SAHE.

4.10 Measuring success

Factors contributing the success of the CBSP include poverty, gender discrimination, the near collapse and poor quality of public education, failure of government to followup on commitments to communities, no schools for girls, unaffordable private schools and lack of professional opportunities for women. The success of the program can be measured in terms of the demand from other districts for community schools, increasing enrolment and low dropout estimated at twenty five percent as compared to the government's fifty percent, extension of the primary program to five and a half years, preference for CBS in the presence of other options that have recently become available, a 95 percent success rate of CBS students in examinations which is much higher than that of the government, retention of eighty percent female teachers initially

hired, construction of schools by the communities and for the program to also start schools for boys.

Demand for education beyond primary has increased in the communities where the schools are located. Some of the CBS primary completers have enrolled in public middle schools and in three communities the village committees have set up middle schools on self-help basis. Community participation is more in evidence with six school buildings with five classrooms each having been constructed by the community. And, attitudinal change towards education, especially that of girls has taken place.

As a result of the CBS experience the Teacher Education Program has extended its professional programs and training to several schools and organizations in large cities and other districts. In some cases its services are being partially compensated.

A key indicator of success is the empowerment of women evident at all levels. The confidence level of female trainers and education promoters, female teachers and girl students has risen. Their ability to express themselves, communicate and interact at the organizational, community and school levels has improved remarkably. Further, they are providing opportunities for learning to their families and have created openings for women in otherwise extremely traditional and feudal areas.

The Education Watch program has expanded to include research based studies and evaluations. SAHE is now recognized as one of the few organizations with in-house expertise in conducting research and providing evidence based inputs into policy.

Another outcome of the program is the collaboration between SAHE and other organizations including the Institute of Educational Development – IED of the Aga Khan University, the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), Issues and Policies Consultants, the Lahore Grammar School system and Simorgh- Women’s Resource and Publishing Centre - in research and joint projects. This is helping to create a lobby for a quality agenda in education with government and donors.

Moreover, SAHE’s lobbying and advocacy agenda is recognized by government evident by the participation of SAHE personnel in meetings of the Department of Education both at the federal and provincial levels, the Planning Commission, forums on poverty and sustainable development, and as a key player in the Global Campaign for Education coalition.

4.11 Lessons Learned

It is not possible to develop an education agenda for the poor without disaggregating education and literacy. Ensuring even primary level education of some quality requires an understanding of pedagogical issues, rigorous training and monitoring and sensitivity to local concerns of communities, parents and teachers. A programme for girls' education needs in addition sensitivity to gender issues. Sustainability of educational interventions rests on the constant interaction with communities with clearly defined roles and expectations of community, parents and other stakeholders. And, keeping teachers motivated is pivotal to the delivery of education in the classroom. The changing situations of the poor resulting from a decline in employment opportunities, degradation of the environment and other uncontrollable factors have to be met with flexible responses.

Some of these are a revision of the training programme with greater involvement of the SAHE Lahore Support Unit in directly training teachers. Among other factors this was necessitated by the change in curriculum and textbooks. Therefore, all training of CBS teachers is conducted by the Lahore team of trainers and observed by the district teams. Indicators for followup and assessment in the classroom are also developed by the Lahore team. The classroom follow-up, cluster based trainings and monthly payday trainings/teacher support are the responsibility of the district Teacher Support Centre and district teams. The TSC is increasingly focusing on (i) Cluster based training of teachers (ii) Pay day training of teachers (iii) Students assessment (iv) Classroom based training (v) Supporting teachers in upgrading their qualifications through the distance learning programmes (v) Resolving teachers' social problems (vi) Organizing co-curricular activities (vii) Documentation. The centre is focusing on ensuring that children do not drop out by motivating teachers, emphasis on classroom improvement, and documentation of experiences. It is also providing training to NGOs running non-formal schools under the Department of Literacy in the districts.

4.12 Scaling up the CBS programme

The question of scaling up an innovative intervention is fraught with inherent problems such as the availability of financial and human resources for different programme components, higher level management and pedagogical expertise, retention of personnel at the district level, an effective monitoring system, and the development of appropriate data/information systems.

Difficulties encountered in the CBSP model provide a basis for the kind of problems likely to be encountered in expanding the program. Increase in poverty and migration owing to the feudal social/political/economic structure, a deteriorating physical environment, finding suitable expertise at district levels, adequate space for the schools, community conflict and insecure social environment for female personnel and girls. The likelihood of meeting fundamentalist resistance as the programme expands into more conservative and poor areas combined with early marriage, poor health and nutrition of girls and female teachers are likely to impact on the quality of the initiative.

Although the district teams had been involved in several pedagogical activities with the teachers and students, the need to focus more on content based training required expertise lacking in the district teams.

The district government has initiated a process of making some of its dysfunctional schools operational. In two communities where SAHE had set up four CBS in government school buildings, with the operationalization of the government schools, SAHE withdrew from the

community. This is now one of the strategies which SAHE is following for withdrawing from some villages. Increased collaboration with the government possibly in some kind of formal recognition of SAHE as a partner in the district for which there is room under the process of devolution and decentralization is under consideration. However, the newness of the system and increased inclusion of political stakeholders contribute to the contentious nature of the situation.

4.13 Redesigning the CBSP

As the program has evolved over a period of six years, changes have been made for quality improvement and to ensure the retention of girls. Redesigning has been found necessary in all components based on the following observations:

- Communities need time to accept changes and link quantitative and qualitative aspects
- A high level of quality inputs are required for providing primary education in poor, illiterate communities
- The constant attrition of human resources developed at the district level requires continuous capacity building and is a slow process
- A central education programme located where pedagogical expertise is available is essential for quality interventions and measuring progress
- Changes in training, curriculum and textbooks is important to ensure that learning takes place and the motivation level of communities, teachers, district teams, trainers and students is maintained
- A redefined role of communities in school management, that is, more in administrative matters and not in pedagogical issues with increased parental involvement compared to the village committees

Regarding expansion of the CBS program, no further expansion in new communities would be made beyond the forty-five villages of district Pakpattan as the demand for primary education in remote areas is also being addressed by the district Literacy Department with plans to open maximum number of schools in the district. The District Education Department's recent move to recruit primary teachers in vacant government school building is also an encouraging move towards improving the level of rural primary girls education. CBSP district Pakpattan has an informal agreement with the department not to open any further school in those areas where government primary school teachers are also appointed and are working along with CBS teachers. These are the areas where government primary school buildings have been under use of SAHE community schools since the time the school started in that particular community when there was no government school functioning and the government school building was lying vacant.

Expanding the community based schools program to other high poverty and low literacy districts adjacent to SAHE's working districts where there is demand, is under consideration. Another direction for the SAHE CBS program is to link with poverty alleviation programs such as school nutrition and micro-finance programs for mothers/families seeking to provide education in disadvantaged areas. However, so far the education component of such programmes is minimal and of poor quality. Sealing up and expansion depends on the availability and commitment of funds for a long period.

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Acronyms

AKU-IED	Aga Khan University – Institute of Educational Development
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Action Committee
CBO	Community Based Organization
CBSP	Community Based Schools Programme
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPRID	Centre for Research on Poverty Reduction and Income Distribution
DC	District Coordinator
DOL	Department of Labour - USA
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Educational Management Information Systems
ESR	Education Sector Reforms
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FBS	Federal Bureau of Statistics
GDI	Gender Development Index
GPER	Girls Primary Enrolment Ratio
GPEP	Girls Primary Education Project
HDI	Human Development Index
ILO	International Labour Organization
LUMS	Lahore University of Management Sciences
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOL	Ministry of Labour
NEMIS	National Educational Management Information Systems
NFBE	Non Formal Basic Education
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
PESR	Punjab Education Sector Reforms
PIHS	Pakistan Integrated Household Survey
PMSP	Punjab Middle Schooling Project
PRSP	Punjab Rural Support Programme
SAHE	Society for the Advancement of Education
SAP	Social Action Program
TSC	Teacher Support Centre
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UPC	Universal Primary Completion
UPE	Universal Primary Education
VEC	Village Education Committee
WVEC	Women Village Education Committee



Society for the Advancement of Education

#65-C, Garden Block, New Garden Town – Lahore. Pakistan.

Tel: 92-42-5868115-16. Fax: 92-042-5839816. E-mail: sahe@sahe.org.pk