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Sindh Basic Education Program

In partnership with USAID

Newsletter

Volume II | Issue III

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Profile

The Sindh Basic Education Program (SBEP) is a holistic program towards modernizing the education in Sindh. The School Education Department, Government of Sindh and U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID) are working together to implement SBEP. The program aims to improve the quality and access to basic education for children in Sindh by increasing and sustaining student enrollment at primary, middle and secondary levels. The USAID is contributing \$155 million to the program while the Government of Sindh is adding \$10 million to the implementation unit of the program. The implementation period is 2012 up to 2018.

Program Management and Implementation Unit (PMIU):

In order to ensure transparent and efficient management of SBEP, the School Education Department (SED), Government of Sindh established a Program Management and Implementation Unit, which is headed by SBEP Program Director, who reports to the Secretary, SED.

Sindh Reading Program (SRP):

SRP aims to address critical issues in early-grade reading and mathematics through continuous teachers' professional development, improving assessment, distributing supplementary materials, and encouraging family participation.

Sindh Community Mobilization Program (CMP):

CMP is working on mobilizing the target communities for increasing enrollment with particular focus on girls' enrollment. CMP is also supporting SED in designing and implementing the initiative of Education Management Organizations (EMOs).

Sindh Capacity Development Project (SCDP):

SCDP is supporting the sustainability of the SBEP by ensuring stronger governance and improved public accountability in the education sector through systems building and institutional strengthening of PMIU and SED.

The background of the slide is a photograph of two young girls wearing white hijabs, sitting at a table and reading a large, colorful book. They are in a library or school setting, with bookshelves filled with books visible in the background. A colorful mural is also visible on the wall behind them.

Message

The Sindh Basic Education Program (SBEP) has marked a paradigm shift in the educational system of the province.

Adopting a multi pronged approach, SBEP interventions range from construction of new school buildings and facilities, focusing on student enrollment, teacher trainings, and community mobilization to standard setting for reading and teaching, curriculum development for non formal education and alternate learning pathways. In the process, school enrichment is undertaken through providing them with modern furniture, laboratories, state-of-the-art libraries and information technology facilities. In addition, SBEP has been providing technical assistance to the School Education Department (SED) and supporting it in its reform policy.

We have recently inaugurated our sixth state-of-the-art school building in Sukkur. This is a testament to many months of hard work of highly committed teams of SBEP and USAID. The unwavering support from the US Government augmented by the Government of Sindh's tireless efforts to achieve the ambitious targets is coming to fruition. These initiatives will have far reaching impact on improving the quality of school education and children's learning experiences and environment in Sindh.

I would like to acknowledge and thank everyone for playing their role with perfection, including the School Education Department, Government of Sindh, USAID, CMP, SRP and SCDP, without whom the success would not have been possible. I am so happy to lead and serve such a robust program that is immensely contributing to a brighter, more prosperous Sindh and Pakistan.

Akram A. Khowaja
Program Director
SBEP (PMIU -GoS)



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PMIU UPDATES

Inauguration of new state-of-the-art school buildings

The fifth state-of-the-art school building was inaugurated at Kolab Jial, District Khairpur on August 23, 2016. The US Consul General Brian Heath, Sindh Education Minister Jam Mehtab

Hussain Dahar, Secretary Education Dr. Fazlullah Pechuho and Program Director, SBEP Mr. Rafique A. Buriro graced the inauguration ceremony. All of the SBEP partners, government

officials, community members, students, teachers, parents and media persons attended the event.



Provincial Minister for Education & Literacy visits PMIU

Jam Mehtab Hussain Dahar, Minister for Education & Literacy Sindh visited the Program Management and Implementation Unit (PMIU) on August 19, 2016. He chaired a detailed meeting with all SBEP partners and reviewed the program's progress. The representatives from USAID, Sindh Reading Program (SRP), Community Mobilization Program (CMP) and Sindh Capacity Development Project (SCDP) attended the meeting. The Minister appreciated the efforts of the SBEP team and assured his full cooperation in program execution.



Sindh Education Minister Jam Mehtab Hussain Dahar receives briefing about program.

The PSC review progress



Dr. Fazlullah Pechuho chaired the PSC meeting.

The 14th meeting of the Program Steering Committee (PSC) for the Sindh Basic Education Program (SBEP) was held on September 21, 2016. The meeting was chaired by the Secretary School Education Department, Dr. Fazlullah Pechuho and was attended by the representatives from Program Management and Implementation Unit (PMIU), USAID, Sindh Reading

Program (SRP), Sindh Community Mobilization Program (CMP), Pakistan Reading Project (PRP), Sindh Capacity Development Project (SCDP), A&E contractor, P&D Department, GoS, Finance Department, GoS, RSU and Directors of Schools Education. Strategic decisions were made at the PSC with key follow up actions to accelerate progress of SBEP.

SBEP celebrated 5th anniversary

The fifth anniversary of the signing of the SBEP activity agreement was celebrated at PMIU on September 21, 2016 in Karachi. Dr. Fazlullah Pechuho, Secretary SED and Dr. Randy Hatfield, Senior Advisor and Program Manager SBEP-USAID, performed the cake-cutting ceremony. All SBEP partners, including SRP, CMP and SCDP were present on this occasion.



SBEP celebrated 5th anniversary of activity agreement, Dr. Pechuho cutting cake on the occasion.

Participation in JESR II

The PMIU set-up a stall showcasing various SBEP interventions along with information material during the two days Joint Education Sector Review (JESR) -II organized by RSU/SED in Karachi on September 27-28, 2016. The activity catered to better visibility, understanding and awareness of the SBEP activities and upcoming initiatives.

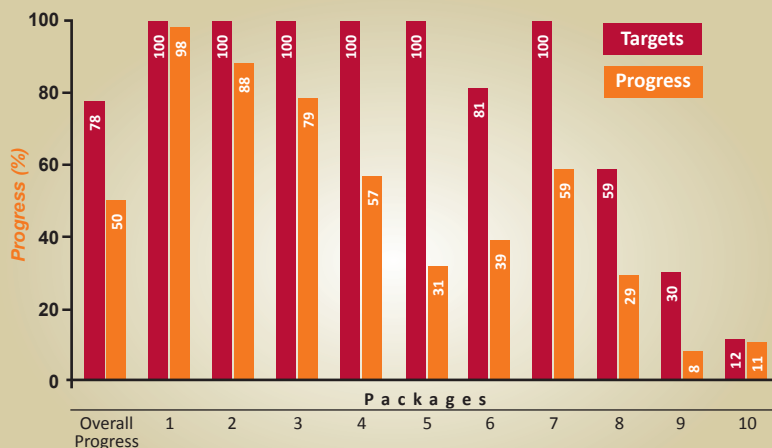


A group photo of SBEP family with Sindh Education Minister, Jam Mehtab Hussain Dahar, Dr. Randy L. Hatfield, SBEP Program Manager, USAID and Mr. Rafique A. Buriro, Program Director, SBEP

Progress on Construction of New School Buildings

There are 15 construction packages under which 106 schools are being constructed. Of these, 71 schools in 10 packages encompassing five districts and select towns of Karachi are at different stages of construction. Remaining schools in five packages are in advanced stage of planning and procurement.

Summary of physical progress on construction



*Seven schools are completed, of which, 4 schools are handed over to School Education Department, Government of Sindh.



USAID delegation attending second DST meeting in Sukkur along with senior level officials from partner organizations chaired by the Deputy Commissioner.



Children performing during International Literacy Day celebrations at GGPS Haji Lal Bux Shaikh, Larkana.



USAID mission during meetings with Community in Village Dodanko, Sukkur.



CMP Year-4 Work plan meeting in Karachi.



Dr. Randy Hatfield, Senior Advisor and Program Manager SBEP-USAID visited ICT Level -3 Training organized by SCDP in Sukkur and Khairpur districts.

SINDH COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION PROGRAM

CMP signs small grants agreement with SMCs

The CMP Qamber Shahdadt team organized a quarterly review and planning meeting to share the program's progress with the District Education Officer and his team. CMP also shared the snapshot of the CMP year IV plan. Besides the ongoing support to SMCs and construction contractors in construction schools, the CMP team signed 70 grant agreements with SMCs as part of the small grants program.



CMP undertakes initiatives to enhance enrollment and community outreach

CMP has conducted cluster based enrollment enhancement campaign in 75 clusters. As a result, it has managed to reach out to 36,601 participants, including students (both boys and



girls), teachers, parents, civil society representatives, media and officials from the education department. This was also the first time when the Education Department in Sukkur district registered the students in general register on the day of admission.

Community outreach is another area where CMP has made significant efforts by engaging communities in celebrating community recognition days, like Annual School Days, Independence Day and International Literacy Day in various schools. These events foster enhanced community participation and strong involvement in local decision-making. These also create excellent opportunities to engage communities for increasing the role of women in promoting girls' enrollment. CMP has continued to provide capacity building support to SMCs and facilitated the process of developing Social Mobilization Plans (SMPs) and School Improvement Plans (SIPs). During the fourth quarter, SMCs drafted nine SIPs. In addition, 56 new SMPs were developed.



Local resource generation initiatives

CMP organized school based events for a local resource generation in 54 schools. As a result of the success of this as well as previous quarters' local resource generation events, CMP team sought 456 in-kind and cash contributions from community members, local notables and philanthropists of 54 schools.

CMP and AKU sign agreement for technical assistance

CMP signed a sub-contract with Aga Khan University Human Development Program for technical assistance in the implementation of component III (i.e. To improve child nutrition in selected communities and government schools through research that informs innovation and good practices). In the last quarter, 44 CMP focused schools were supported in conducting school cleaning activities. CMP ensured gender mainstreaming in



all program activities, such as women's participation in community recognition days, reviewing and implementing grants, which addresses equitable needs of boys and girls, and engagement of men and boys in facilitating women's participation in local decision making. In this regard, CMP conducted dialogue with team members, communities and organized meetings with other stakeholders.



CMP provides technical assistance to SED

One of the significant accomplishments of CMP during this quarter is to provide technical assistance to the School Education Department (SED) in drafting RFP # 3 on cluster based model (a package of construction as well as some neighboring schools), which will allow EMOs to improve a greater number of schools. CMP also organized two district support



team meetings in Khairpur and Sukkur districts to facilitate existing EMOs in smooth operations and management of handing over of the schools.

CMP provided technical assistance to SED in hiring of independent experts for EMOs to streamline financial management matters for already outsourced school. This will allow EMOs to effectively operate and manage schools

SINDH READING PROGRAM

Approval of draft reading standards for implementation

In the efforts to create a system that ensures quality education, the USAID SRP has been working to create a draft of reading standards in the past year. As a result of this endeavour, in the reporting quarter, SED approved SRP's reading standards for piloting. This brings the program one step closer to creating an implementable system of mapping out reading competencies at early grades as well as the requisite teaching and learning support required for achieving them.

The reading standards will be piloted in selected schools of SRP's Cohort II, where students and

teachers will also have access to a brand new set of age-appropriate teaching and learning materials. As the next step, a draft proposal for the selection of sample schools has been prepared, and once approved, the SRP team will begin its piloting of reading standards across sample schools.

Stepping stone for institutionalizing formative assessment

The program continues to advance in the area of education assessment with the introduction of tablet-based formative assessment. With the guidance and support of the SED, an



assessment system for the early grade public school can be implemented in the coming years. In this regard, SRP along with School-To-School International has initiated the concept note, 'Supporting Enhancements to the Government of Sindh Assessment'. The concept note proposes creation of a comprehensive assessment system

that takes into account both the need for formative assessment for teachers and the information necessary for SED to facilitate evidence-based decision making around teacher support. Once specific data is available on learning outcomes, financial allocations could also be aligned for need-based teacher inputs and improved learning outcomes.

Upon further discussions with stakeholders, a detailed design document will be developed by SRP to guide the process of developing a comprehensive assessment system for the Sindh Province over a two-year period.

Lyari Textbook Library - A host for colloquiums

On September 25, the Lyari Textbook Public library hosted its first debate competition where the young minds received an opportunity to showcase their aptitude for a passionate exchange of thoughts. The debate competition was sponsored by the



Sindh Reading Program where participants were asked to talk about the "role of education in maintaining peace". School teams, community members and library visitors attended this event. The honorable guests included the chairperson of the Women Development Foundation Project, Director of Libraries of DMC - South, faculty members of the Institute of Business administration (IBA), scholars/researchers and administrators of District Municipal Corporation, who also actively supported in organizing the event. The ideas brought forth by the debaters pleasantly surprised the audience as it reflected their ability to think

beyond the conventional. At its conclusion, the judges of the competition pledged to provide voluntary support for the library space on a weekly basis. This proves that a small community space like the Lyari Textbook library can be a platform for bringing a greater change.

The event was seen to be conducive to brainstorming new ideas and looking into future library activities that can be carried out. The library outreach program aims to communicate with community members, encourage them to partake in activities that contribute to the development of public libraries and start a national dialogue to revive libraries. SRP has been actively supporting the library throughout the intervention period. In addition, more services are now being offered to the local community with support from the local government - who are also deeply engaged in ensuring the success of this library space.

SINDH CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

LET'S GO HI-TECH

Technology Enabled Training for Teachers, School Children and Out-of-School Adolescents & Adults

SCDP rolled out an ICT training program in collaboration with INTEL and SED in SBEP target districts. Under this initiative, about 8,800 trainees will be provided ICT skills, including 800 teachers, 4,000 school children (Grades 6-9) and another 4,000 out-of-school children / adolescents (OOSC) and adults from the local communities.

During the first phase, training was provided in Khairpur and Larkana to 128 teachers and master trainers, including 49 female participants.

The trained teachers / master trainers were then mobilized to provide training to 630 students enrolled in grades 6-10 in five SBEP schools located in the

districts of Sukkur and Khairpur. It was reassuring to observe that in some of the target schools, laptops donated under a previous USAID project were utilized during the training. Of the 630 students who participated in the training, 245 were girls and 385 were boys.

To meet the challenges of the 21st century, ICT training is also extended to out-of-school children.

SCDP teams remained in contact with the school management committees (SMCs) of schools where the teachers were already trained. SMCs helped the teams to identify such out-of school children who could not continue their education due to various reasons. These students were contacted by SMCs and brought back to school to attend the ICT trainings. Altogether, 680 such children were trained including 352 girls.



IMPROVING PERFORMANCE THROUGH GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY IN SINDH'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

Over the past two years, the Sindh Education Department (SED) has strived for transparency and accountability. Dialogues for change, building capacity of relevant personnel, efficient intra-departmental communication and use of evidence of timely action are not rare, but preferred practices at SED.

The Directorate General Monitoring and Evaluation of SED has got 15 districts covered so far with independent Chief Monitoring Officers (CMOs) and 225 Monitoring Assistants with monitoring of 100 percent government schools in each district. Real time data are being generated for key indicators, including attendance, enrollment of teachers and students, and facilities capturing essential functionality.

In order to enhance coordination between CMOs and the Directors (Elementary and Secondary) at divisional and district level, a

two-day unique training workshop was held on September 29-30, 2016 in Karachi by the SED and the Sindh Capacity Development Project (SCDP) under the Sindh Basic Education Program (SBEP) funded by USAID.

“Understanding & implementing Monitoring and Evaluation for Accountability and Performance” was a customized capacity building exercise targeting CMOs, Directors and other relevant staff of SBEP/E&LD. It focused on understanding the nuts and bolts of technology enabled monitoring systems.

At the event, Dr. Fazlullah Pechuho, Secretary E&LD shared his ambition that the needle must move on education and learning outcomes for the children of Sindh. He said that E&LD is

working on a number of initiatives through development partners and PPPs in ECE, nutrition, and learning of adolescent girls. Therefore,



Directorate General M&E would remain the eyes and ears of the department to further improve the performance of the sector to the satisfaction of the citizens. Thus, capacity building initiatives, customized by SCDP-USAID and DG M&E must be replicated at the divisional and district level to align accountability with performance.



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RESEARCH STUDY INITIATED ON PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

The SBEP Research Consultative Group has identified two third-party research studies to be undertaken on innovative interventions and strategies employed under the program. The group represents SBEP Implementing Partners, PMIU, E&LD and USAID. The studies identified include Public Private Partnership (PPP) for Better Service Delivery and Improving Early Grade Reading through

Innovations. A rigorous and consultative approach was adopted for all stages from identification of research topics to evaluation of proposals and award of the contract.

Overall objectives of the research studies are to increase the availability of evidence-based knowledge on education sector reforms in Sindh with particular focus on SBEP interventions, to

assess the potential for replication and scaling up of promising approaches/innovations adopted by the interventions, and formulate a set of guidelines and recommendations to help policy-makers, planners and practitioners for replicating the interventions and reforms across the sector.

The study on PPP particularly focuses on the EMO initiative.

SUCCESS STORY

Expanding horizons for girls' education

In the post-flood scenario in 2011, Government Girls High School, Arain, District Sukkur was one of the schools which were severely damaged.

Besides its dilapidated infrastructure, it also limited the girls from continuing their education after grade VIII. Ms. Uzma D/o Mr. Asmat Ullah, a middle class public servant, was one among many girls of that village who was left with no option but to quit their studies after grade VIII.

Uzma said, "My parents were willing to provide me education as they did for my brother, who completed his B.Sc. But they prefer that I go to any girls' school, not in the co-education.

After the flood, our school was used as an IDP camp to accommodate people from the worst affected areas."

According to one of the teachers of GGHS Arain, distance to other schools, lack of a dedicated school for girls and unsafe environment for girls were some of the other challenges to girls' education in this district.

When USAID decided to construct this school, it was upgraded from an Elementary to a High School. This enabled Uzma and many girls like her, who were forced to drop out more than two years earlier, to resume their education.

Now with this school, having all the required facilities, parents are very happy to send their girls to school.

"Had there not been a newly constructed Girls High School, many girls like me would have lost the opportunity to continue higher education and pursue our dreams to

become what we want to be," Uzma

Continued. "In a remote community like ours, secure places for girls' education are very important."



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