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SUCCESS STORY

Breaking the barriers

The Sindh Community Mobilization Program continues to maximize community support for the Sindh Basic Education Program's investment in the future of education in Sindh Province by strengthening School Management Committees and promoting community ownership of the education.



Photo by: USAID/CMP

Children alighting the school bus donated by the SMC Chairman, GBLSS, Hasul Khan Jamali.

“The team of Sindh Community Mobilization Program made us realize the importance of education for our children and development. I contributed PKR five lac for remodeling of the vehicle and 4,000 per month for repair, maintenance and fuel costs. I will continue supporting the transport arrangement and am willing to contribute even more for the education.”

Dr. Sher Khan Jamali, SMC Chairman, Government Boys' Lower Secondary School, Village Hasul Khan Jamali, District Jacobabad.

The community members, members of the school management committees and community mobilization team of District Jacobabad could be observed engaged in a discussion. Meeting centered on how to enroll the girl and boy students of the eleven villages situated within 10 kilometer radius of the GBPS Hasul Khan Jamali and GBLSS Haji Hasul Khan Jamali, the only schools in the area. Parents could not afford the travelling cost of sending their children to the school because of absence of cheap availability of public transport.

Participants were trying to unsuccessfully solve the problem, which had barred the doors to education for all in their area, as financial cost was involved in all options. Meanwhile, the village elder and SMC Chairman, a middle aged person, Dr. Sher Khan Jamali, intervened. “Education is the right for all. I will financially support pick and drop of children from the six villages,” he said.

Community based meetings by SMC in the villages proved very successful and many families decided sending their children to school by availing the free transport facility offered. It was the day of excitement when services of six auto rickshaws were hired for the pick and drop of students. The 291 girl and boy students got enrolled in the GBPS and GBLSS Hasul Khan Jamali schools within 15 days. School enrollment of GBPS Hasul Khan Jamali increased from 38 to 208 and GBLSS students' enrollment increased from 81 to 202.

It was decided during another meeting after a month that PKR 3,000 cost of transport per day was proving very expensive. Again Mr. Sher offered remodeling of one of his vehicles and got it refurbished by spending PKR 500,000. It was the day of celebration when the school bus reached the school campus, and when it began picking 240 students from the 11 villages. The school bus plying on the roads of Hasil Khan Jamali and adjacent villages is evident of the fact that harnessing communities' support for education can deliver wonderful results.