



## SUCCESS STORY

### Acchi Taleem – A Mother’s New Prayer

Sindh Reading Program’s mothers are breaking free from the shackles of the long-held belief that girls cannot dream. These mothers are not only furthering their daughters’ pursuit of success but also helping them dream big.

#### Helping Dream Big



“Reading at home has become family time. My husband and I are very pleased to see our daughters read all by themselves and get very little help from their tuition teacher. SRP books have made reading very convenient, and we can see a lot improvement in girls’ fluency and comprehension,” says Rubina, mother of Midhat Fatima, 7, Grade 2 student at Government Girls Primary School, Haji Lal Baksh.



Khalida, 35, does not let her domestic responsibilities come in the way of her key responsibility toward her daughter’s education: the responsibility of helping little Mundat chase her ambitions passionately.

Rugged topography, impenetrable vegetation and hostile weather conditions characterize the tiny village of Lal Buksh Sheikh, in the upper Larkana district of Sindh. Easily among the district’s most remote villages, Lal Baksh Sheikh is located near the frontiers of Indus River.

Gathered inside the front yard of Rubina, a group of four to five mothers sat down to talk to me about their experience as parents with USAID Sindh Reading Program (SRP). I thought of it as a good opportunity to also tell me how far they think they have come in letting their daughters get an education which puts them on a par with boys today.

And their response was overwhelming!

“In our generation, we would be told to get married, have children and have a good life. But now life is different. I want my daughter to be independent and have her own job and do well in her life. I want her to be able to make her own decisions. That is what I wish for my daughter”, said Rubina, 37, mother of Midhat Fatima,

Nighat Bibi, 40, added to the account: “When I was young I went to school for two days. I had to walk a long distance before I could reach my school. My family refused to give me food because they didn’t want me to study. So, I gave up my dream of education because I couldn’t go without food. After twenty years, my daughter not only goes with proper breakfast in the morning but, at times, with some lunch as well.”

The USAID-funded Sindh Reading Program is helping mothers in interior Sindh redefine age old proverbial prayer ‘*accha naseeb*’ (good fortune) to ‘*acchi taleem*’ (good education).

The program is equipping future mothers with basic literacy, whereby, they can read skillfully, and thus, also increase their comprehension ability. SRP has gone extra mile in creating its learning materials on a scientific framework, which studies and factors in font style and size, illustrations, book size and number of words per page to ensure that these resources are age and grade-appropriate.

Khalida, 35, helps her daughter Mundhar, 6, to read at home. Mundhar is Grade 1 student at SRP supported Government Girls Primary School. “SRP has already provided my daughter with interesting reading material; it is my duty to make sure that she is making good use of the books to improve her reading skills. In Mundar I live all my dreams of better and higher education,” says Khalida.

Describing a changing world, these mothers are now optimistic about the lives their daughters may have. “The prayers of the past no longer apply. We know now that only reading and learning can change a girl’s fortune”, said Fatima Ali, 45

Nodding in agreement, Rubina said, “We want our daughters to follow their dreams – an opportunity which we were denied. If young girls are literate, their chances to change their destiny are high. Our lives will also change with them.”