

HAMID ULLAH

# THE SLUMS DEVELOPMENT



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

# SLUMS DEVELOPMENT

Written by:  
*Hamid Ullah*

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# DEDICATED TO

*My beloved children  
Mehak Gul  
&  
Vissal Shakir Rehman*

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## **For vulnerable people...**

It's the people who define history, but the whole history needs a specific context. It is not possible to get whatever a person wants but to get to the destination every step of the path is considered a sign of success that is only achieved through persistence.

History is evident to numerous stories of human struggle. These stories also have in them such examples, which can be interpreted as 'historical moments'. That is, such moments changed the entire course of history turning a new chapter in the life of mankind. In the mass movements, there have been many ups and downs. Sometimes the volume of the mass decreases, but sometimes the mass changes to a completely new state, which historians call revolution. A revolution is a tumultuous and transformative event that does not take place overnight but happens only due to the result of persistent struggle.

People in Pakistan have been undergoing such unending struggles for the past four decades. All these mass movements culminate into one thing. That is, the



stability of a democratically developed society where all citizens can live a peaceful life without any discrimination on the basis of gender, nation, color, creed and region. Where they have freedom of expression, association and the right to rule. They should not live under the fear, terrorism, and narrow-mindedness. There are many colors of people's struggle to achieve this goal. Political struggle for human and civil rights, movements against social inequality are also moving towards the same destination.

Hamid Ullah has become an epoch of this era in this respect, his era is the height of such social movements when the poor and underprivileged people began to empower themselves with their courage. We can call this the age of empowerment. When the common people formed their parent organizations, organized themselves, amassed some of their infinite resources and started doing great deeds which not only facilitated their lives but also became a source of imitation for others.

I still don't forget a young boy from the past who used to put new cells in old batteries and make them usable. In my view, he has made himself so powerful

that he has become a role model for others.

Although people have become lawyers through private studies, but it is his conscientiousness and political understanding that have made him a prominent figure.

Apart from himself, he also pulled his wife to join the circle. There was a time when in 1995 Aurat Foundation refused to invite her to a program on political education, because the NGO administration thought she was apolitical, however, she has proved everybody wrong and now she is a leader of a political party at the district levels and an active councilor of one of the towns of Rawalpindi. The struggle of this couple is one of the best examples to bolster the poor and helpless people.

I cordially felicitate him on writing this book and pray for him to achieve more success in life.

***Zahid Islam Lahore***

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The role and experience of the social leader is more important than the social development process.

Development is a process that involves other factors, but they need to be linked. In Pakistan, the social sector is quite old but it has not been able to come together due to various reasons. It is the need of the hour that we should write down our experiences that the people have easy access to so that people could gain from them.

Hamaray Tajarbaat (Slums Development) is an effort in this regard. Hamid Ullah who is a social activist has the skills to do experiments (social) and also coordinate and work with ordinary people. In this book, he describes the circumstances of his professional life in plain language. Whether it's an education issue or a student issue, whether it's a business issue or a poverty alleviation skill, this book provides content for the average reader. This book has lots of things for general reader so that the resources could be identified for people who are fighting poverty in the society. In this book, Hamid Ullah has written down all the situations that today's social worker seems to be suffering from.

All the experiments he conducted in the fields of

environmental pollution, damages caused by floods and loan scheme have become a beacon of light for his peers and the newcomers. The most important work is the establishment of non-governmental organizations. The aim behind setting up NGOs is to resolve social issues on priority. Because of the innumerable problems, it is very important to build institutions and to maintain them consistently. Hamidullah also mentioned his foreign tour in a very good manner. The story of this visit helps in garnering many new ideas which give us better development opportunities. Reading books is essential for positive change and choosing good books is an essential part of it. The book in your hand is an open truth about social development. And this truth can only be experienced. Most great people tell us where to go or when to go, but the greatest people take us to the destination. So this book is also something that hints towards such things. This book is a good formula for students, sociologists and social organizations. It attracts us to do experiments and then convey our thoughts and experiences to ordinary the people.

***Anis Danish***, Executive Member Hands

## Why is this book important?

The French Revolution and the Russian Revolution filled the word revolution with such magic that these two revolutions came to be regarded as the epitome of solutions for all problems in societies around the world. Occupying the state came to be seen as the only way to change the system. This was the romance that began to die down after the fall of Russia. The Third World, and especially in our country, nobody understood this scenario that these revolutions, which were themselves the result of an evolutionary process, were in fact the end of the old systems.

Vigorous and change loving Europeans, on the basis of volunteerism, changed everything on their own by cultivating new consciousness, new vision, new ideas and new inventions in new literature, art, philosophy, politics, economics and sociology. They rebelled against the old backward feudal institutions and formed new ones, which changed the map of Europe. The discussions of communism and capitalism were the next stage of such comprehensive development.

In our society the British laid the foundation of new system by replacing the old institutions with the new ones. Since it is not the result of our historical demands and material activity, we are not yet ready to adopt this modern state system.

While the real need and the only way is to improve the modernity of this system, to form and strengthen its institutions and to rid it of the old backward elements and factors, but in our country the rebels of backwardness and the spokespersons of new consciousness have often fallen prey to the political and revolutionary organizations.

Their theoretical consciousness could not produce pragmatic vision because it did not give rise to any kind of Semitic knowledge and material activity.

With the collapse of communism and then the emergence of extremism in Pakistan, the wave of consciousness broke the intellectual connection with the next generation. But there is an ideology that has been pushing them to do something. Regardless of the NGO debate, there are new people in our cities, villages and towns today who want to do something with a volunteer spirit. The face of the worst system can only be created

by their social practice and material dynamism.

HamidUllah is the representative of Pakistan with a new spirit of enthusiasm, activism and volunteerism who has been among the common people for the last ten to fifteen years providing many services to them, building institutions, creating platforms and organizations. He has set new examples of weaving and decorating character. He has written all his experiences in this regard in the book under review. I think that while HamidUllah is a model in the people-friendly transformational trend in building a new Pakistan, his book is a curriculum for those who want to change this society in practice and want to do something for people. This book shows that even if you are in a very backward situation and environment and both your hands are empty, you can still do great things.

***Dr. Rosh Nadeem***

## Impression

It is said that a living elephant is worth one lakh and a dead elephant is worth one and a half lakh. This is not because of his weight but because of the importance of his body parts which are used in various works after his death.

This example is bereft of HamidUllah. As long as he kept on doing a job, he was useful for his office, but as soon as he left the job, the parts of his brain which he said were rusting during the job, started working again. Resting for a while after being unemployed, he started producing over Rs125,000 production and his years of experiences that had been forgotten in the last ten years began to be refreshed and he picked up a pen and started writing. In order to write one of his experiences daily, he woke up at around 6 am daily and when I used to get up at around 8 am, he will hand over the paper saying this is our experience of sewing center, the experience of our trainee grant, the experience of our school and so on. After reading his thoughts, I usually told him that he has summarized his experiences to



great extent as compared to the enormity of the struggle he has undergone during his life. I was with him during these experiments. But his experiences were his mental inventions even then and today. They come to the fore in the form of his creative book. It is also a testament to his hard work and dedication. He says the writing should be short but concise. In this book, he summarizes his experiences. It was not an easy task for him to cover the struggle of 20 years in 100 pages, but thanks to their comprehensiveness, it happened. In this book, there is a message for any small organization like CBO that starts some project and often stops due to lack of resources or lack of interest by the people. There is a message for them to read it and learn how and in what time to start a project and what resources and how much time it takes. All the experiments have been included in the book.

***Sumaira Gul***

Rawalpindi

## Preamble

I usually buy a book and put it in the closet. Sometimes there is a book that is very interesting and the number to read it comes after two years. When I read it, I often regret why I haven't read this book before.

Even after marriage, I felt that I should have read this book first. Although this book has been in my library for two to four years. Now after writing the book, it feels like I'm newly married.

I gave the best part of my life to social work. I have benefited thousands of people before I reached the age of prophethood. Sometimes I tell my friends that I have done my part. Now whatever I will do will be a bonus. The institutions I created are still in service today and thousands of people are still benefiting from them. This book contains all the experiences I have had in the past 20 year. During this time, my bread, clothes and residence were the responsibility of my elder brother and his wife.

***Hamid Ullah***

## Primary School

I started teaching at a school in my neighborhood, which had been serving the local community for the past fifteen years, but the irony to the fact was that no kid was ever lucky enough to even clear the middle standard exams. (And during the course of time, I realized as to why the case was so.)

The school owner despite being a public servant was an entrepreneur and was running two other franchises of the same school in other areas. Obviously, he had little time to pay heed to the welfare of the school or towards the well-being of students in our area. The male teachers instead of paying attention to the studies were inclined towards chit-chat with the female students of the senior classes as well as their female colleagues. The situation had a trickle-down effect on the boys from senior classes as well who also remained indulged in the same practice. On the other hand, the school owner and principal only had the interest in fee collections instead of redressing the issues that the school was facing.

Unfortunately, in the entire neighborhood, there

was neither a public sector school nor a private one and the inhabitants of the area had no other option but to send their kids to the same institution. Apart from being poor, they were also illiterate and lacked the conscience that they should get their kids schooled in better educational institutions of the city.

I still remember that it was during the course of the 1990s elections, a need for establishing a new educational institution in the neighborhood was felt direly; unfortunately, requisite funds to purchase land could not be garnered and the dream of setting up a government school in the area could not materialize. Therefore, the proposal did not see the light of day because in reality it never got approved. In the meantime, I along with my like-minded friends was able to launch a campaign. Accompanied by some influential people from the area, we were able to collect some funds. We sold 100 rupees tickets on which a picture of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was printed. Through the entire exercise, we were hardly able to make a collection of Rs14,000 only, whereas in order to purchase the land we required around 800,000 to 1million rupees. We also had to bear the taunts from the people of the neighborhood as well to what they said

was a futile exercise.

In the meantime, we managed to invite, Member of the Provincial Assembly to the area, but instead of doing something practical or making an encouraging announcement for our project, he only gave verbal assurances that he will raise the issue on the floor of the provincial assembly. All our dreams and efforts to purchase land for area school dashed to the ground. But one thing was for sure, we earned good reputation in the area and people started acknowledging that we wanted to do something for the area and nobody dared to question our sincerity anymore.

During the entire exercise of collecting funds for the school, I continued teaching in the only neighborhood school, but I also did not let the dream of establishing my own school wane off. In the private school, I befriended some teachers, and usually, we had a get together at someone's home after school and most of the time our gossips' topic was our female colleagues. Sometimes we also invited them to our gatherings too. During our meetings, we realized the necessity of setting up our own school. We were able to realize that when a poor principal like ours can run a school then how come it was

impossible for intellectuals like us to run an institution efficiently. It was decided that a couple of teachers from the school would voluntarily resign and help establish our own school.

In the meantime, the other teachers would smuggle out the students from the area's private school and also convince the new comers to join our school. Unanimously the school was named, Al-Falah. We selected the home of a student and rented its ground portion for the school. We acquired quotations for some furniture for the school. We had also decided the time for the school inauguration, but unfortunately, we hit the roadblock when the landlord announced that he will not rent out his home to us and our entire plan dashed to the ground. In fact, we were shattered. According to the plan, I was one of the two teachers' who resigned from the private school.

I also had my graduation examinations near, so I paid attention to my studies. For around two to three months, I remained quite busy in studies and after my examinations; I started reading the novels and books which I couldn't during my exam preparations.

One morning when I awoke, I heard a knock

on the door and found a neighbor standing outside. He told me that as we had been looking for a house for establishing a school fortunately, the family living right in front of my house had evacuated the house. Divulging the details, he apprised me that the landlord was also present in the house and I should go and check the house, if I wanted the house for our school project. Frankly speaking, I had no intention of getting into the school affair once again. But my neighbor had come to my door, so ethically speaking; I felt obliged to accompany him to the house which he thought could be suitable for my school project. I checked the house and in order to discourage the landlord from renting it out to me, I only offered him a meager monthly rent of Rs800. But my stars were shining, the landlord agreed to rent out the house even on such an amount. Therefore, I had no option to get the house at Rs800 per month. Our family was indulged in a vocational training center and we were paying a rent of Rs300 for it. So after making my calculations I thought out to run the school initially, I will need around 1000 to 1200 rupees monthly fund for rent and to hire a teacher. And if we lay out a monthly school fee plan of Rs20 for each student then we will

need around 50 students to run a primary school. I also calculated whose children could be enrolled in our new school as students to make up the required figure; I needed for running the school. I reached the conclusion that if we had around 50 students then we can run a primary school.

However, the main question remained about the furniture for the school. I had nothing in my pocket to make the dream of this project come true. Therefore, I met the people who had collected funds for the school at the initial stage and tabled my plan before them. They said that they had 14,000 rupees in the kitty and they agreed to help us get the required furniture for the school. For the office, we required a table and four chairs, which a very kind-hearted person donated from his pocket. Our neighborhood councilor had a broken office chair. I made a request to him to give the chair to us, if it was of no use to him, he happily obliged and I got it quickly repaired. A proper chair for the principal was ready. We got two electric fans in installments and someone donated an old fan as well. We got it repaired and got it fitted in one of the classes. On August 27, 1993, our school Al-Falah was inaugurated.



The local influential attended the ceremony. It was a multifaceted institution. In the morning, we ran a primary school in the building, in the afternoon we utilized it for our vocational center and in the night it became a tuition and karate center for the kids of the area. Our institution was up and running.

In the first month alone around 100 kids got admissions at our school and we earned around Rs2000. We were up and running as the earnings had begun!

I supervised the school with three other teachers. Till the end of first year's annual examination, the strength of our school had reached 200 and in the meantime, we also hired a couple of more teachers for the school.

The school was being run on help yourself basis. With the new admissions, we started providing syllabus to the kids which also became a source of extra income. The school card and badges were also other sources of income while through school leaving certificates we also earned money, which was quite meager because more and more kids were getting admissions into our school instead of leaving it. Keeping our success in mind we raised our admission fee up to 50 rupees.

To uplift the standard of our institution, we

approached different organizations. First of all, we met, Honorable Nasreen Azhar, who got us introduced to Edwin Samson from ABES who at that time was training teachers of federal government institutions. So we asked him to train our teachers to which he happily obliged. As a result, the overall performance of the school improved rapidly. We also adopted some traditional and local procedures to make the school more successful. As part of the drive, we gave chalks to our students to write down the name of our school, Al-Falah on every nook and corner of the area. Similarly, we penned down several anthems for our school. One of them is as follows:

*Al-Falah... Al-Falah... we swear by you*

*We will sacrifice our lives in your path*

*You are a place for the poor and vulnerable*

*We will raise your standard in the world*

*In another song we said:*

*O friends study, Al-Falah stands by you*

*Here, the teachers are great*

*They are highly qualified and well-trained*

*Smile and only smile, if you lose your life in its path*

*O friends study, Al-Falah stands by you*

We also helped our students memorize, Quranic

Verses, as well as small poems that made the parents realize that our school was inculcating better education to their kids and more and more families started bringing their kids to our school for admission. In order to make the school more popular, we often invited some prominent faces from stage and television. The effort paid dividends and the school became very popular in the neighborhood. At the annual functions, we invited some political figures.

Now the system was up and running as people from different organizations had started visiting us. The people started giving us importance. We also got coverage in some local newspapers and we celebrated some important days by organizing awareness walks for students which added to the school's popularity. The students' figure was persistently on the rise with each passing day and the number which had reached 300 mark and the building was unable to cater to our needs.

We shared the issue with Ms. Nasreen Azhar. Her son, Osama Azhar, made a proposal for our school and Aslam Azhar took us to the office of TVO where we met Chief Executive Iqbal Jaffar. In our proposal, we had demanded a grant of 90,000 rupees but TVO officials told

us that they had no policy of giving out small grants. We revamped our proposal and quoted a figure of 138,000 rupees in it, but once again the TVO officials said that their organization does not fund a project of less than 4 to 5 million rupees. They apprised us that in order to fund our project of such a small amount they had to restructure their legislation. We were fortunate enough that TVO made required changes to its legislature and we were paid a grant of 138,000 rupees in two installments.

We utilized the fund to purchase new furniture, fans, water coolers and rented out a new and spacious building for the school. The students' strength also got better and it touched the figure of 400, which was a very tremendous and encouraging factor. We were able to replace the old broken furniture of the school office with new one. We hired highly qualified teachers, got the school registered with the board, and gradually raised the school fee. We provided recreational facilities to the schoolchildren by placing new swings and rented out another building for the school. Looking at our performance, the TVO extended our grant for the next three years, which also included a loan program for poor parents of our school students.

With the new fund, we not only improved the standard of our school but also established two new schools in the adjoining slums. This enabled us to educate around 1,000 students of the area simultaneously and majority of them belonged to poor families. A Canadian, Family Daniel, somehow learned about us and offered his services. For quite a while, he continued educating mathematics at our school, which also helped our teachers to improve their teaching methods. Today it's been seventeen years, Al-Falah is going strong and around 4 to 5 hundred students are studying in it despite the fact it is being run on a self-help basis and without any donors' assistance, it is providing better education to the children of the area.

Recently, I visited the locality and a number of young men met me; they introduced themselves to be the students of the maiden batch of my school and now were studying at Gordon College, Rawalpindi and doing their graduation. I was quite astonished to see them and asked them whether they were alone from the area or someone else had also got education. I was relieved and came to tears when they told me that several of the youngsters who had been taught at Al-Falah were now

studying in several colleges and universities of the city. I became quite emotional to see that my dream had come true. Today I am not in the area, but the children from my area have crossed the barrier of middle standard and I hope the school will continue for many more years. Now many more branches of the school have also been established in different areas.

The entire process taught me a major thing that if institutions are established on the right foundation then one day they deliver the result and keep on producing results. These days the institution is being run by Abdul Qadoos and Abid Hussain.



## Vocational Center

A lady councilor provided embroidery equipment to some youngsters of our area, unfortunately the vocational center never saw the light of the day, the equipment was never utilized and it was leftover to rust. When I was told about the stuff, I made up my mind to start a vocational center. I talked to a vocational teacher about the equipment that one of my friends had and asked her that due to the non-availability of a teacher, we could not start the vocational center. She agreed to teach the students how to stitch clothes.

Initially, I rented a room in my neighborhood on Rs300 per month and then set up sewing machines in the room. We inaugurated the center and launched the work. With mutual consent, we fixed a Rs50 per month fee for students. In the first month, around 20 girls took admission which resulted in a monthly income of Rs1000. We scheduled the class in the evening so that school-going girls could easily come to the center and learn their skills. From the monthly income, we paid Rs500 to the teacher, kept 300 for rent, and allocated the rest of the

amount for purchasing items for the vocational center. The center quickly became very popular and girls from far and near started coming. This system continued for a year or so.

The youngsters who provided the equipment for the vocational center had political ambitions and when they found they could not make their dreams come true abruptly shut the center down and took their equipment away. I was really dejected, and being a student of intermediate started concentrating on my studies. However, the girls who were learning the skills forced the vocational teacher to resume the center. She approached me but I told her that I had no machines to run the system efficiently and how could she work without machines. She said girls were willing to bring sewing machines from their homes to learn the skills. I give my nod to the proposal. We had a small room. I talked to my father about this project and he happily agreed to give this room to us. It was a collective effort as the girls brought the sewing machines, the teachers brought her measuring tape, scissors, and a mat, while I provided my study table and the center resumed. Once again the strength reached around 20 to 25. From



the fees savings, we bought two sewing machines in installments of around Rs300 per month. We had to finish the installments in a year. In the meantime, I got in touch with the Social Welfare organization for registration of my organization. Assistant Director, Farhat Ifza was a nice lady and she along with a rich lady from Islamabad visited our center. She donated a couple of sewing machines for our center.

A large number of girls had learned the skills of sewing. Now it was time to find them some work. I talked to a tailor at Moti Bazaar, Rawalpindi, who sold readymade children's garments. He had leftover clothes at his shops which were usually around half or one meter in length. He said he will do the cutting and the girls at the center will have to stitch them. He offered Rs10 charges for each suit. I readily agreed and the girls we had trained got the work to test their skills and earn their livelihoods.

We had submitted an application with National Zakat Foundation for more machines and furniture for the vocational center. After hectic efforts, they approved a fund of Rs38,000 which helped us improve the condition of the vocational center. Sometimes later, the Managing

Director of the National Zakat Foundation visited our center and approved another Rs90,000 for the center. From this fund, we opened two more centers. Now we were efficiently running three vocational centers in which around 150 girls were learning the skills. We especially focused on the localities where girls used to pick rags from the market.

Some of them were quick to learn the skills but the majority of them were reluctant fearing their time at the vocational center will disturb their livelihoods that will eventually hamper their way of living. Therefore, we approached an organization called CRS (Catholic Relief Service). The organization agreed to provide us a 5-liter cooking oil canister, 1 and a half kilogram pulses, and one kilogram powdered milk that helped us convince the girls who were reluctant to join the vocational center and learn the skills. During 1990-2000 we not only trained around 1000 girls but also worked on their thought process skills for which we had reserved an hour which was attended by human rights activists, lawyers, trade unionists, and other people. Although only a handful of girls worked on a commercial basis at least everyone was capable enough to serve their families and stitched

their clothes. It proved that with determination we can launch anything whether we have resources or not.



## Informal School

Some children who used to pick rags from the city lived nearby. They usually collected scrap and rags from the municipality dumpsters and sold them at local scrap yards earning around 10 to 20 rupees per day. We asked them to join our school, however, their parents were of the view that their studies could hamper their earnings as they were laborers. We gave them an option that after their daily work, they can come to our school to which they agreed.

Under Prime Minister Literacy Commission we established five non-formal schools and provided training to some teachers. These schools were established at rooftops of these teachers' homes. These children worked in the day and came to their respective schools in the evening. Every teacher had around forty students. Thus around 200 students were studying in these schools and teachers had to get them clear their primary standards in three years.

The teachers were hardworking, but the salary paid by the literacy commission was often late. Usually,

the teachers should have been paid Rs2400 after every third month, but alas they were paid after a year. The files of teachers' salaries got entangled in bureaucratic hurdles. This led to a drop in teachers' interest in teaching.

Once again CRS came to our rescue. With their help, we started providing rations like cooking oil, pulses, and milk to these children that cost us around Rs500 per month and asked the students to pay a monthly fee of Rs50. This amount was used to pay salaries to the teachers. The amount which was paid by Literacy Commission was considered as a bonus. Due to food grant, a large number of kids joined our schools and we were finding that the existing space was insufficient to meet our needs.

We resolved the issue by shifting the students to the buildings where we were running our formal schools in the morning we ran the regular classes in which students had to come in proper uniforms and bags while in the evening the students of non-formal schools were taught and the students were free of carrying school bag or wearing proper uniform.

The students of the informal school were quite

sharp-witted and understood the situation very well. They were acquainted with mathematics and were quite sharp in learning. They also started paying attention to their personal hygiene and after getting free food were fully focused on their studies. The majority of these students after completing their primary education took admission in informal schools to continue their education.

Once, someone donated computers for these students. To find an instructor for them became a headache for us because the instructor could not be hired for free we needed money to pay him the salary. After thorough deliberation, we told the students that in order to learn computer they will have to bring stale bread from their homes once a week.

We had the strength of around 1000 students. Usually, every child started to bring 1 kilogram of stale bread and at the end of the week, we had around 1000 kilograms meaning around one ton of stale bread and the market value of the commodity was around Rs6,000 and after four weeks it amounted to Rs24,000. From this amount we hired a computer instructor for these kids easily.

We also had few more experiments of non-formal

schools among which one school was opened in Railway Quarters in which separate classes from 1 to 5 were arranged. It was a complete primary school.

Meanwhile, a non-formal school through Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) technique was run. Under these techniques a child learns from his surroundings. They learn about the names of these things, arrange them, draw their pictures, maps and improve his learning skills.

There is no doubt in the fact that non-formal school was run through salary and as long the salaries are paid the school continues imparting education and it abruptly shuts down with the stoppage of salaries, but if a proper and strong organization runs these schools then they run these schools through different means.

Similarly, this thing is also correct that it is hard to convince working children to come towards education, but when they pay their attention to studies then they get motivated to tread the path of formal education.

It is quite important to understand that students of non-formal schools require special attention because these kids are different from other children, and it is quite difficult to teach them in a traditional manner. They are

sharp-witted and quick in making deals.

According to a survey, when two groups of students, one a group of out-of-school children and another of those which comprised students from formal school was assessed, it was found out that out-of-school children were quick learners as compared to their peers of formal schools.

The basic thing which a child should learn is to read, write and do some basic mathematics and any mean could be utilized to enhance their skill level and running of non-formal schools is one such system.

We learned the basic thing that a proper school building, uniforms, and shoes are not necessary for basic education. You can start your education institution at any spot and provide basic education to anyone because buildings and other necessities make education expensive and are out of the reach of a poor man. Similarly following a proper set of time for schools also hampers the chances of education for those children who earn a living for their families.





## Trickle Up Program

It was Ibrar Shah who floated the idea of the Trickle Up Program. Ibrar Shah had established an organization in his village, Haripur Hattar. It was named Rawal Development Project. In those days the majority of donors were working in the Hazara division thanks to the presence of Umar Asghar Khan. Ashok Kumar, a representative of the Trickle Up Program visited the Hazara division and distributed forms for the program among the villagers. Ibrar Shah worked in Rawalpindi Carriage Factory and seldom stayed with me. He stayed with me overnight; we had dinners and he reciprocated it by giving me the address of a donor. He also provided me a form of the Trickle Up Program. Just for fun we filled it and mailed it.

The head office of the Trickle Up Program is in New York, the United States of America and they usually provided a grant of \$100 to a person through an organization and the grant was given in two installments. The first installment was of \$50, and second one was also of the same amount which was provided later. This

grant was meant for a small business.

We had enlisted 10 of our relatives in the list among whom one person performed very well and the others did nothing. We got ideas for something different for the next time. We gave the grant to employees of Carriage Factor and provided them training for poultry farming, but these people also did not consume the money it was meant for. For the third time, we did not give cash grant to anyone, instead, we got pushcarts prepared for them so that these people could use them for selling vegetables.

This turned out to be a successful experiment and the person could not either sell it to someone or giving it away. In those days cost of two pushcarts was around \$100 and two families benefitted from it. I usually conducted interviews of these people and asked what did they sell today and in response, they told me that they brought onions for Rs500 and have earned around Rs800 and they still have some quantity of onions left which will earn them a good profit. So it told me that they could earn around Rs1000 from Rs500 commodity each and that was enough amount for daily needs of a family. It was for the first time that our project remained

successful and for the next project, we selected nearby villages.

The sale of milk and meat by the villages to urbanites is not only beneficial for urbanites but also for villagers. Keeping this philosophy in mind we constituted ten groups comprising ten women each in ten villages and imparted skill training to them under Trickle Up Program; provided one goat each to a woman. We purchased the goats all by ourselves as providing cash payment was not found to be a good experiment for us.

Initially, we lacked the skills to purchase good quality goats and the first batch of goats that was provided to these villages was quite feeble and weak. But the villagers were hard working and did all they can to improve goats' health.

Later, we became expert in buying goats and bought only those goats which were about to give birth. Under the program, we bounded the villagers to return the first baby goat back to us and the goat will be theirs. We started providing baby goats to other women. This resulted in expanding the entire project not only in that particular village but also in the nearby villages. I will like to mention a couple of people who really benefitted from

the project.

A widow, who was childless and had no relatives to take care of her, so we gave her a goat, she returned us the first baby goat, and her herd continued to expand. Once she was quite sick and for her treatment she sold two of her goats. This project made the women quite happy. I will cite another example in which a woman who was given the goat had left her husband before the project was launched over a domestic issue, however, when her husband found out that she had got a goat, he happily took her back to his house.

Dost Mohammad Khan helped us technically in this project and we appreciate his services.

We used a novel idea of approaching these villagers as most of the residents of the area, who were in our know-how, used to come to the city for their personal chores. We used them for outreach to these villages and offered this program to the female dwellers of the area, which remained quite successful. Initially, the woman who was given the goat returned the baby goat in a hurry, but later we made them bound to keep the baby goats at-least for four months. We also experimented with poultry farming and provided training

to the women in some villages. This project also proved very successful.

We did another experiment. We frequently visited these villages for goats. One of the villages in the foothills of Margalla is Shah Allah Ditta and a vegetable named 'Jeranda' is cultivated in these mountains with the help of water coming from the mountains. It is a mixture of rigged gourd and zucchini, which people cooked and ate. The people of the village plucked this vegetable from the field and took it to the market from where people of nearby villages brought it that was often costly and stale. The men in the village did nothing and when they were asked to tell about the reason for their joblessness, they said that they worked at stone-crushing factories and while digging out rocks from the mountains they suffered injuries in different periods of time as rocks fell on their hands or feet which left them useless. Now the hands and feet have healed but they can't lift heavy weights anymore. We advised them to sell vegetables grown in their village to the nearby villages. They said they will need bicycles for traveling between villages.

Under the Trickle-Up Program, we provided

bicycles to five people. They started selling vegetables but instead of the money they started collecting maize or wheat from their potential buyers of vegetables under the barter system. Usually, they brought home around 40 to 60 kilograms of grains as well as Rs50 to Rs60. The group started earning very well. The villages lacked drinkable water supply system. The stream was in mountains. So we purchased donkeys and water gallons for some people and they started supplying water to the villages by charging Rs2 for each gallon of water. This was a win-win situation for both villagers and water suppliers as one got work to earn his living while others got clean drinking water.

Later we provided bicycles to a large group of people who were doing scrap business in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. When I investigated, I found out that these people were provided bicycles by the scrap dealers as well as the amount of money for purchasing scrap. They called this amount “Morri” (return).

Usually, the people doing this scrap work were in their youth. They usually visited different sectors of Islamabad and bought newspapers, stale bread, and other scrap and were bound to sell their stuff to the

person who provided them the bicycle and the money to purchase the scrap. He usually paid the amount which was around Re 1 or Rs2 less from the market rate. Therefore, if these people brought around 40 to 60 kilograms of scrap on daily basis to these scrap dealers they usually suffered a loss of around Rs100 to Rs150 on daily basis. This amount reached around Rs3,000 to Rs4,000 on monthly basis and even the bicycles did not cost that much.

## **Tehreek Pasmang Shehr**

I formed a group of these scrap boys and named it “Tapish” meaning “Organization of Underprivileged of the City”. We arranged around 20 to 30 bicycles for them and after collecting the amount bought more bicycles for another group of youth. Mr. Zulfiqar Gilani and Fayaz Baqir distributed these bicycles among these youth. This proved to be a very fruitful program.

The donors of the Trickle Up program appreciated our initiative. The things we learned from this program proved that there was lots of profit in small-time business, but the major issue was that the people

lacked investment. It proved that if these people are provided basic investment and that too in the shape of kind and not money than they can excel in their lives. This policy helped such people get rid of middlemen and profiteers. They only needed will to succeed in their lives.





## **Cleaning Household Garbage**

We were introduced to the head of the Small Grant Program of United Nations Development Program. At that time many projects were being taken up in Pakistan under Life Program to improve the environment of the country. A project to dispose of solid waste in Rawalpindi was implemented at a cost of around Rs100,000 to Rs200,000 at around two to three places. We put up an application to do one such project of disposing of waste in the city and we were selected for the project.

In our neighborhood, there were lots of buffaloes and they were the main reason behind excessive waste in the area. But there was also no system to dispose of solid household waste as well. There were around fifteen sweepers who were assigned the task to clean the street and drains of the entire area. They did not lift garbage from the households as that was not part of their duty and that led to rising heaps of garbage in every nook and corner of the locality. The open plots remained an eyesore with rising heaps of garbage. People usually disposed of their household garbage along electricity

pylons and the entire neighborhood resembled a large garbage dumping point. The streets were also narrow and placing dustbins in them was not a feasible option.

As part of our project, we initially selected 20 streets where the number of buffaloes was less as compared to other streets. We held a meeting in each street and after mutual consultation assigned the duty of the Lane Manager to a woman who was given a register for a daily roll call of all the sweepers, as well as a collection of Rs10 from each and every house of the street per month. The female manager was given proper training to do her job.

The next task was to assign a sweeper to the area. We talked to an employee of Rawalpindi Municipal Corporation who introduced us to a family which could not do a government job due to their medical issues. The family was economically very feeble and had to take loans on interest for medical treatment. They had to face the pressure of money lenders on regular basis. The family lived at quite some distance from our neighborhood and it was hard for them to travel between their home and our locality and that could have cost them a lot. We resolved their problem by building them

a room on the rooftop of our school and they moved into our locality.

They started their job in the streets. They were provided a wooden wheelbarrow and people started giving them their household garbage. They started disposing of the waste collected from the houses at the government designated point. In the first month, they collected garbage from around 200 households and it helped us earn around Rs1500. Similarly on daily basis, we were able to sell around scrap to the tune of around Rs10 to 15 on daily basis. The solid waste disposal project kicked off and with the passage of time, more and more people started joining the system of household garbage disposal and our income was getting better.

The government-designated garbage collection point was at a distance and when the quantity of garbage continued to rise, the sweepers demanded that the garbage disposal point should be set up in the nearby vicinity. We accepted their request and after hectic efforts of around six months convinced Municipal Corporation to set up one such garbage collection point near our neighborhood. But the staff of the Municipality did not lift garbage from the new spot and it took us

around six more months to make them lift the garbage from the new spot. Then we decided that the previous spot was far better than the new one. The family dealing with garbage in the area also engaged their children in the project. These children studied at our school in the morning and then helped their family in disposing of the garbage. This family started earning well. Around 700 families were utilizing their services in disposing of their garbage and even after a lapse of 13 years, the project is running successfully. The family has purchased a plot for their own home and many of their children have even been married.

Keeping in view the success of our program, UNDP with the help of the Japanese government established the SWEEP Program that spurred up the sweepers to lift the garbage from the street level all by themselves. Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi was given new vehicles and dustbins. The officers were properly trained and the problem of garbage in the city was controlled to some extent. This was one of the major experiments of my life and after 13 years I took up the initiative once again in a new way and will shed light on it in my e-guard project.

This program proved to be very successful and it proved that if people are spurred and they had will to resolve their own issues then they can not only settle the problems but also help financially and physically.



## Loan Scheme

Dr. Akhtar Hameed Khan provided loans to different people through different organizations. We adopted their Orangi Charity Trust model which facilitated businessmen who had a running business and needed around R1000 to 20,000 loans to boost their business. They only had to give personal surety of a couple of persons and had the obligation to return the loan within a year with a defined set of markup.

In the beginning, we helped around 50 people get a loan from Orangi Charity Trust. Later we were able to get cash from one of our donors. There was a slight twist to the original plan as we were asked to find such people whose children were studying at our school and they wanted to expand their business to earn more so they could easily pay fees of their school-going children.

One such person was working as a mason and had four kids studying at one of our schools. He was hardly able to make both ends meet and pay the school fees of his children. When we discussed the prospects of loan program, he gave his concept that he is a mason

and if we provided him Rs5,000 loan then he will buy large planks of wood and wherever he will work, he will rent them out and that could help him generate around Rs50 to Rs100 income on a daily basis. He was confident it will not only enable him to pay back the loan but also smooth the process of payment of school fees of his kids.

Similarly, another person was jobless and he said if he is given Rs5000 loan then he will be able to buy a pushcart and bring vegetables from the wholesale fruit and vegetable market and earn around Rs300 to 500 on daily basis.

These were some of the examples of some of the people who utilized the loan scheme to their benefit, but there were some people who spoiled the chance and suffered loss as instead of investing in business they utilized the money somewhere else. A person took a loan from us and bought a color television set for his children, another person utilized the money on his household kitchen, and another used it for meeting the expense of his daughter's marriage.

Later with the help of OCT, we took a loan of around Rs20 million and more than 1000 people took

loan from us but we found that it was not a successful venture as only a handful of people utilized it for the right purpose. Some could hardly pay off their loan and the last installment which usually comprises markup was hard to come by and we had to make concerted efforts to recover it. But due to the circulation of the amount, the bank statement was regularly improving. An individual could not benefit from the system, but it was the organization that truly benefited from this system. However, among the local community, the organization was deemed as just as an interest-generating organization. In the case of non-payment, there were always chances of verbal spats with the non-payer which is not good for civil society organizations. Some people have done the same business in an innovative way by selling different household items in installments. I feel that the loan program is a system that could be considered a blessing or bliss. It depends on the thinking of each individual. My personal experience was that there was a need to alter the loan dispersal system. I felt that there is a need to find a system that could improve the overall situation of the common man that will not only enable him to cope with the rising ratio of inflation and get out of poverty.



## Getting Rid Of Air Pollution

Two-stroke scooter rickshaws are one of the basic reasons behind the rising ratio of air pollution in South Asia, particularly Pakistan. In Pakistan alone, more than 250,000 of such rickshaws are being plied on roads and they could not be shut down abruptly because a majority of people are benefitting from them. Although India's Supreme Court in one of its decrees that all those vehicles which are causing air pollution should be stopped from coming on roads and imposed a ban on two-stroke rickshaws.

When I conducted research on them, I found out that if special kits run on Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) or Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) are fitted in these rickshaws then pollution could be controlled to some extent as they do not emit poisonous gases that are released when two-stroke rickshaws use Mobil oil and petrol. We contacted UNDP which sought proposals in this regard. We sought Rs2 million for extending loans to rickshaw owners and Rs500,000 for running expenditures.

UNDP approved our proposal. We surveyed the market to learn to where we can get gas kits for rickshaws and how much will it cost. The kits imported from Turkey could have been fitted in rickshaws and these kits cost around Rs8,000. While the CNG kit which was imported from Italy cost around Rs25,000. Pakistan-made LPG kit cost around Rs5,000, but it was not very efficient.

We talked to rickshaw owners and also involved their union in the process. We briefed them about the benefits of gas kits that if they will use gas kits then the cost of their daily fuel consumption will cut down efficiently. They were told that if they spend Rs300 daily running the rickshaw then after the gas kits they fuel cost will come down to around Rs100 only and they could earn a profit of Rs6000 per month. The union-management was quick to grasp the idea and they assured us that they will make all rickshaws drivers follow the orders and organize a meeting in which we were going to brief the rickshaw drivers about the benefits of these gas kits.

We visited a meeting where around 20 to 25 rickshaw drivers were present. They were apprised about the gas kit, but we could not convince them to use it. The majority of them were of the view that the

use of kits will reduce the speeds of their rickshaws and it will not be able to efficiently tackle heights and most importantly where will they get mechanics for such kits and where will the gas come from.

Their queries were worth contemplating. We started finding answers to their questions. We quickly surveyed and found out that there was only one place in the city which was quite high. We visited several workshops and asked the mechanics who understood the machinery of gas kits. We found only one such mechanic who had the knowledge of a gas kit. So we hardly convinced a rickshaw owner to install a gas kit in his rickshaw. We organized a second meeting with rickshaw owners and told them that there was only one place in the city that was quite high from the rest of the city and there was a mechanic present in the city who knows how to repair gas kits and a specific person promises to provide the gas for their rickshaws. They raised another issue that they don't have the resources to invest in gas kits at once. To which we told them that they will be given a loan and they will have to repay in installments.

In the third meeting, an elderly rickshaw driver

who had an old rickshaw was convinced to join the experiment. In the initial stage, he was reluctant to join the project, but later the union-management stressed that if something happened to his rickshaw then they will get it repaired to which he gave his consent to joining the project. We got the first gas kit installed in his rickshaw and plied it on the road on an experimental basis and the result was quite astonishing. The elderly rickshaw driver was very happy as he was saving the cost of fuel which resulted in an enhanced income for him.

We held another meeting of rickshaw drivers and asked the elderly rickshaw driver to share his experience with his fellow rickshaw drivers. One of the youngsters said that this is an elderly man and they will not enjoy it when the rickshaw will not release its distinguished sound. But five more rickshaw drivers agreed to join the project. We released loans to five more rickshaw drivers and installed gas kits in the rickshaws.

When the number of rickshaw owners, who joined the initiative started rising then we started getting emission tests of these rickshaws. Usually, we conducted three tests, one before the installation of the gas kit, the second after the installation, and the third

after a period of three months. The results were quite encouraging. Although CNG kits' results were quite efficient as compared to LPG kits, it was costlier and secondly its pressure was very high. Maintaining a CNG kit was quite expensive too, but their running cost was very low and the profit was very good. But its major flaw was its weight and the rickshaw was usually carrying load of an extra passenger all the time.

We basically focused on LPG and provided a loan of Rs200,000 to 200 rickshaw owners. Every rickshaw driver was returning Rs500 per month against the amount he had borrowed from us. And we gave the loan to ten more persons every month.

Some private entities also started taking interest in the program and started giving gas kits in easy installments. Similarly, some businessmen set up gas supply centers at specific points and more and more mechanics were learning the work of the gas kits. Slowly and steadily more and more rickshaw drivers started installing these gas kits in their rickshaws. Now the drivers too were paying more rental charges of a rickshaw run on gas kit as compared to petrol. They were paying Rs300 rent to the owner of a gas kit fitted

rickshaw and Rs200 for the one running on petrol. So in order to check the stem of losses, the rickshaw owners got gas kits installed in their rickshaws as well.

The local administration had reservations about the safety standards of gas supply centers and feared that they could lead to an accident at any time. Decanting could lead to an explosion anytime. The local administration used the services of the police to get these centers closed. The rickshaw drivers protested and blocked Murree Road. Both the sides held negotiations and it was decided that every rickshaw driver will use only a 5 kilograms cylinder in his rickshaw. The government announced to introduce LPG filling stations but the project is still a distant dream.

Cut the story short, slowly and steadily this program expanded in every nook and corner of the city. Although some banks contacted us but due to lack of surety they backed away, however, the government introduced four-stroke rickshaws that were given on installments through banks. Now the day when there is gas load-shedding, the rickshaw drivers do not ply their rickshaws on roads. Results could only be achieved through persistence and steadfastness.

## **Floods in NullahLeh and our work**

On the fateful day of July 23, 2001, a flashflood in NullahLeh devastated Rawalpindi city. NullahLeh is a rain water-fed natural stream flowing through the city of Rawalpindi. Although NullahLeh is a small stream but every monsoon season the stream floods after being fed by its catchment basin in the Margalla Hills bordering Islamabad.

The Nullah Leh Basin has a catchment area of 234.8 km<sup>2</sup>, extending to the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Usually when it rains for several days, results in devastation across the city, but on the fateful day a record level of 620 mm of rainfall fell in Islamabad, in just 10 hours brought in its wake huge urban storm flooding Nullah Leh. The rain started at six in the morning, quite normal for Islamabad this time of the year. Many low lying areas were inundated and even markets were under 3-feet deep water. Rainwater gushed into several homes around Leh Nullah and it was so fast that families could not save their belongings. Many shops in the markets were inundated, the basements were filled with

rainwater. Millions of rupees worth merchandise was wasted. many families lost their buffaloes as they were swept away by floodwater, later the carcasses of these buffaloes were found from the rooftops of the homes situated along Nullah Leh.

In Islamabad alone, there was 620 mm of rainfall on 23 July - the heaviest in a century. While the better equipped and well-planned capital city got away with such a huge amount of rain with comparatively little damage, Rawalpindi was brought to its knees by 170 mm of rainfall. Nullah Leh rose to 34 feet as the rain kept falling and before long, the multitude of houses and shops on both sides of the underground channel was submerged in 20 feet of water. As the waters began to drain away, more and more bodies were being discovered. Fifty people died in Rawalpindi alone and the wreckage caused by the flash floods was enormous.

Much of the problem seems to have been caused by Nullah Leh thanks to the garbage thrown by the people living along it for past 100 years. Meanwhile, an estimated 5000 houses were damaged and more than 1000 heads of cattle were lost.

We were quite perturbed as to what to do and from



where to make a start. Most of the families had lost their homes and were forced to live in the open. We arranged cooked food for them. We contacted Catholic Relief Service (CRS) and Gul Wali Khan guided us through the process. First of all, he provided us tent sheets for the affected families of NullahLeh floods. The sheets along with bamboo sticks were provided to the affected families. We selected ten union councils for our work. At that time the local bodies' elections had concluded recently and in every union council, 21 representatives were present. A couple of them in each union council were selected and they were provided with these tent sheets so that these could be distributed among those in need. In the second phase, we provided water cans and water purifier tablets (chlorine) to the affected families. When we visited the flood affected localities, we found that the families whose houses were not completely damaged had their latrines completely damaged or at least filled with sludge. With the help of the Catholic Relief Service, we took up the task to build latrines in around hundred to hundred and twenty homes. We introduced Pit Latrines at that time which is usually built on a pitcher which usually helps the soil to soak the excess water.

The people got a new system of latrines. The homes which were affected by the floods had to face another dilemma and that was of excessive stench. The people were provided with limestone and brushes to clean their homes with them.

The relief operation continued till August 2001. We had regular meetings with the councilors on daily basis in our office and devised strategies as how to manage the crisis. Our only options to avert future flood disasters in Rawalpindi was that the people in Islamabad should manage their own drain water as they not only drain their routine wastewater into Rawalpindi through NullahLeh but also the rainwater from the capital city affected the people in Rawalpindi.

When I spoke about the matter in a ceremony, the chief guest who was Nazim Rawalpindi got angry over it and I later learned that he was anIslooite. After the summer vacations were over, the children started getting back to school, but the kids neither had uniforms with them nor the books as everything was lost in floods. We once again requested Catholic Relief Service and Wali Gul once again came to our rescue. The organization accepted our proposal and we got books and uniforms

for 500 affected students which were distributed in different ceremonies.

In October, the autumn started to set in but the people lacked proper sleeping arrangements as they had no beds and mattresses or quilts. With the help of the Catholic Relief Service, we arranged quilts and mattresses for five hundred families as well.

But this time we adopted a token system for distribution and on it, we provided a couple of bed sets to every family. We visited homes along NullahLeh and asked them to visit a particular place when they will be provided with bedsets. By doing so we were content that the deserving got what they needed.

When the people returned from the tents back to their homes they found that their houses were whitewashed, the latrines were ready and the school children had got their bags and uniforms. Although they had got beds and other stuff; their utensils were missing from their cupboards in which the families usually served their guests. The people through their councilors conveyed their message to us and we once again contacted Catholic Relief Service. The CRS provided dinner sets each for 300 families which were distributed

among the deserving families.

It was my first experience working during an emergency situation and we learned a lot as how to provide relief goods to the affected families at their doorsteps.

This experience worked for me in lots of places in the future. I only learned one basic thing that during an emergency you have to keep your senses and there is a lot of need for teamwork.



## Teachers Resource Centre

Our home, formal and non-formal schools had the privilege of having training facilities of international repute, as a Canadian national, Daniel and his family took the responsibility of Mathematics and ABES's Edwin Samson provided us with a two-year teaching course to our teachers. But the private schools around us were providing education to the students in a traditional way. Most of the children from nearby localities were studying in these institutions.

With lots of effort put in, we formed an organization of 25 private schools. The owners of all these educational institutions were invited for a meeting and through a system, the president, general secretary of the organization were elected. We set up a room in our school where for teachers training a Teachers Resource Centre (TRC) was established. Asia Foundation provided the initial amount of money for the center. The then US Ambassador to Pakistan inaugurated the center which increased the value of our organization.

Initially, we selected two to three teachers from

every school of our organization ABES for training. After the training, Rawalpindi Nazim gave away certificates to the trained teachers. The training course helped improve the capacity of teachers, who were taught the latest methods of education. The teachers were imparted training by Canadian experts.

One thing we learned from the private schools was that the teachers got changed quite rapidly. If the teacher switches her school then it was deemed as fine, but if she abandons teaching then the entire teacher's training process goes in vain. Therefore, we found a solution and only trained those teachers who were attached to their respective educational institutions for a longer period of time.

Besides, we also appointed a well-trained female coordinator in the resource center to provide training to the new teachers on weekly basis.

Therefore, we found the solution and all those teachers who were new got the training, and the gap left by trained teachers was filled by the new ones. It was also decided that every week our appointed coordinators will visit every school once a week to find lacunas and talk to the owners to address them. It helped us train

those teachers who lacked teaching skills.

With the help of this organization, we tried that all these educational institutions should impart uniform syllabus to their students besides having a uniform exam system, the system did not work and did not succeed in it.

We established a combined library and computer center that helped the teachers of all these institutions a lot. We also took another initiative for teachers' benefit that we affiliated all these educational institutions with an international organization where American experts were imparting training. They not only provided training to staff of our neighborhood schools but also provided supporting material for their libraries. The mothers of students studying in these educational institutions were also imparted training as they should work with their kids at home and help them improve their studies.



## Health Program

We erected hoardings and banners of our organization at different places. When Family Planning Association of Pakistan's (FPAP) Program Officer Anwar-ul-Haq read one of these hoardings, he visited us and asked us that besides running different organizations we should also run one of their dispensaries.

We readily agreed and asked them to provide us a Lady Health Visitor (LHV), dispensary equipment, and running expenses for every month whereas we were asked to provide a room for setting up the dispensary. We provided them with a room in one of our schools and our dispensary kicked off.

The dispensary lacked general medicine as most of the medicines provided by the Family Planning Association of Pakistan were for family planning. The LHV assisted the women and provided them with different injections and tablets and the women who were satisfied with their families were advised to go for family planning operations.

Initially, only a handful of people agreed to their



project but whenever a woman in a family succeeded in her operation, she became a role model for other women who one by one started showing interest in family planning. But most of the time these were the women who had already given birth to at least seven children each but the dispensary helped them to avert further enhancing the figure.

After the Family Planning Association of Pakistan, the dispensary, National Trust for Population Welfare also asked us to run one of their dispensaries. They provided a grant for the dispensary, while the rest of the arrangements had to be taken care of by us. We allocated a room in one of our schools in another locality for the new dispensary. We bought new furniture, medicines, hired an LHV, and appointed two social mobilizers who were tasked to visit every household and convince women about family planning.

Men usually disliked contraceptives like condoms, while women were unhappy with medicines because they had to take these medicines like normal food. Most of them wanted injections but women had to bear brunt of this method because they usually got injured in the process and the LHV had to treat them for excessive

bleeding.

One of the major reasons for the success of our dispensaries was the students studying in our schools or the girls undergoing training at our vocational centers whose mothers usually accompanied them to their respective institutions and when they visited our dispensary, they got their desired treatment from the LHV. However, the situation was not good for quacks working in our area and they propagated against us that we were doing the un-Islamic deeds and our dispensary should be shut down. They usually said all this because apart from family planning medicines we also provided general medicines to the visitors and that affected business of these quacks. The people were quite aware of the situation and they seldom paid heed to the sayings of these quacks.



## **Setting Up Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)**

The first organization in which I ever worked belonged to a lady councilor. I had no idea under which act it was registered or whether it was registered or not at all. But I was appointed regional secretary, but later developing differences with regional patron forced me to quit the organization. I started visiting the Social Welfare Organization office for getting my own organization registered.

Farhat Ifza, Director of Social Welfare, was a nice lady. She inquired about my whereabouts and called Social Welfare Officer Mahboob Alam and after thorough deliberations, she told me that a registered organization Social Welfare Organization (Anjuman Falah-o-Bahbud) was working in my area, but was non-functional therefore, if I wanted to work then I should take charge of this organization.

Mehboob Alam told me that I will need around 15 persons to run the organization; among them, seven will work as office-bearers while the rest of the eight will be

members of the organization. He said if I will provide him with the list then he will issue a letter after which I will be able to run the organization. I liked the proposal.

I convened a meeting in our locality and formed a list of 15 important personalities of the area. The next day, I visited the office of the Social Welfare Officer and he immediately issued a re-organization letter. He also issued me a copy of the manifesto of the social welfare organization. After research, I also got the registration copy from the president of the organization, and the organization which was established and registered in 1974 was re-organized and made functional once again in 1990. We had a bank account in the name of the organization. Initially, we had no idea about donors but we learned about them at a later stage. We were provided donations by more than 10 donors. We spend the amount on dozens of educational institutions, health projects, environmental issues, and loan schemes.

In 2000 differences developed among our ranks. A woman, Shagufta who was the director at that time in connivance with assistant director Mr Shah wrote a letter that led to the downfall of the organization all of us lost our posts and now the organization is no more and

only remains in papers.

In the year 2000, I got two organizations registered under the Trust Act 1882. One was Al-Falah Development Organization and the second one Dr. Akhtar Hameed Khan Memorial Trust. We got the organizations registered in the office of a registrar where normal properties are registered. Its process is quite simple, a person who wants to get his organization registered had to show an Rs500 stamp paper inscribed with all the details of all the rules and regulations. All board members have to appear in person to get the organization registered. The registrar will stamp the deed and the organization gets registered.

Under Al-Falah we started a credit program whereas Dr. Akhtar Hameed Khan Memorial Trust was used for sanitation and solid waste management programs. Both the organizations are working efficiently and it has been more than ten years that I got these organizations registered. Both the organizations have five board members.

I have also got two organizations registered under Trust Act 1860. One is called Action for Community Development (ACD). I got this organization registered

from Islamabad in probably 1997 or 1998. Under this organization, we had planned to provide housing facilities to slum dwellers in the rural area for which we even purchased land. The fund for the land was provided by Tasneem Ahmad Siddiqi from Saiban, but so far the project is inactive because Capital Development (CDA) is yet to issue NOC for the project.

Another organization that was established under the same law was registered last year and is named Urban Resource Center (URC). An organization with a similar name is also working in Karachi that was aimed at helping resolve the day to day problems of the citizens. we also wanted to get the problems of the residents of Rawalpindi and Islamabad resolved, but we haven't succeed in our endeavor so far.

We also initiated a business venture in the name of e-guard. The basic purpose behind setting up this organization was to dispose of solid waste in urban centers through a proper payment system. The major success of the project includes that so far around we have been able to lift garbage from 2000 households and in return get Rs100 fees from every household. The monthly income is about Rs200,000. Although the

amount is enough to pay the salaries of the staff, we are confident the organization will be reaping its due profit soon and the government will also start investing in the scheme.

Under e-guard we have also established a Haryali Center where we will prepare organic fertilizer from green waste. It will be later sold.

There is another organization, which has not been registered so far. It is named 'ZaminKada". We intend to provide training to farmers through it. We have purchased land under the scheme. Hopefully, this organization will become a training center where farmers will get the necessary training.



## Getting Grants from Donors

Initially, when we launched our organization we had no idea as to where we can get grants for our organizations. But slowly and gradually we started learning that many organizations provide grants for social welfare projects. We got addresses of all such organizations from our friends in different organizations and newspapers and started writing them letters.

We made a handwritten note of our progress so far and started sending it to such organizations to whatever address we got. Usually, we did not have money even to buy the postal stamps. We usually kept an eye on the incoming mail and used the tickets posted on them that were not stamped. We also got NGOs donors directory which had lots of addresses in it. We contacted them.

The first amount we received as funding was from Rawalpindi Municipal Corporation through our President Ghulam Mohammad Naz. After that, it was DAPRC that provided us fund to the tune of Rs5000. They had sought the project through a newspaper advertisement. Then it was Usama Azhar son of Aslam Azhar from TVO



who prepared a proposal for us that helped us secure a grant of Rs138,000. He also learned how to prepare a proposal. Through a letter, CRS granted us Rs200,000 to Rs250,000 food aid. Then NZF gave us grants of Rs38,000 and Rs100,000 respectively in two phases.

UNDP not only provided us a grant to visit Karachi but also issued us a grant of Rs150,000 for a solid waste management project. The Karachi visit helped us as Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) diverted the grant from Water Aid towards us. Initially, we got the assistance of Rs50,000 which expanded with the passage of time.

We used the grant for our capacity building. We hired proper staff who worked on computers and knew English. We also prepared fancy reports to attract donors. We also prepared a survey of 1000 households which was not only admired by the donor but was also admired by Dr. Akhtar Hameed Khan. In this survey, we had every kind of information about these thousand households. We usually kept an eye on representatives of donor organizations in different symposiums, seminars, and workshops and whenever we had an opportunity to meet them, we took their addresses and approached them quickly. We presented our proposals

to them and asked them to visit our area. We usually showed them our streets that portrayed the condition of the downtrodden segment of society.

Fayaz Baqir had taught us that it was good to seek a grant from everyone, everything and every time. Following our principle, we got assistance from around 15 organizations. Every second day, foreigners used to visit our office and we arranged their visits to our localities.

Although donors helped us to some extent, it affected our persistence. We started developing apprehensions about each other and we lost confidence posed in us by our community. Our direction changed rapidly. However, one thing was for sure that we got consistent aid, but after almost fifteen years we have found out that corrupt elements have also crept into donor organizations and it will be seldom when a donor will give aid on a handwritten note to someone.



## **Low-income housing scheme for poor**

I had always dreamed of setting up a low-income housing scheme for the poor. The desire reached the pinnacle when I studied the low-income housing scheme for the poor named Khuda Ki Basti set up by Mr. Tasneem in Hyderabad, Sindh. I wanted to replicate the project in twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad but unfortunately have been unable to do so till date.

Since its inception, housing schemes were launched for rich people but no housing scheme was built for the poor that led to the sprouting of around 40 shanty towns or slums in Islamabad. Meanwhile, the land that had been purchased for future housing schemes by Capital Development Authority could still not be retrieved from the occupants and these sectors have also been turned into slums.

Similarly, there was a slum near Rawal dam called Sunbal Kork which CDA was able to evacuate and the residents of this locality became homeless. Some of our friends thought of setting up a low-income housing scheme for these homeless people. Our group

comprised Asim Akhtar, Bashir Buttar, and Ms. Nasreen Azhar. I along with Raja Israr, a resident of Sunbal Kork visited Karachi's Khuda Ki Basti to study it and how it was established. After returning to Islamabad, we found and purchased 150 Kanalland near Rawal Dam in a location called Kurri for the low-income housing society. The money for the land was provided by Tasneem Ahmad Siddiqi's organization Saibaan. We conducted the survey of the land and prepared its map.

Tasneem Ahmad Siddiqi visited CDA for getting the map passed but ten years have elapsed, CDA has not allowed us to establish the housing scheme in Kurri near Rawal Dam. Tasneem Ahmad Siddiqi even briefed three successive prime ministers during the past decade but so far we can't get a No Objection Certificate from CDA. Although with the help of Omar Asghar Khan we got a policy for slums passed by President Pervaiz Musharraf. We gave the arguments that without poor people living in slums, Islamabad could not be run even for a day because if there are no peons, security guards, gardeners, sweepers then every system will shut down in the metropolitan city. The then government understood our arguments and a policy for slums was announced

but till date, we have not been permitted to set housing scheme like Khuda Ki Basti in Islamabad.

Presently I am thinking that if we make a group of 50 persons who can afford a payment of Rs2000 each per month then we can collect Rs100,000 every month which can help us allot a plot to a family every month as well so that the family who is allotted the plot can construct its home on that piece of land.

I have lots of dreams and setting up a Khuda Ki Basti is one of them. If life permits then one day I might be able to make my dream come true.



## E-Guard

It was not a new experiment because, in 1997-98, I had already conducted a similar experiment, but that could not turn out to be a dream project. However, I started the latest project in an efficient manner.

For the past 15 years, we had been running sewerage and sanitation projects on a self-help basis. It was a slow project. Secondly, when a sewerage line was laid in a street, people started spreading garbage in the streets and nobody came to clean the streets. The need to address the issue of disposing of this garbage permanently arose. The place where we were working was an area managed by Rawalpindi Cantonment Board, but it lacked facilities. There were no sweepers and the sanitation system was quite poor. Some people on a self-help basis had laid down sewerage lines in their streets but there was no system to dispose of garbage efficiently.

Keeping one of our old experiments in view, we formed committees at the street level. We convinced the people to pay at least Rs100 per house for the

lifting of garbage from their streets. As per our previous experiment, we hired a couple of sweepers and appointed them to work in the locality.

In the first month, around 150 houses gave their garbage and only 130 of them paid Rs100 each and the collected amount was around Rs13,000. But the project gave us encouragement that this project helped us collect such an amount only in a month and within two to three months, the amount jumped up to Rs23,000 because more families had joined the project and started giving their garbage and also gave payment. This was a good result. We were not expecting that such a poor neighborhood could easily dole out such an amount. Similarly, the sweepers also found around at least Re1 scrap from each house which they sold separately meaning if they collected garbage from 200 homes then they easily found around Rs200 scrap from the garbage as well.

Initially, we designed a Ching-chi Rickshaw for lifting garbage from the locality, but it was not successful. However, the couple sweeping these streets has now bought a Ching-chi Rickshaw on its own and doing its work successfully. But we designed wooden tri-wheel

wheelbarrows for the sweepers working in that area.

Although the dry waste is sold easily, the green waste which is wet was a problem and there was no system to address it. We established a spot near the locality and named it Haryali Center. The organic waste was collected at the spot for one week and was later shifted to another locality and more fresh organic waste replaced the old one. The process continued and repeated for eight weeks and later the waste turned into organic compost which is quite good for plants. We pack this fertilizer in One-kilogram packets and sell it at Rs20 per packet. The fertilizer's labor costs the same, but it is the best way to address the problem of wet waste. Slowly and gradually we are expanding this project and have franchised this work. The people who initially worked with us as Social Organizers (Qaisar Abbas, Bakhshad, Bilawal Khan and Tanveer Masih) are now working on a self-help basis and running this project and expanding it.

Social Organizer, Qaisar Abbas is currently working with three hundred houses and is earning around Rs30,000 and he has only one sweeper who is paid Rs10,000 per month and he also sells the scrap of



a similar amount meaning two people are easily earning around Rs.50,000.

Bakshad who is a widow is providing sweeping services to 100 houses and one sweeper is working with her. They easily earn Rs.6,000 each. Bakhshad is charging Rs.150 from some houses.

Similarly, Bilawal Khan who is only a matriculate is providing service to 400 houses and he has four staffers and he pays them Rs.6000 each.

It means they are providing services to around 1000 houses and people attached with it are earning Rs.100,000 per month. The scrap worth Rs.30,000 is sold on a monthly basis. We have also arranged a stall for a scrap dealer at Haryali Center who buys scrap from sweepers. The project is helping around fifteen people earn their livelihood respectably.

We are planning to further expand this project and that is to make an entire union council part of the project where households will be charged on Rs100 each for sewerage service.

Another thing I want to tell you people is that initially when we started providing service to 500 households we provided service to only those houses

who were paying and those who were left threw their garbage in the street, which affected our performance. In the next phase, we launched the project for 500 houses simultaneously and also started cleaning drains which showed good results.

We want to organize this scheme as a proper project which will provide services to every household and prepare compost from green waste and sell its bags.

We are also conducting another experiment that we are forming committees at the Mohallah level and giving responsibility to them to take care of their neighborhoods so that they can collectively understand their problem. We are planning to involve, students from different universities, office-bears of chambers of commerce, trade unionists in the project as well. We are also organizing contests for schools students in which they draw paintings or drawings so that they can also join the struggle for garbage collection and its disposal.



## **Job experiment**

When Mahnaz Akbar Aziz started working with Asia Foundation, she visited my primary school, and then we use to meet at different events. We regularly visited Dr. Akhtar Hameed Khan in Karachi and she also visited him so we often met there.

In 2000 Mahnaz married Danyal Aziz but she did not invite me on her marriage. Once I visited her office and said why she did not invite me to her marriage. She said if you want to have lunch then let's go. She took me in her Purple color Honda Civic to Kitchen Cuisine restaurant and ordered a burger and cold drink. We enjoyed this simple food while sitting on benches made up of wood. In the meanwhile, Mahnaz told me that she was fed up with doing the job and wanted to set up her own NGO. She asked me to help her set up the NGO as how it could be registered.

I asked her to form a group of five board members. I promised to help her get her NGO registered. Mahnaz offered me the board membership saying we will form two members of the group which could be joined by

Mr Riaz from Karachi and Javed Jabbar as well and we could find the fifth person for which I suggested a woman should be suitable for the board membership. I asked her to think about it. We finished our burger. I sought her permission and took my bike and left for my home.

A few days later Mahnaz invited me to her office. We discussed the registration issue once again. I told her to ask her board members to bring in the Xerox copies of their identity cards. Mahnaz agreed to it. She said that she wanted to fund me so I should send her a proposal. I made a proposal for Teachers Resource Center. Mahnaz released the funds through Asia Foundation. We established the TRC Center in Rawalpindi for which Mahnaz brought US Ambassador to Pakistan Wendy Chamberlin for the inauguration. It helped us gain popularity in the area while Mahnaz also got popular in Asia Foundation and US Embassy in Pakistan. In the meantime, a delegation of USAID also visited our center in Dhoke Hasoo. The delegation not only visited our Resource Centre but also visited some government schools in the area. A few days later, another delegation from the US also visited our center. In the meantime, Mahnaz got tired of all the hassle she called me and

said that two women had come from United States and I should make arrangements for their visit to the Resource Center. She sent them.

The women were Chris and Pam, who had come from Children Resource International (CRI), US, that was working on promoting kindergarten education in 35 countries around the world. I took them to Afghan slum where they visited our informal schools. After getting out of the school, Chris fell into a drain and her foot particularly her socks were soiled. I got quite rugged and quickly asked a kid to bring in water. We got her foot cleaned. Chris thanked me. I took her to private and government schools in DhokeHasoo. Later I took her to Edwin Samson in ABES. Neither I had an idea of to what these women wanted nor did Mahnaz knew what they were up to. But Edwin understood that they wanted to establish a branch of their organization in Pakistan. So I facilitated their visit and they left for Islamabad.

Some days later Mahnaz called me and said if I had a passport to which I replied in negative. She asked me to hurry up and get my passport as soon as possible and if, I do not have money then she could help me. I quickly got my passport and after preparing my

CV gave it to Mahnaz. Sometime later I learned the CRI representatives who had visited us some time ago had selected Mahnaz as country director of CRI Pakistan and she was making her team in Pakistan who will visit the US for training and will work on the education sector in Pakistan.

Once, Mahnaz summoned me to her home early in the morning. Mahnaz was getting angry at Mr. Riaz as to why he had brought a new woman instead of the one he had recommended for board membership. However, we as a group of two men and women took the US ambassador's recommendation letter to the US embassy in Mahnaz's father's car and without getting into queue we reached the Visa section where we were interviewed. My interviewer asked me about my salary which was Rs.2000 at that moment. However, the interviewer said that it was very low. I told my interviewer that I was a poor person but my organization was quite rich and I was also a Trustee of the organization as well. I even showed them my papers and told them it was their organization that was inviting me to the US for training and I was least bothered or interested in going to the US.

However, the other three members of CRI were issued visas. I was denied the visa because of my age group because the attackers of 9/11 were also in the age group of 16 to 45 years like me and for this purpose, I had to be monitored for two months and as the training was scheduled for next month I was not deemed fit for the training because visa would be useless in the meantime so it was canceled.

I could not go to Washington. Mahnaz had returned after getting training with four to five members of ECE. After the training, Mahnaz invited me to her home and offered me a job. I told her that I will discuss the issue with my friends and let her know. Actually, I did not want to do a job. My father had once told me that earn for yourself even if you have to set up a kiosk. My grandfather used to say that job is not good if you are doing it for your father.

In May 2002, my wife was expecting our child. I took her to the hospital. I needed around Rs8,000 for admission which I did not have at that moment. I borrowed the amount and submitted it in the hospital. On May 12 my daughter was born but she died a day later. We were all sad at her sad demise. I wondered had

I taken my wife for delivery to a good private hospital, the situation could have been different. But despite taking a loan for the hospital as my salary was only Rs2000, my daughter could not survive. Although my organization had received a grant of Rs2.5 million from the United National Development Program and despite being the trustee I had no desire to utilize the fund for myself because in my view the money was meant for the organization and it should be utilized only there. However, I made up my mind and from May 20, 2002, I started doing a job.

Mahnaz asked about my wife and child and got angry when I told her about our ordeal. I told her that everything happened so quickly and I couldn't comprehend what was happening to us. We stayed at Mahnaz's guest room and continued making programs for CRI. One day Mahnaz called me and said how much salary I would prefer. I told Mahnaz that my previous employer was paying me Rs2000 so she can hire me at Rs3000. She said the amount was too little to offer. She said she has hired people at Rs40,000 salary. So I say pay me Rs5,000, she said it was also less so I asked her raise it to Rs8,000 to which she that she will pay



me Rs12,000. I said it will be great. But after a month when I was paid my first salary check it had an amount of Rs16,000 written on it. I went to Mahnaz and asked as to why she was paying me Rs16,000 instead of the agreed amount of Rs12,000. She asked the admin officer standing next to her to clear mist in my mind. It was my first job because earlier in the organizations I had worked with were those organizations which I had established myself. It was the first organization outside the ambit of my organizations where I was working.

On June 20 I visited the United States as a visitor. I monitored the education system of around 10 US states where I saw how their education system worked and what was going around in their institutions and universities. I returned on July 25.

After my return from US, CRI office at Embassy Road, Islamabad was formally launched. The staff had been hired. An office had also been established in Karachi and agreements had been reached with educational institutions of Rawalpindi, Islamabad, and Karachi districts. We were planning for imparting the training. A trainer had to visit us from the United States. The first training for Islamabad and Rawalpindi's

educational institutions was held in August. The training was attended by nursery level teachers with heads of their respective organizations.

I spent around eight years in CRI which later transformed into the CGN. During these eight years, I was devised different roles and whenever, Mahnaz wanted to start afresh, I was used for laying its foundation. Mahnaz usually shifted me from one department to another like the rest of the staff. All of us always remained ready for transfers and posting like army units. However, during my time at job, I remember lots of things that happened some were pleasant others not. I intend to write another separate book on my job experience. I learned lots of things to improve the educational system. The American trainers regularly came to Pakistan after a gap of six months for imparting training to the teachers of selected schools from Pakistan and we assisted them.

With the passage of time, my salary got appraisals on regular basis. I did not waste a penny from my salary and after eight years I bought myself a car and build a home. Our home expenses were run on the salary my wife was getting.

My last posting was in Buner, Swat where

I worked as project coordinator. I had the job to train teachers from around 100 schools. I regularly worked for a year in Buner Swat where not only I laid a good foundation for the project but also trained the teachers.

In June 2010, when I had finished the last training of teachers and returned to my office from where I had to return to my home, I received a call and was asked to check my email. I saw that I was being sent on forced leave without pay. The letter was signed by Mahnaz. I took a print and left for my home. I always stood by my promise to myself that I will never leave a job or resign. I have returned to my parent organization. This was the experience of my first and last job.



## Early Childhood Education

A human brain develops around 80 per cent of its full capacity in the first five years of age. But in our country, early childhood education is never given due consideration. This lack of attention always proves to be damaging in setting up a good foundation of a child's upbringing that often leads to a weak personality for the rest of the life. In many cases in our society whenever a child cries parents give them opium so the child would sleep better and not create a hassle for them. Modern mothers give their kids cough and fever syrups and the child continues drowsing most of the time. However, this has a damaging effect to a child's mental growth and they lack creativity. Our government also spends money on children after five years of their age. Although children could be enrolled in local neighborhood schools as early as 3 to five years of age, the teachers in such institutions are not well trained and the only purpose these institutions serve is to earn money and children never reap their benefits and deliver as per desired results.

Keeping in view all these scenarios I went through a couple of experiments.

First, was a three-year experiment in which children were not directly linked but was with the mothers of these children. This topic will be discussed in detail in Parent's education section while the second experiment was with children between three to five years of age group.

First of all, we worked on a syllabus for children between three to five years of age group. In Pakistan very little work has been done for children of this age group. Although the Text Board of Pakistan has established a book it is not good enough. It lacks practical things or activities. The program which I introduced had 52 chapters for the first year in it and the syllabus for the second year also comprised 52 chapters. Every chapter had a single subject which had to be continued for a whole week. The child had to visit a spot near his home two hours a day for five days a week and a mother had to handle a group of ten children of the community and she had to help them perform activities. The syllabus took care of the aspect that all senses of children work properly. It was not only aimed at physical growth

but also of the mental growth of the child as well. We tried to train the kids how to draw random lines, colors identification, and playing with soil. So they could understand and develop the sense of smell and taste. They should differentiate between different shapes and colors. The child should be able to understand the difference between the institutions in our society. They should understand and learn about birds and animals, food and relationships. I worked day and night for three months and developed a syllabus with 34 chapters.

The second phase was about the selection of mothers who could convey these chapters to the children. We selected local mothers who had benefitted from our adulthood education program. We trained them for three days. We provided around ten to fifteen thousand rupees things to the mothers for the children and even allowed them to charge Rs50 to 100 from each child if they wanted.

The experiment turned out to be a great success. We established around ten such training centers for small kids where ten to fifteen children were getting education that was aimed at improving their mental growth. Every woman who was running the center got

a job. We experimented in the city area. Later, around thirty centers were established in rural areas which were far more successful than the urban centers. We even facilitated the parents that if they can't pay the center's fee in cash then they can pay in kinds like eggs and grains.

Although homes in rural areas are larger in size and usually a woman could find ten to fifteen children in a single home who could be trained by a maternal or a paternal aunt who could work for free for the sake of the future of her family's children.

In the first two phases of the project, people put pressure on me that the women handling these centers should be paid some remuneration, but I was against this philosophy because whenever salaries stopped, the educational institutions also stopped working and my thought was that the local community should be charged for the education of their children and my experiment proved successful.



## **Taleem-e-Balghan (Education for Adults)**

There had been many experiments on education for adults, but many of them failed. The system which I learned had a different module and the parents' education was linked with the children's education. This helped the program to succeed as compared to past programs.

Around 100 chapters were designed and every chapter had a system in which the person had to learn it first and then teach the kids. There were many chapters including Mathematics, Science, Writing, Reading and Story-telling, and different games. The syllabus was designed by a 75-year-old female who was a US educationist.

In order to spread the program, government-run educational institutions were selected. The teachers of these schools initially taught 20 parents of their classes and then the parents were tasked to teach their kids the same things at home. It not only helped the parents get education but also teach their kids.

This was a unique system of education for me. The teachers were paid Rs1,000 per month and the



experiment was conducted in three major cities of Pakistan and it proved quite fruitful.

The teachers were initially given three-day training which was later expanded to five days training sessions. The syllabus was based on two volumes of 50 chapters each.

Usually, the parents tend to visit the school late, but in order to attract their attention a novel on a serial basis was recited to them which attracted them and they started coming on time.

Many women got jobs on basis of certificates provided by the program.

When the parents came, a test was conducted that was aimed at encouraging them to write their names and learning. The system was revised to understand as to how much the parents have learned. On completion of 5 chapters, the parents were even given certificates.

In order to train the teachers a specific set of study material which was different from the traditional books was utilized. This set of materials was provided to every teacher which included books and papers of different colors and shapes.

Although there were lots of funds behind the

program and the design could be utilized with slight changes which could be motivational for the mothers who could then teach their kids at home. The buildings and staff of government schools could be utilized in the evening.



## Our Home

We married in early 2000 and both of us were active social workers. We had fixed a monthly salary of Rs 2,000 each in our organization. We married in a simple manner and it cost us around Rs.500 only because we did not spend on new clothes and shoes. I used to live with one of my brothers and after marriage, my wife also moved in and we hardly needed money for our expenses. I saved money and built a room in my ancestral home. I intended to live in the same room for ten years (till 2010) and later think about building my own home.

In 2002, I got a job and my salary jumped from Rs.2,000 to Rs.16,000 and we saved the entire amount because our household expenses were very little and we utilized my wife's salary for them. Both of us are vegetarians, we don't spend too much money on clothes, shoes which helped us save a lot of money. From my first couple of salaries, I bought some utensils and a mattress for my home and later continued saving my salary. Initially, we saved Rs.100,000. We had a friend

Mr. Nazim (Bholla) who worked as an estate agent and we visited him along with one of my cousins who was also interested in buying a plot. We asked Mr. Nazim (Bholla) that we were interested in buying a couple of 5 marla plots and that too on the condition that they were not that costly. He showed us a plot that was of 10 marla size. We liked it. Its cost was around Rs.500,000. We agreed to buy it and initially paid Rs.100,000 each and took time for the remaining payment. We paid the remaining amount in installments. Both of us got a plot of Rs.250,000 each. The next phase was to build the home. In those days banks were giving loans, we talked to a couple of banks, but they were giving preference to A-Type property.

We, however, contacted House Building Finance Corporation (HBFC) and got our housing loans approved, we got Rs.750,000 and Noor Islam got Rs.950,000 approved. We started construction. We were able to build three-story floors and lent two portions on rent and started paying the rent amount to HBFC as installments. Therefore, after an investment of Rs.250,000 we got our homes. We moved into the house in 2004 and are enjoying our success. The time

when we will reach 55 our HBFC loan will be over and if we are alive by then, this house rent will be our old-age benefit.

## **A Year in Buner, Swat**

The war of terrorism and the fight between the Pakistan Army and the Taliban inflicted the most damage to educational institutions in Swat. These were around 100 government schools which were spread over five union councils. Most of the area comprises hillocks. When initially, I visited the area for a survey, my office did not give transport fearing it will be damaged in the area. I visited the area in my personal car. I was sporting a traditional Pashtun dress. Although my village was quite near, I was born and bred in Rawalpindi therefore, I lacked the understanding of true Pashtun culture. But spending a year in Buner and Swat helped me cover up this deficiency. I took the help of my maternal uncle who's a poet and used to visit the area for poetry recitals. We visited a Hujra on my first day in the area and as per Pashtun tradition saying of prayers is mandatory so I visited the nearby mosque to offer my prayers. The mosque in which I said my prayers had the prayer leader belonging to Tehreek Nifaz-e-Shariat and he later

became a commander of the Taliban in the area. Despite wearing a traditional Pashtun cap and waistcoat, people were well aware that I was an outsider and everybody was shaking my hands.

The people who were coming to offer prayers were also having their weapons with them and as it was the holy month of Ramazan, the people were breaking their fast in the mosque. After breaking the fast I was offered tea in the mosque as well. Initially, I even hid my identity from my host that I was representative of an NGO and that too an American one. I told them that I worked with the Federal Directorate of Education and was visiting the area to look after the schools and improve their overall condition where I will train the teachers. I looked for a place to set up my office because the rent in the area was quite high because representatives of several NGOs were also in the area looking for the same. The locals were quite clever that these are foreigners, therefore, they should ask for more rent. I looked at ten houses in a week and later returned from the area. I set up my office in Swabi, a nearby district of Buner, Swat. I appointed the staff and started conducting surveys of the schools. We had a regular monthly coordination meeting with

the DCO. We attended the meeting and apprised him about the progress of our project. It was a coincidence that one of the Members of the Provincial Assembly who was also the provincial education minister hailed from the area and I was in his contacts because he was in the good acquaintance with my maternal uncle.

Besides training teachers of 100 educational institutions, I was also assigned the task to set up 30 training centers in the area which were to be run by the mothers in their homes. Although the mothers were not being paid for the task they were compensated with some material. Every center was to be build for 10 to 15 children aged between three to five years of age.

Our organization had a tradition of reaching an agreement with the government. We took our Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to the DCO. He had appointed a coordinator in his office. I briefed him about the project. He visited DCO's house because he was sick and briefed him about the project. He agreed to sign the agreement. We got quite happy. The MoU was signed and we announced dates for training. Later one of my friends Abid Hussain was also assigned to work with me on this project. He basically hails from Chakwal but



we worked in Islamabad. Akhtar Shah, Abid, and I used to wander in the streets of Islamabad and make such proverbs that people got astonished at our thinking.

Here too we used to wander in hillocks and enjoyed our evening along the water canal. We had a five-marla empty plot in our office. We started cultivating vegetables at the spot. We used to cook fresh vegetables and enjoyed them.

We started the training schedules for males and females separately. Abid Hussain used to teach Urdu and I used to teach in Pashto. The teachers used to inform us one day in advance that tomorrow we will be his guests. After finishing our task we accompanied the teacher to his place. After setting our stuff at his home, we immediately asked him to take us to a spring in the area. We enjoyed bathing and in the night we ate the traditional food at our host's place and enjoyed it and talked about the traditions of the area. The majority of teachers used Pashto as a mode of communication so I had to interpret them for Abid. For the first time in training, we ordered food from the hotel, but the teachers were not happy with it. The next time teachers asked us to pay them cash and they will arrange the food. We

agreed to their demand. They hired a local caterer who cooked a new dish everyday for us and we enjoyed this food. Most of the teachers on part-time had shops or were tobacco growers.

The majority of things appealed to the teachers but the one thing that attracted most of their attention that when I said to them they were grooming a generation that was useless like the tobacco which was used only in the sniff. It is not high-quality Virginia Tobacco which is used in top cigarettes brand like Gold Leaf and the children of this generation are unable to use their hands and feet and despite spending five years in primary level are unable to read or write. I told them that this was a great injustice not only to the kids but also to the nation and we will have to take steps to make amends today.

They were told that they will have to teach the kids to make them responsible citizens of the country. The teachers got inspired by our talk.



## End To Poverty In The Blink Of An Eye

In the last year of the military dictatorship cabinet, American Secretary of Finance visited Pakistan. A month before his arrival, Jonathan told us that the US Secretary of Finance wants to visit a good educational institution where he wants to watch the true reflection of Pakistan's educational culture. Our organization decided to take him to Dhoke Munshi which is a poor neighborhood and the condition of schools in the area is quite pathetic. The next day we showed Jonathan a couple of schools in the locality among which he liked one. In few days after her induction, the newly appointed USAID officer Sawera called us and said that few more people want to visit the school for administrative and security purposes. The delegation included Deputy Mission Lawrence. Mehnaz apprised me about the visit in the night and as per her directives I had to be at the office by 7 am. I reached the office even one hour before the scheduled time. I spend my time chit-chatting with the security guard and the cook. When Sewera arrived we left and reached the newly built Sarena Hotel. At around 8:30 am Lawrence

arrived, however the State Department's security team had not reached the hotel. We waited for them for around half an hour and later left for the visit site. Lawrence took us with him in his car. He was in the driver's seat and while driving he also lodged a complaint with his office about the security team. We reached Dhoke Munshi and I described the two roads leading to the school, among which one was a broken road while the second one was carpeted. However, I revealed to him that the carpeted road crosses through a busy bazaar and crossing it could not be a feasible option. However, they checked both the roads. Before the finance secretary, a ten-member security team visited the site.

They rejected the school citing the presence of houses around it. They feared anything could happen. We got dejected and left and told Mahnaz about it. She suggested a G-6 school, however, this was rejected by Sawera and Jonathan and they themselves left to find a suitable school. Later one of our team members Fakhra told us that both Sawera and Jonathan continued peeping through the closed school doors to select a school because they had to finalize a school the next day. Finally, the team selected a Federal Government

Model School situated in Malpur village situated along Murree Road which was reflective of poverty. The next day a meeting was arranged at the office of Director General of the Federal Directorate of Education and they were apprised of the details of the visit. Finally, everything was finalized amicably.

Mehnaz assigned me the task to visit the school and check its whereabouts. The road to the school till Murree Road was carpeted, however, after this initial stretch around 3 kilometers road was bumpy and uncarpeted which fulfilled the demand of poverty made by Jonathan.

A day before the visit, Mehnaz's parents wanted to visit the school to inspect it personally so before moving ahead, I was able to convince them that the road ahead was not perfect as at a few spots it was bumpy, but I lost my wits when we moved on the road that all the bumpy patches and ditches have been covered up and the bushes along the road have been cut and the vicinity seemed quite clean and sharp. The cow dung heap in front of the school had already been removed and lots of people were busy finalizing arrangements for the visit. The whitewash and quick fixes to the school structure

were being made. The teachers and students were also getting ready for the visit. When I apprised Mehnaz about all these arrangements she also announced the arrival of flower pots for the school as well by the next day.

When the next day we reached the school for the visit, as per Mehnaz's prediction white painted flower pots could be seen everywhere in the school. A woman clad in shining dress at the reception of the school asked Mehnaz whether she was one of the teachers on which Mehnaz introduced her, however, due to stringent security measures she again asked about mobile phone and camera. Mehnaz had already handed over her mobile phone to the driver while I forgot to bring the camera with me. When the receptionist received the answers to her queries in negative, we were allowed to enter the building. I was walking behind Mehnaz obediently with a couple of books about fish stories in my armpit praying of her reaching the ground floor safe and sound. We had reached the school well before the scheduled time. The officials of the Federal Directorate of Education were making a fuss about the situation and giving last-minute directions to their subordinates as

to how they should behave before the dignitaries. The English-speaking vice principal who had been borrowed from an English medium school was a bit late which was enough to infuriate the higher-ups. Close to the gate, a sapling of Araucaria plant was ready to be planted. At a distance, few kids clad in white uniforms with drums in their hands were waiting to perform before the visitors. A good number of well-dressed parents were also present in the school.

Finally, the US secretary of State for Finance arrived, the drum was beaten by the students in new vigor as per the directives of the higher ups which was followed up by clapping as to how and how much that should be done. The secretary, first of all, visited the science exhibition and later told them a fish story which was later translated by Mehnaz. The story's moral was based on equality. Later the secretary made his speech in which he told the audience about his three daughters and twelve grandsons. He asked the parents that they should practice storytelling like the way he did as it was beneficial for their children. One of the parents thanked him for visiting the school.



## Political Education

After the end of the USSR, lots of leftists either went insane or embraced Islam. Some found their refuge in non-governmental organizations and some died. The west in order to keep them busy funded them whole heartedly. NGOs arranged different kinds of training at different 3 and 4-star hotels. There was a time when three to four pieces of training were going on at the premises of a single hotel. So it became quite difficult for us to pick and choose. And if we had to face the dilemma that if we had to send our staff to each training, then who will run the organizations at the office.

We made the arrangement by formulating a workshop group and in order to make our presence felt at each training, we would send these people to such training every time. One of the most serious pieces of training was the Political Education Program (PEP) which was organized by Aurat Foundation and Nigar Ahmad was the life and soul behind the project and most of the people attending the training were leftists and it was not only the organizers but the participants were mainly the



people doing politics of left.

In the beginning, we remained in touch with Dr. Charles Amjad who was the program director and when he left and was replaced by Mr. Zahid Islam we learned a lot from him. I would like to shed some light on the program design. Around 100 participants from the four provinces of Pakistan were attending the training which was simultaneously arranged for all the provinces and the time period for it was around three years. Usually, we got together at one place for five days and listened to intellectual thoughts, and later exchanged our notes. During those days we had the opportunity to learn a lot from political stalwarts of the country. Due to this program, we had the opportunity to meet stalwarts like, I A Rahman, Qaisar Bangali, Umar Asghar Khan, Hina Jeelani, Dr. Eqbal, Tariq Banori, Prof Azizuddin. We learned a lot from them.

Another quality of the program which I want to share with my readers is that this program helped us mature politically quite enormously. It helped me in understanding the women's role in society as now my wife is my equal partner in my property but also is a political and social worker. Once when she had to visit

the United States on a visit visa, her parents were against it but I was able to persuade them that she should be given the opportunity to explore the world at her own. She visited the United States alone and later visited Sri Lanka, Bangladesh. Similarly, I have bestowed her with the right to divorce as well.



## Sustainability

Sustainability is the one word that is quite common and often spoken in the non-governmental organizations' sector. Even some NGOs have inculcated this word in their titles and many launched projects with this word. In each of their proposal, they portrayed the narrative of sustainability but till date, none of these NGOs has ever sustained the thick and thin of the society as they were always in need of finances.

Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani asked the Canadian government to invest in government instead of NGOs because they spend around sixty percent of their budget on management which was quite an apt thought. However, raising the issue also had some interests as well.

Usually, NGOs are funded from abroad and the foreign donors also give their rules and regulations that had to be followed in letter and spirit. Most of the regulations are formulated keeping in view the foreign society and the donors feel that by doling out little amount of money they can bring in a change and

achieve the desired results. However, the thing could have been possible in a western and developed society. In developing societies this was impossible and as soon as the funding ended the project ended as well.

In order to attain sustainability if some NGOs take some practical steps then hindrances are created by the donors that such practices should be shunned and donors don't cooperate in miscellaneous expenditures of the organizations and sometimes the expenses for rent, transportation, and staff salaries are fixed and the NGOs have to spend them at all costs if they are not needed at all. This proved that Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani's demand of direct funding to the government instead of NGOs proved to be right because usually, NGOs spend around 60 percent of their budget.

However, it is also beyond doubt that the projects funded and completed by NGOs are on minimal funds while the government organizations spend almost ten times the budget of the NGO to finish the same projects. In the past ten years, the role played by NGOs in human resource development is tremendous that a large number of ministers in the present cabinet are from the NGO sector.

## **The journey from Rawalpindi to Islamabad**

It was sheer chilly weather that made me abandon my motorcycle and I decided to travel between the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad in bus or wagon for which I had to get up early in the morning and leave my warm quilt and bed. I always tried to sneak through the door without disturbing my wife who had always slept late due to her routine. But I always failed to succeed. As she got up and did not allow me leaving the home without having my breakfast. Usually, it took me around ten to fifteen minutes to reach the bus stand by traveling through the narrow streets of our locality. Usually, I witnessed different early morning scenes in the streets as someone was getting his hubble bubble ready, a man was getting his horse cart ready for the daily routine. Another was draped in a shawl; the same kind of shawl his donkey was also adorning and after washing his face with murky water he put the water bucket before the donkey to drink the same. This was his daily routine. Children usually clad in blue and white dress were walking towards their schools with heavy bags on their

shoulders.

Usually, the bus got full at the bus stand as most of the laborers with their tools traveled in the bus daily. Someone was a sweets seller while another one was a digger. The next stop was the fruit and vegetable market stop so apart from students the fruit vendors also got up the bus. Most of the time, the students did not pay the fare which often led to heated arguments between the students and the bus conductor and such altercations led to scuffles. From the fruit and vegetable market stop the number of passengers almost doubled. In the wagon, the people had no other option but to stand in a bent position whereas in a bus the tall people only had to keep their head downs like the way they are in a king's palace.

Socrates says: "State is like a heavy animal and he is like a stinging bee which will spur it to move faster." The majority of the commuters are like the stinging bees who often ask the bus driver and conductor to move fast but they seldom listen to their demands. At every bus stop, they make a short stay and ask more and more passengers to board the bus. They always try to make space for extra passengers asking all those who are

standing in the aisle to make little adjustments that help them adjust a few more commuters. On the very first day, it became quite hard for me to even take out my wallet to pay the fare and paid Rs100 but during the whole course of my travel, I waited for the return of the remaining amount. Now I have been quite expert and kept pennies in my hands even before boarding the bus to pay the fare. I have kept the things of my daily routine like a comb, mirror shoe polish, and brush in the office and even considered even keeping a dress in the office to have a fresh dress while working because I was working in an international organization and the person who travels in the public transport usually resembles an eaten mango whose entire pulp has been sucked.

Once after the Eid holidays, a girl clad in a beautiful dress and ribbons in her hair boarded the bus, but when she was getting off the bus due to hectic struggles on the bus, she resembled an old newspaper that had been used to clean the face.

At Peshawar Morr, most of the people got off the bus and the vehicle got completely empty at Karachi Company and new passengers continued boarding the bus. Here the dressing and tools in the hands of

the passengers were different and instead of shalwar kameez, the people boarding the bus wore jeans and formal dresses or even clean shalwarkameez with a proper waistcoat with its proper pocket square and they had a file or diary in their hands. The conductor started talking to them in a respectable manner using prefixes like Sir and Mr, but the thing that did not change was the packing of passengers in the bus like before. Some passengers who use to travel on the bus regularly even had the courage and skills to read the newspaper.

Before Peshawar Morr, the majority of passengers discussed the ups and down of the market but after Peshawar Morr most of the passengers mostly discussed the flaws of their respective bosses or their administration.

After traveling for two long hours I finally reached my office and after marking my attendance I had to travel back to the same spot, I started my journey but now in my office's new Honda Accord because that is our office's field area.





## **Zamin Kada (Guarantor)**

Our farmers are oblivion to modern technology. At the state level, there are few organizations that are providing technical assistance to farmers to improve their yield. While providing grants to farmers too but ordinary farmers do not have access to such organizations because their precondition is the availability of a modern laboratory where the latest machinery and seeds are available that can help improve the quality and quantity of a farmer's produce so that he can earn extra money from his cultivation.

According to our research, the majority of the income a farmer earns is taken away either by the transporter or the middle man, and the remaining amount is usually spent by the farmer either on health issues or filling the losses he had incurred due to natural calamities.

Keeping in view we laid the foundation of Zamin Kada (Guarantor) for which we bought a piece of land measuring four acres from the amount United Nations had given us as prize money.

So far we have succeeded in buying the land, provision of water and building few rooms on it. In the future, we want to utilize it as a training center and laboratory for farmers and their kids. We intend to provide easy mark-up loans to farmers besides giving them seeds, tools, and animals as well. Here we intend to provide training to farmers about fish farming, poultry farming, and livestock farming through tunnel farming. We are also considering ways and means to provide direct access to the farmers to the market. We plan to provide organic food by using the solid waste produced by the nearby cities.

Zamin Kada (Guarantor) is still a dream and probably will become a reality in the coming decade or two.



## **Travel to the United States of America**

Mehnaz sent me to attend this program. I want to share my experience with organizations in the United States with you. I kept a daily log of my routine in the US. Here is the day-to-day detail of it.

### **21-06-02**

On 21<sup>st</sup> June we enjoyed a bon voyage ceremony that was arranged at the residence of Linda and was attended by our 14 member group, organizers from the US Embassy in Islamabad and Bela Jamila, and Mehnaz. Everybody took the tea and listened to the speech of Federal Minister for Education Zubaida Jalal.

In the evening we left for the airport. Due to some problems with tickets we had to wait for a long while outside the airport. The basic issue was the timing of the transit flight because as per schedule we had to wait for three hours for our transit flight but on our ticket, the time mentioned for transit was only half an hour. But after repeated requests, we were allowed to board the plane

at the last minute. After Lahore, we reached Abu Dhabi. In Abu Dhabi, we faced another problem as some people had their tickets from Emirates Airlines and others had British Airways tickets and we hardly managed the group at the same spot. Abu Dhabi is a fine airport and people from different communities were wandering here and there. We traveled on British Airways and reached the United Kingdom and landed there by sunrise.

## **22-06-02**

Early morning we reached England where the airport was quite lavish. In the afternoon we left for Boston on Pan American Airlines. After traveling for eight hours at about 2 pm we landed at Boston Airport. Here we had to go through strict checking and the immigration and security process was quite hectic and long which led us to miss our flight. Adjustments were made in our tickets that helped us board a local flight for Philadelphia. Two women Jacky and Petty were waiting there for quite a while to receive us. Unfortunately, the luggage of some of our friends was lost which aggravated our problems.

However, after traveling for almost thirty hours we reached our hotel in the historic state of Philadelphia.

Soon after reaching our hotel, we slept in our respective rooms.

## **23-06-02**

Everybody enjoyed rest before noon. At midday, we visited some historical places of the city including Independence National Historical Park that is a federally protected historic district in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the United States that preserves several sites associated with the American Revolution and the nation's founding history. Administered by the National Park Service, the 55-acre (22 hactres) park comprises many of Philadelphia's most-visited historic sites within the Old City and Society Hill neighborhoods. The park has been nicknamed "America's most historic square mile" because of its abundance of historic landmarks. There we watched the artifacts put on display at the Post Office and Printing Press.

There we witnessed two-hundred-year-old tools used by carpenters that are still in usage in Pakistan. We even watched horse carriages and a printing press that is still in practice in Pakistan.

One thing we particularly noticed was a parade by

children and women. They were carrying gun-like batons and were commanded by a man who was portraying the war of independence. In the end, we visited a church where a pastor was giving his sermon, and a box for donation was ever-present there. Later we visited a shopping mall where the merchandise was being sold through pushcarts like the ones used in Pakistan.

## **24-06-02**

Our hosts from IVC welcomed us at the breakfast that was arranged on the 18<sup>th</sup> floor of the hotel building. IVC President Nancy J. Gilgog made the keynote speech and welcomed us to the US. Later, US State Departments officials Alicr Kenitance and Nancy Colleesi spoke on the importance of the program. We were apprised about arrangements for our food and a health insurance card according to which if we fell sick during our trip we could be treated upto 50,000 dollars cost. We were also provided with different cards that declared us state guests and different stickers of quite an importance. In the afternoon we visited a hotel for lunch that was organized by IVC. After lunch, we visited Pennsylvania University where the vice president and

chief of Staff Pennsylvania met us. He apprised us about the working of educational institutions. Here, we were apprised of the working of public and private schools. Here we learned that most of the private schools were run by missions and were costlier than public schools. In the evening we went to a cinema to watch a movie. Here too our guide got tickets by paying some extra money. Different cinemas were established in the same hall and after getting a ticket we were free to watch the movie of our liking.

## **25-06-02**

Today we were free and we made a plan with Robert to watch the museum, but he did not come in the morning so I made a plan with Ashok and Nisar and we took a tour bus for sightseeing the city. We boarded a Flash, a bus service that cost us \$4 and we enjoyed the trip of the entire city. The bus driver besides driving the bus provided us live commentary on different city areas and important locations. We dropped off at City Hall and had our pictures taken with the statutes installed there.

In the afternoon we visited Temple University where university head Goan Mannng briefed us about

the state and local government roles. He apprised us in detail about National Defense Act 1950, War against Poverty Act 1960, National Commission 1980, Gool 2000 US Education Act 1990, and No Child Left Behind Act 2001.

While responding to queries put up by the visiting delegates from Pakistan about the state of education in Pakistan, one of the university professors' said it seems that you are telling the story of a state near Philadelphia, as the same issue had been faced by different states of the US as well. They also apprised us of the role of parents in the education of their children, their co-curricular activities as well. They said that parents were more interested in other activities instead of paying attention to the education of their kids. They also said that around 50 percent of children drop out of educational institutions.

## **26-06-02**

Early in the morning Philadelphia Education Fund's Executive Director Nancy told us that majority of the education funds come from property and state taxes. She said that there was no syllabus at the national level,



the local state is responsible for the curriculum taught to children of all ages. It is the state that decides what is to be taught as well as fixing the salaries of teaching faculty. The federal government assistance for education is based on the level of poverty. She said in Pennsylvania there are 501 schools in a district and every district has a school board. Its main role is to collect the revenue, devise a policy, and implement it in letter and spirit. She said that around 5 to 6 thousand dollars are spent on the education expenditures of every student.

After the briefing, the visiting delegation was met by Philadelphia Hearten Children and You Co Policy and shed light on the issues of children and youth. They were of the view that the issues faced by children and youth mostly remain unaddressed. They said that their organization was constituted to listen to their voices.

In the afternoon, we visited a market which was flooded with food items from all over the world. In the evening we met Deputy Mayor Philadelphia Mark who is also a police science professor. He apprised us about the pros and cons of federation and confederation. Although this meeting was not in our schedule, never the less it was a thought-provoking lesson on the issue

of confederation.

## **27-06-02**

According to our schedule, we visited CPRE in the morning where four persons were waiting for us and they told us that they use to do policy research in five universities of the US. Shaun and John spoke on the occasion.

In the afternoon we reached our hotel after lunch, at around 2 pm we had to leave for the North region of Raleigh state.

At the airport first, our luggage went through strict security checks and we had to go through a strict body search twice. However, the air travel began and we saw the houses and fields of the Philadelphia state. When we reached North Carolina, which was quite different from Philadelphia state as there were no skyscrapers nor it housed a congested population. Greenery and trees could be seen everywhere. Most of the houses resembled each other. At the airport one of our peers lost his luggage while the bag belonging to another one was damaged. It took us a while to make the claim. It was raining heavily outside the airport. We also bought

some things to eat because according to our guides we will not be able to find anything to eat out in the city. After traveling for around half an hour we reached our hotel. Here we were given our new program for the next five days.

## **28-06-02**

In the morning we visited the NG Department of Public. Here a group of four persons briefed us about the Chartered Schools which provided leadership technical assistance. We were also apprised as to how charter schools were constituted.

In the meantime, the remaining members of the group who could not travel with us from Philadelphia due to the cancellation of their flight joined us in North Carolina. In the evening we visited ISP where we were welcomed by Ms. Marty. The office was made up of a traditional wood structure. She told us that how they use to develop partnerships and keep liaisons with other groups. We were also told that recently they were visited by a group of teachers. After the meeting, we visited a Shopping Mall where some members of our group did some shopping.

**29-06-02**

We visited Natural Science Museum which was enriched with natural beauty. At some places, the scenes portrayed depicted forests, and in some places, it depicted scenes of beaches. For public information, there were small screens installed which showed information about the scenes. Computer-based information was also available for the visitors. Later we visited Art Palace where a spot was designated for printing. Lots of wonderful paintings were displayed there and many women were busy in painting.

In the evening we visited a couple of universities among which one was the Public University of North Carolina and the other was Duke University. The latter was named after a family and the heir to the family Sarah Duke helped develop the university from her assets. It was quite a reputable and costly university. When we reached the university we found out that a ceremony was going on which was for marrying former students of the university while at a park of the university another marriage was solemnized. The couple later left in their Volkswagen Beetle.

In the night we enjoyed the nightlife of Carolina

and visited a market which housed hundreds of shops of electronics goods, garments, decoration and shoes. All the items out on display in the market were quite costlier as compared to Pakistan. Whenever, we inquired about the prices of any item we converted it into Pakistan rupees and left them about finding the price it would cost us in Pakistan currency. For example, the shoes I bought from Pakistan for Rs400 were costing around Rs6000 in US. We also got an idea to sell out our shoes and clothes in this market to earn hefty profits. Then an idea came to my mind that if we can export Pakistani products to the US we can have a way of earning for our NGO.

### **30-06-02**

In the morning as per schedule, we went out sightseeing but as it was Sunday most of the city wore a deserted look. We had planned to visit the Governor House of North Carolina but could not get there and had to return after having a siesta at a local graveyard.

In the evening we were invited for a dinner which was organized by a local family belonging to Carol Right. Our host picked us up from our hotel right on schedule.

Five males and two females of our group left with her and within fifteen minutes we reached her home where we were welcomed by her family. Although the home was small it was well furnished. We visited their rooms and later the poolside where seating arrangements were made for us. We were given starters to eat. Except for a couple of persons, most of us enjoyed beverages provided by the host. We were also shown a Jacuzzi. Later, we visited the barbeque grill on the other side of the swimming pool where Robert Gally was grilling the meat.

After a lavish dinner, Robert Gally took us to his Designing Room where he made designs ranging from Heart surgery, tractors, and computers. He used to charge \$25 per hour from the companies whose designs he had been working on. He had no servant in his room and he completed all his tasks on his own. His office did not lack any facility and was well decorated and tidy. He also had a Xerox machine, computer, and fax machine. In the end, we exchanged gifts. He gave us a copy of Peace in America and we gave different gift items to him.

**01-07-02**

In the morning we visited POC Montessori  
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Magnet School where a teacher briefed us about the working of the institution. Later, we were shown a film in which class activities of children, block corners, storytelling, and color television and group, as well as individual activities of the children, were portrayed. As summer vacation was going on we could not monitor the full working of their institution. We saw the rooms and a library in the school which was quite splendid and we could not even imagine having one such library in even the biggest of our schools. They said that they always promoted the interests of the children. The school administrator told us that kids of four to five years of age study in one class. They also revealed that the parents have to afford the school expenditures of their kids up to nursery level while there was no fee for higher grades.

The nursery fees for the whole year was around \$4000. The school had its own syllabus. In every school, there was an assistant teacher for the class teacher.

The administrator apprised us that the teacher also gets training from the district level institutions and whoever gets the teacher's training certificate is graded by the schools. They also revealed that the ratio of dropouts in their school was marginal. The higher wings

students studied together, however, they voluntarily helped the minor kids as well.

At around 11 am we visited Exlorius, a museum about the world, and whoever visits the museum is allowed to place items of their country in specified showcases in the museum. We saw items from different countries on display in the museum which is run by an NGO. The NGO was also running a shelter home and a school. Our hosts apprised us in detail about the items on display and expected from us that we will also send the museum something from our country as well.

In the afternoon we visited Raleigh Charter High School. It was an industry before being converted into a charter school. Some of the walls of the school were old while few were newly built. The school was meant for secondary and higher secondary level students. The institution had all the facilities like a computer laboratory and other good things.

The school principal apprised us that this is a charter school which the locals want to run on a self-help basis. We were told that initially the reputation of the NGO is judged, its financial position is evaluated and its governing board is judged. We were told that the funds



from the state and district level are doled out regularly while the remaining expenses are borne out by the locals all by themselves. The school principal apprised us that the charter school system was free for the public whereas in a 45-minute class refreshment is also served to the students. Usually, a teacher is hired on one year contract, and it is the sole discretion of the board to hire or fire a person at its own. The principal also pointed out that a committee comprising four to five Ph.D. professors is set up by the institution which is named PASTA. The committee members comprise parents, social activists, students, and teachers. The parents too play a pivotal role in school and other progressive activities. The institution also holds quarterly meetings to discuss school issues.

In the evening we visited Franklin Academy and were quite impressed by its building as it was well furnished and also had a computer lab. Franklin Academy Administrator apprised us that there was no concept of principal in their institution. On average a single teacher had 11 students. She said that teachers are working on contract or part-time. We were also apprised that a charter school has its own salary package.

**02-07-02**

We kept on sleeping till late in the morning because we were about to leave this city that's why we had no schedule today. We were already divided into two groups. Petty, one of our senior guides who was also quite aged, was repeatedly making us understand what color of the group we were in. Basically we were accompanied by some genius people from the State Department including Jacky, Robert, and Patty. Jacky was mostly a reserved personality person and she always kept her emotions and thoughts to herself and she seldom spoke. The other two were completely her opposite who issued the directives time and again and had quite a talkative type of personality. Our group was guided by Jacky and it was good for us because most of us were less talkative.

The counting for luggage and persons began and luggage was loaded onto the bus and we also got on board. We reached the airport in half an hour. Our driver was an African American and was regularly talking on his mobile phone. After listening to Patty's final words we separated and reached our designated platform. A person checked our passports and tickets and accompanied us

to a room with our luggage. We were asked to stand in front of a counter. Two female aviation clerks handed us our boarding passes and luggage tokens. We were quite elated that we will enter without any kind of checking. However, our elation dashed to the ground when we are asked to stand in front of another counter for checking our luggage. We saw that almost everybody whether he was white or African American was getting thoroughly checked. Because a day before news in one of the local newspapers revealed that the security at the airport was insufficient because some people from state agencies through mock bombs and weapons got clearance at security points therefore, today stricter security measures were adopted. They even checked the makeup kits of our group members and even sniffer dogs were used to check them. However, after a long wait, we all got cleared. So with our guide Jacky, we waited at a waiting lounge for our other colleagues to join us. I was quite hungry at that time. So I brought out my lunch that on instructions of Patty we had purchased from a Chinese restaurant. I had hardly finished half of my meal when our last colleague had his bag checked. And an airport staffer after marking it was taking it to the airplane.

We ran towards the escalators where a man and woman checked our tickets.

After reaching the upper floor we once again went through the checking process and our hand-carry luggage was put in the X-Ray machine. We were asked to whip every minor thing from our pockets and had to go through body frisking with electronic gadgets. We were asked to expand our hands and it seemed like we were about to fly even before boarding the plane. We reached the waiting lounge and there was little time left in the flight to take off. All of our luggage and bodies were once again searched by four persons. In the meantime, our guide Jacky continuously watched us with sympathy in her eyes.

Although the State Department has issued special letters for us but Americans don't take a step without thorough checking. Finally, the time arrived and we boarded our plane. However, an announcement was made that due to inclement weather the plane could not take off and there were even chances of the flight cancellation. All of the delegation members got worried that after going through strict checking, we will be unable to take the flight. We were even determined to stay inside

the flight and not to return to our hotel in fear of going through stringent checking once again.

Taskeen even started saying prayers. Finally, the announcement was made and we were asked to fasten our seat belts and get ready for takeoff. The flight took off and after a while it landed again at another airport and we had to stay there for a while. Some people found it useless to stay on the plane and decided to leave the plane and visit the airport. We roamed through the airport for a short while and on return to the plane, we were once again checked thoroughly.

Once again the announcement was made on the plane that it was raining outside therefore the flight will take off in a while. Dr. Jatoi jokingly said that we will have to recite Ayat Kareema as there was a problem with our flight. Finally, the flight took off and we reached Kentucky Airport.

Our host was waiting for us at the airport. Joan Ruth Mayors welcomed us at the airport. She had a very pleasant personality with a round face, short cut red hair, and dressed quite elegantly, she was quite charming. We put our heavy luggage in trolleys and followed her. We had to travel in a wagon-like vehicle in which we not

only loaded our luggage but also ourselves and we left the airport.

After traveling for a short while we reached a hotel where rooms had been reserved for us. The hotel was situated along the Kentucky River. Our host apprised us of details of different important locations of the city, but nobody was paying attention due to arduous checking at the airport and travel as we were quite tired.

The hotel was quite luxurious. When we reached a hotel groups of blind people with their dogs were roaming in the hotel. Some of our friends got afraid of the dogs while some adored them. Some were happy that they got the company of dogs while the rest were unhappy their accommodation was with dogs. When we reached our accommodation we found out that they were apartments with each apartment housing a couple of bedrooms, a TV Lounge, Dining Table, kitchen that was well furnished a refrigerator, oven, toaster, and other household utensils that are needed for daily routine. The lounge was facing the riverside and the beautiful scene of beautiful bridges and boats got us freshened up. We decided that at the night we will roam around the city. It was the decision of the group leader so everybody has

to rope in. We all left behind the women members of our group. We visited lots of restaurants but found that they were not serving food but alcohol. After getting fed up, Dr. Haroona asked a horse carriage driver about foot outlets who guided us to a fast food outlet nearby. We were quite tired so we had no other option but to limp towards our destination. We bought burgers ate them and returned to our hotel rooms after passing along the restaurants where alcohol was served and the dogs roaming in the hotel lobby.

### **03-07-02**

Our host reached the hotel to pick us up at 9:30 am. After getting out of our rooms we once again bumped into dogs in the lobby to our host who was interviewing a blind dog owner. We quickly sat in the wagon and moved on the city roads. Our first meeting of today was with the University of Las Vale School of Education's Director Joseph Peer. He was a quite well-informed person. He gave us the 1990s Reforms Act. He apprised us that Americans were trying to bring education to the local level. He said after the 1990s Reforms Act there was a hike in the number of funds for

education and they don't take monotonous exams. They were working on development at different levels. At the school level, a sense of responsibility was inculcated among the students. He said that they had a teachers union as well and they hold dialogue at every level. We were told that even the teachers were trained as per their local needs.

Later, we visited Planetarium Theatre devoted to popular education and entertainment in astronomy and related fields, especially space science, and traditionally constructed with a hemispheric domed ceiling that is used as a screen onto which images of stars, planets, and other celestial objects are projected.

The locals told us that such Planetarium cost around \$4 billion and there were around three hundred such Planetariums in the US and such Planetariums were being built in schools as well. Students from different schools visit the Planetarium and they are taught about astronomy and other related fields. They also revealed that the journey from mankind from its early days in the cave to date can also be shown on the screen.

Then we visited Speed Art which was one of its kind place we visited. At the onset, there were adult art specimens



as well as love motherhood on display. The Speed Art Museum is a place that seeks to inspire curiosity, build visual literacy, and foster a greater awareness of the world around us. Speed Art is aimed at creating innovative programming that allows visitors of all ages to see, create, and interact with art in new and unexpected ways. Here there was lots of stuff for children's education. We were quite welcomed by a couple of young persons including a boy and a girl. They took us to different spots where games and art programs were on display, which help kids understand easily. Through these programs, kids can easily draw their pictures and also record their videos. They dance and enjoy. Our hosts showed us the workshop where parents and volunteers also help design the artwork by the kids.

## **04-07-02**

During the whole day, we did nothing except wash our clothes or iron them out. In the evening some people had made the plan to visit the riverside. But the news on TV changed our plans. It showed that a lone terrorist opened fire at the airline ticket counter of El Al, Israel's national airline, at Los Angeles International

Airport in Los Angeles, California. Two people were killed and four others were injured before the gunman was fatally shot by an El Al security guard after also being wounded by him. The terrorist used a .45-caliber handgun in the shooting. In addition, he was armed with a 9 mm handgun, a 6-inch knife, and was also carrying extra magazines and ammunition for both guns. The US authorities enhanced the security at the airport but we wondered if someone had planned to commit an act of terrorism then why he entered the airport, he could have done it at any place. Due to media uproar, the entire US nation was terrified and even our friends also hesitated going out. But I could not stay idle therefore after having my dinner, I put up my tracksuit and visited the riverside. I witnessed quite strange scenes as US citizens were busy enjoying themselves at the riverside. I wondered that such scenes were common in Hollywood movies but tonight I was watching them live. I reached a park along the river where a concert was underway and later fireworks were scheduled.

Few youngsters were performing on stage and American kids were dancing to their tunes. They were fully enjoying themselves therefore I also joined them

for a while. Later fireworks started and people diverted their attention towards the show. A boat was anchored in the middle of the river from which a team was putting up a fireworks show for the audience. It was quite an impressive show and I was quite enjoying it. I even remembered a famous couplet from Faiz Ahmad Faiz that portrayed a similar situation.

The fireworks continued for an hour and I also left the place with other Americans who were leaving the park. From a place near my hotel, I bought ice cream and enjoyed it till I reached the hotel.

## **05-07-02**

As usual, our host arrived to pick us from the hotel at around 8:30 am, all of us were ready. Only our guide was absent from the scene. I took the opportunity to present a gift to our host that was a tortoise made up of marble. She happily accepted it and thanked me. All of us were going to the Indiana University on the other side of the river. She was briefing us about different prominent spots of the city, but we could not muster a word what she was saying. Because from the very first day, Jacky had occupied the front seat and the next seats behind her

were occupied by women from our group while we (two gentlemen) were seated behind them and had to watch through side windowpanes as to what was going along. Sometimes a couple of words dropped into our ears as what she was saying. We reached the university where two middle-aged women Karen and Margaret greeted us and through a question-answer session apprised us about the university.

They told us that they were attached from the teaching field. They said that in the US teaching diploma certificate is done after 12 years of education. For primary and secondary education separate licenses are issued to teachers and the teachers earn equally like other professions. They usually earn around \$25,000 to \$30,000 annually and it could go up to the level of \$50,000 to \$60,000 as well. They told us that in Indiana State there was McNett and Charter school as well. And they were teaching multi-cultural subjects sensing the number of children in a class could be from diversified cultures and therefore to meet their needs multicultural subjects were taught to the students. We were told that their teachers' association is quite strong and the education standard provided by missionary and private

schools was quite up to the mark. We were told that the state funded the school which showed 98 percent attendance of students regularly and if any school had a lesser attendance percentage its shares of funds from the state also got reduced. They told us that there was a school corporation system in the school instead of the school board. And in order to clear our confusion, we were told that both were doing the same thing. There was Education Training System (ETS) in place in the school as well.

Later, we returned back. Ruth took us to her office from where we checked our emails. Later, we visited Green House where we were welcomed by two women and briefed. A Chinese woman Lalaying Hong Pir remained with us and briefed us that they were teaching cultures of four Asian countries to the children. The countries are Japan, China, Korea, and India.

Here education is free and Asian festival also takes place. The students of these countries are taught literature of these countries as well as the history of Buddhism, China-Japan, Korea, and India as well as the food of these countries.

The organization also made us visit the gallery,

which showcased the art and culture from the four nations of Asia. We also visited the workshop where all this stuff was being made. All these things had also been put up for sale. Taj Mahal, the status of Ram, henna, bangles, and other things belonging to Indian culture were present there.

## **06-07-02**

It was a wasted day because we had no engagement in the day as well as the evening. However, Ruth had promised that she will come and take us to the market, shopping malls, book shops, and cinema houses. We were free to do whatever we wanted to do. So left at around 1:30 pm and reached the market in half an hour at around 2:00 pm. Ruth briefed us about the places of importance as per usual. In the market, it was decided that Ruth will pick us at 6:00 pm. Some people went to the cinema to watch a movie of their liking, while some visited the book stalls and general stores. In the US most of the stores are built on the land of around three to four Kanal and a person can get anything of his liking under one roof. Every portion housed a different world and the women of our group who had made a commitment

to themselves not to indulge in any kind of shopping couldn't resist the temptation. Almost everybody bought something including myself and Jacky thanked all of us for supporting the US economy by shopping there. While returning we visited few farmhouses and reached the hotel at around 7 pm. As the women were afraid of dogs ever-present in the hotel, therefore, they had found an escape route and everybody reached their rooms easily without any hassle.

We had decided that we will take dinner in our room, but suddenly the program changed and everybody reached the decision to dine out so we reached the food street at around 8 pm. But we learned that Americans usually had their dinner by 6 pm and close the markets. So we visited a couple of more spots but did not like them so it was decided that we will return and cook the items present in our rooms for dinner. So all of us returned and started cooking.

## **07-07-02**

In the morning we stayed in the apartment. In the afternoon, we visited the riverside to enjoy a ride on the steamboat. The ticket was \$10 each. So we bought it

and got onto the boat. A very beautiful woman greeted us at the gate of the boat. At around 1 pm the boat left the riverbank. Some members of our group were sitting on the top deck while the rest of us were on the lower deck. The ship had the capacity of around 200 persons. The ship started its journey and went under a couple of iron bridges. The girl who had greeted us at the gate of the boat was doing the running commentary of the trip. She was also asking questions to some people and replying to queries put up by others. She gave a detailed briefing on the history of the ship and the important spots we crossed. A family was also enjoying the boat ride. One of the kids from the family had his birthday and they celebrated his birthday on the boat.

The voyage continued for almost an hour and the people who were traveling by small boats usually waved towards us. People had their snaps taken at different spots in the boat and we returned at around 3 pm.

By 4 pm we were invited for a luncheon by the former faculty of Indian State University. We reached Indiana University where first we were given a tour of the University which had a computer laboratory, library, and a workshop for pottery making and classroom as well.



All the machines were of the latest technology and we wondered if these things could one day be used by students in Pakistan. After an hour-long visit to the university, we left for the house of our host Clyde which was located in a forest area. When we got of our vehicle we saw a statue of Gautama Buddha while many small decoration pieces were displayed in cupboards, showcases, walls, and pillars and were looking wonderful.

We sat on the balcony where chairs and tables were present. After a while, our host served us snacks and everybody enjoyed them. One of our friends, Romana, had brought a film with her which showcased her work in Pakistan.

Four other guests were also invited by our host and we all got acquainted. The food was served. In the end, a sweet dish and coffee were served as well.

Clyde took us to the upper and ground portion of her house. The ground floor housed lots of dolls, paintings, and pictures while on the upper floor a bedroom and clean washroom were there. All these things were present in a 3 marla house made up of wood which was hardly 30 feet high. Everything was elegantly made and

set up. We wondered how the hosts who were in the late 60s could manage cleaning and taking care of them.

## **08-07-02**

Today our first meeting was with Education Professional Standard Board which was around an hour's drive from our hotel. We left the hotel at around 7:45 am and on reaching our destination we found the hosts were waiting for us and everybody introduced us through presentations as what each one of them did.

They told us the process of nominating a teacher and that a teacher is hired on contract for one year and he/she earns around \$1400 per month. Later, the teacher is examined through the post of headteacher and examiner. If a teacher fails in his/her effort then they are given another opportunity, but if they fail the second time then they could not be allowed to work as a teacher in that state.

We were told about different teaching certificates and courses. We were apprised that in this respective state the teaching certificate was a five-year course while teachers can also do a short course as well that are emergency certificate which includes on subjects like

technology, electronics, media transcription. We are also told about the process of teachers' meetings. Usually, they conducted 15 different sheets in which students' and teachers' attendance is given very importance. Online training is also imparted and it was seldom a teacher will leave her job. We were told that the US was moving from methodology towards technology. Therefore, we were told that in order to teach technology, every classroom has a computer and the schools were also inter-connected through networking.

We have apprised about the role of supervisor and around 176 supervisors were present in a single district and the school board appoints the supervisor for a minimum period of one year and a maximum of four years. The school board also has the authority to hire or fire a supervisor. On the insistence of one of our colleagues, we visited the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln Sinking Spring Farm, Kentucky, US which was a two-hour drive from our place.

First of all, we visited the place where Abraham Lincoln spent five years of his childhood and the cabin which comprised a single room including a door and window which was hardly 10 feet in width and 8 feet

in breadth. After that, we visited this birthplace and the place where he used to get his water from.

Abraham's family line is believed to be extinct after his four sons. After that we visited the Bernheim Forest which is a beautiful place to visit, with over 16,000 acres, 40 miles of trails, picnic areas, lakes, gardens, and art. Especially around the Arboretum area, the trails are level and easy. It's just a lovely place to be outside. And there is a fun drive from the main area through the thicker forest to some overlooks, which I really enjoyed. As for how the whole thing got started, Mr. Isaac Wolfe Bernheim, once a poor, teenaged German immigrant with \$4 in his pocket, eventually became a successful bourbon distiller in Kentucky. After his success, he bought and endowed the main area of the park back in 1929. In 1931, he brought in the Frederick Law Olmstead firm (who landscaped New York City's Central Park and North Carolina's Biltmore Estate) to rearrange some lakes, and the park opened to visitors in 1950. Later he donated this area to an NGO and now research work is being done here.

A young guy briefed us about the forest. Although for a slight while the forest's director also visited us but

most of the time we were accompanied by the same young guy. He told us that they have a collection of around 7,000 plants. We were told that after removing a tree from a spot they evaluate the differences between the place which had the tree and then without the tree. We were shown various plants and trees and every plant was properly cataloged with proper information. We were shown an artificial and natural forest where every tree had fallen. We were also informed about the losses the area faced.

## **09-07-02**

It was a day for us to leave Kentucky. Everybody got ready and after checking out we started waiting for Ruth. She had also called in a separate vehicle for our luggage as well. But ironically she was late for the very first time. However, after ten minutes she arrived and we left in two vehicles for the airport. At the airport, we said goodbye to Ruth. All the women embraced her and as we were standing in a queue.

Ruth wanted to embrace and say goodbye but Dr. Romana and other women of our group apprised her that in Pakistani culture men and women do not embrace

each other. Everybody started laughing. However, we shook hands and entered the airport. We went through minimal checking at the airport. Probably the threat for 4th July had passed. However, we boarded the plane and after traveling for an hour we changed the plane to another airport and after a four-hour journey, we reached our destination. Here we traveled in a bus to our hotel in San Diego where we had to spend the next five days. The weather over here was quite chilly and the time difference between other states and Pakistan was 10 hours then in this state of the US and Pakistan the difference was around 13 hours.

## **10-07-02**

Early in the morning, we visited San Diego University where Dr. John apprised us about the latest technology. The room in which we sat had 36 cabins in it and every cabin had a television VCR and computer in it. The room also had a multi-media projection system in it. All the computers were centrally connected.

Dr. John told us about the importance and problems of technology. We were told about important things as how much money, the human resource we had

and how much the people knew about the technology as having all these things will let people use the technology as knowledge of all these things can help people use Macromedia networking, internet, online, video, camera, software teacher training, and web page. We were told that they guide the students initially as to which web pages can be useful to them that help them save their time.

Later, we were apprised about mathematics, science and other different things about classrooms and the use of technology. Later, we were briefed about San Diego.

After dinner, we were taken to sightseeing in San Diego. We visited the beachside, several historical monuments, hotels, and markets, in the end, we also crossed the road where the famous San Diego Zoo is situated.

## **11-07-02**

We reached San Diego Education Office early in the morning which worked in liaison with the local School District. We were shown a wall where a 4x4 screen was installed and it was broadcasting different programs. On a corner, a welcome note for Pakistani

Educationists was displayed. We were shown the latest computer lab where only ten days ago the latest Apple Desk Top computers were installed.

Later, we were taken to another lab where three to four years old computers were installed and they were going to replace these computers with new ones next month. The old computers were going to be donated to a local school.

The San Diego Education Office also had its own television station which was running for the past ten years. The experts usually took live calls to resolve students' mathematics issues on live television. We were told that on daily basis the television station was receiving almost 700 calls on average and it was the duty of two teachers to help the callers in resolving their problems. During the briefing, we were told about video conferencing and they also had video films that help in imparting education. They also used the internet and give hints to the students. We were also apprised that they were moving towards the latest technology.

Between 3 and 4 pm we visited San Diego School District where four women welcomed our delegation and briefed us about their respective departments. They



told us that they were shifting towards the paradigm of central management that they had normal and expedient schools. They said that they provide free or subsidized refreshments to around 65 percent of students. They also gave us a chart. We were told that they had a special method to evaluate the students for which a proper syllabus and books were present. The school had a support person and PTA also plays a role in the school. The community remained involved in the whole process of education and it also helps in appointing the principal as well.

## **12-07-02**

Today we visited the School District early in the morning where the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and other officials of the department were waiting to welcome our delegation. It was quite an elegant office where pictures of successful teachers and students were exhibited. We were told as to how the salaries of teachers were raised gradually. We were told that in 1982 a teacher was drawing an annual salary of \$18,000 while in 1992 it reached the mark of \$32,000 and now they were getting \$45, 000 annually. We were

also apprised that around \$20 million were spent on summer school activities in five educational institutions and different measures were in place to improve the standard. We were also told that the ratio that stood at 44% earlier now stood at 57.5%.

Now instead of getting free food and juices students and other people were paying full. We are also told about the role of community in school affairs. They also said that they also had contacts with other departments like the police department as 20 of its officers were their partners and they were not meant to arrest the students but for assisting in other routine matters. We were also apprised that in order to judge the students' aptitude for studies parents are often contacted on the telephone and even advertisements in newspapers are also published. We met a lady who was not only a teacher but a mother as well as the school board president and she had been appointed for four years. The teachers are also awarded for their efforts and their list is also exhibited in the school district.

Later, we visited the school where the principal along with her team was waiting for us. We were taken to a classroom where children were solving mathematics

problems with the help of computers. Every child was participating in the exercise. We asked some questions from the students to check them. We asked what sort of flag they had in their country. We also visited another classroom.

We were then taken to another school where the principal was a Japanese national. She took us to a hall where around 100 students were watching a film on television. We were taken to another classroom where study material was available for students. We were taken to another building which was a family resource center that was frequently visited by the parents to discuss students' affairs with teachers. We were told that the school has every kind of facility to guide them about jobs, skills, social affairs, and local NGOs, and other affairs.

They guide the people in the right direction and facilitate them. We were hosted for a lunch by the school district. Later, we visited National University where we were welcomed by two persons who also gave us a presentation. They told us about the history of the institution which had been successfully running for the past 30 years. The university is about Washington D.C. and tries to implement every state policy.

Today we were free and after having our breakfast we bought a \$ 5-day pass and rode in a tram and visited the old town that houses many markets and eateries. We bought two loaves of bread for \$1 and ate them with butter. We went back to our hotel and stayed there till the evening. Later, we packed our luggage because we had to check out at 5 am the next morning for our next and final destination that was Washington D.C.

#### **14-07-02**

We had to get ready by 4 am and leave the hotel by 5 am. Everybody got ready on time and left for the airport. We reached the airport in half an hour and after routine checking entered the airport terminal. We boarded the flight, after traveling for about five hours reached our destination where a van was waiting for us. We reached our hotel in half an hour. Everybody was tired so we took a siesta in our respective rooms.

#### **15-07-02**

At 9 am we visited Rock Creek International School where parents were dropping their kids. A girl was crying and her mother was taking her back. The

school taught Arabic, Persian and English languages. We visited different schools where children were taught different things.

It was summer school and it was the second day of the season. They told us about the technology about the personal life and school in painting form. They said that they were facing different problems in joining the technology and syllabus in one place. They also told us about the parents' teacher meetings.

## **17-07-02**

Today we visited the office of IIE where we had to meet USAID, Asia Foundation, CRI, and USAID Department. All of them gave us their presentations as to how they were engaged in different programs in Pakistan. Ms. Julie from CRI told us that they had established a CRI office in Pakistan and have also formed a team and will work in three spheres of life.

Dr. John told us that a representative from the Ministry of Education sought help from ESR and he contacted CRI which helped them start the work in Pakistan.

Later, a representative of the State Department

told us about their program. She was followed by Asia Foundation's Vice President Nancy, who briefed us as how her department was promoting education in Pakistan.

She also showed us a couple of brochures that included a successful story 'Going to School' and Al-Falah.

In the end, Dr. John told us that they will be going to Pakistan by the end of next month and give a grant of \$100 million to the Pakistani government.

For the rest of the day Sarah Tirmizi, former country director of Action Aid briefed us about the things she had learned in the US. We were given five cards each and everybody was asked to write out suggestions as to which areas should be targeted in Pakistan.

1. Teachers training
2. Accountability \quality
3. Good governance

## **18-07-02**

Today was the second day of the workshop and in the first session, the representatives from World Bank, Academy for Education Development, and the Education

Department were present there. The World Bank representative presented his report on development work carried out by the Bank in Pakistan.

The World Bank representative talked about the NRB that is working on trickling down of powers to the grass roots level.

The representative of Education Academy spoke at length about the use of technology, standard of education and what sort of powers the federation has in the United States. He spoke about the powers of the state and what sort of work school districts can perform.

After lunch, the scale of yesterday's workshop was expanded. The five areas selected yesterday were further bifurcated into two sections and two groups were formed to work on these aspects.

While keeping ground realities in consideration, our group spoke about the devolution of power and formulated the following suggestions:

1. PTA and SMC should be given authority at the school level.
2. School boards should be established.
3. Funds should be allocated for education at the

districts level.

4. The budget should be formulated at the grassroots level.
5. Teachers should be trained as per the requirements of their local areas.
6. Industrial sites should be encouraged and convinced to assist educational institutions financially.

Some other suggestions for meeting the education needs of Pakistan were also formulated.







# OUR PUBLICATIONS

