



Jamshed Akhtar Qureshi Education Trust

... building an inclusive future - one child at a time



Annual Report

July 2013 to June 2014

We are pleased to share with you our annual report summarizing another year of steady progress, despite continuing challenges.

After eighteen years of operations¹, 2013-14 has been the year for developing a vision for the growth and scale up of the Pehli Kiran School System (PKSS) model. We have proved that it works - and works well. So our Board of Trustees has decided it is time to find ways to promote this highly effective, quality, low-cost, urban slum, education delivery model to a wider audience, as a potential solution to some of the challenges facing education delivery to Pakistan's rapidly growing urban slum population.

As we embark on this exciting phase in PKSS's journey, we used this year to take stock of where we are, and determine how to position ourselves for the scale-up. We plan to undertake this in two stages:

- (i) the first stage will be to gradually devolve the current PK schools from a centralized operation, to autonomous social enterprises operated by our experienced, senior staff. The JAQ Trust will continue to provide core funding, technical assistance and stringent monitoring for quality assurance. Much of the effort in the next two-year devolution phase will focus on achieving this by coaching the new leaders, and further strengthening school systems, academic quality, and staff capacity. We recognize that this is a daunting task, and probably the first of its kind to be attempted in Pakistan, but we are excited about the challenge in spinning off community-based schools into independent social enterprise entities.
- (ii) the second stage will be to expand the PKSS model to other new or existing schools using a franchise approach. PKSS team will partner with other new or existing schools in urban slums to deliver quality primary education at low cost, using the Pehli Kiran standardized "School-in-a-Box" package developed in stage one.

Annual Highlights



Our students and staff continued to be exposed to a range of exciting new experiences over the course of the year.

On the academic front, we increased efforts to raise learning standards and made a decisive break from the traditional rote-learning system with the launch of the new Montessori program for classes nursery to two, another milestone initiative.

Pehli Kiran (PK) students participated in numerous co-curricular events, ranging from sports events, art workshops and cooking activities to nature walks and literary festivals. A few are listed below. Details with heartwarming

pictures can be accessed from the Trust's web site at www.jaqtrust.org.

¹ Fourteen years since the JAQ Education Trust was formally registered - September 2001

1. Girls Rising Day in PK 5 facilitated by Sara Minallah and the Jugnu team.
2. Global Hand-washing Day and a Nature Walk to the Margalla Hills for older students sponsored by Mobilink, a long term partner.
3. Interschool Sports Competition hosted at Khuldunia School, where PK students bagged the trophy!
4. Teachers' and Children's Literature Festivals, organized in Islamabad by the Oxford University Press Idaara-e-Taleem-o-Agahi. This was a wonderful learning experience for our students.
5. Screening of a 3-D film Rio 2, sponsored by Ronaq-e-Qainaat. PK students were thrilled by this first-ever 3-D movie experience!
6. Eid Millan Party sponsored by Global Shapers.
7. Traffic Rules & Laws Awareness Program sponsored by Islamabad Traffic Police and Mobilink - using paint competitions to sensitize children to traffic rules.
8. Tree Plantation drive by CDA - with enthusiastic participation by our students.
9. Celebrating International Children's Day through a Fun Gala, sponsored by PUAN.



We also experienced some major setbacks. In April 2014, one of our schools PK-6 in Sector I-10 with 130 students, was brutally demolished without any forewarning by the Islamabad Administration as part of their "anti-terrorist" drive, and the entire community was evicted. Ignoring pleas from our staff for time to relocate the school's mobile steel structures, bull-dozers rammed into the school sheds, completely destroying them and injuring staff members who were on the roof trying to dismantle and salvage the sheds in the process. Precious school assets, including books, stationery, mats, whiteboards, teaching aids, and mobile libraries which had been built up with much effort over the years were callously destroyed.

We have lodged a formal a protest at this incident with the Chief Commissioner Islamabad and CDA Chairman, and requested compensation for damages. We have also sought their cooperation in identifying safe locations for the PK schools that would not be at risk of demolition in future.

In May, we were forced to dismantle the infrastructure facilities at our pk-7 school in Sector I-11 under orders from the Administration, in anticipation for another eviction drive. In response we have moved the 120 students affected by this to alternate accommodations generously provided by the community.

Despite these ongoing challenges, we are determined to continue with our mission to provide primary education to these dispossessed communities - something that is in fact, the State's responsibility. The unfortunate reality is that no other schools currently serve this large but marginalized segment of the urban population, and if the PK schools were to shut down, these

1500 students would be added to the swelling ranks of Pakistan's out-of-school children. For further details, please visit the Trust's website at [<http://jaqtrust.org/>].

Key Progress Indicators

- Student enrolment grew steadily from 1351 in June 2013 to 1497 by March 2014. However, the demolition of pk-6 and the forced shifting of pk-7 by the Administration caused the enrolment figures to drop to 1333 by June 2014. Enrollment of girls grew to 40%. Despite the setbacks, average student enrolment was 4% higher over the previous year - a remarkable achievement reflecting the resilience of the PKSS and the enthusiasm of our communities.



- 80.4% of students passed the annual examinations and were promoted to the next class (similar to last year's results).
- 25% of PK students (including 10% girls) transferred to formal schools during the year, highlighting the very vital 'feeder-school' function being performed by PK schools.
- 48 PK students, including 18 girls, passed the Class 5 exam conducted by the Government's Federal Directorate of Education (compared to 31 students last year). 46 have obtained admission into formal schools and are continuing their education in class 6.
- 292 PK students from lower classes (including 120 girls) transferred to formal schools during the year (compared to 162 students last year).
- PKSS continued to maintain a Student-Teacher ratio that does not exceed 30:1 in all classes to ensure quality learning, with more one-to-one teacher-student interaction at the Montessori level.
- PKSS currently employs 47 staff, of whom 40 are teachers (32 women). The majority of these teachers work double shift at both morning and afternoon schools.
- The Trust continued to provide educational stipends to 29 deserving girl students beyond the PKSS system, including 2 former PK students.

Quality Enhancement

Our big milestone in 2014 has been the launch of the Montessori Program. Junior classes have been transitioned into the Montessori method of teaching and learning, which is a holistic approach to education that emphasizes independent learning. Pehli Kiran teachers have undergone an intensive training program conducted by the Pakistan Montessori Council and are now Montessori certified. Our curriculum covers six key learning areas:

1. Language Arts (English and Urdu)
2. Mathematics
3. Science and Culture
4. Sensorial Development
5. Exercises in Practical Life
6. Civics & Ethics (including Islamiat)



Students learn in groups through manipulative materials instead of textbooks. Written examinations in junior classes have been replaced with a rigorous, comprehensive assessment process. The Montessori method can be especially beneficial for PKSS students given the challenging surroundings and family backgrounds they hail from. With the Montessori program, the Trust hopes to provide an environment that will help our

students to not only excel in academics and become lifelong learners, but also enable them to acquire the life skills necessary to improve their standards of living.

Student Welfare

Recognizing the great needs of our students and their families, and keeping with our tradition of promoting student welfare, we provided the following facilities, free-of-cost:

- Nutrition support:
 - weekly nutritional supplements (seasonal fruit) in six PK schools.
 - a weekly daig of 'rice pulao' in PK-8
 - weekly milk and monthly lunch in three PK schools, courtesy a generous contribution from the Rotary Club of Toronto.
 - Weekly milk in another PK school courtesy another kind patron.
- Uniforms: were provided to all PK students, thanks to a large grant from one of our patrons - bringing joy not only to the children, but their parents as well.
- Text books: the Government Federal Directorate of Education's Regulatory Authority discontinued the practice of providing free text books to non-government schools this year. So we have had to procure text books on our own for our students this year, while we continue to take this matter up with the government. In addition, we provided note books, stationery and art materials. In some cases this was also supplemented by parents.
- A large number of learning and teaching aids in all schools, particularly for the newly introduced Montessori program. Some of these were produced in-house by PK teachers and students.

- Sports equipment and first aid kits were upgraded at all PK schools.
- Our teachers and students also planted trees, bushes, and flowering plants in an effort to beautify their schools and make them more eco-friendly.
- Medical camps were held by CDRS in several PK schools.
- PK-2 face lift: Students of Iqra University enthusiastically contributed their time and resources to giving PK-2 school a face-lift, dramatically transforming the school environment with fresh paint, wall drawings, and playground equipment.
- Library on wheels: The biggest in-kind donation received this year was a much needed Suzuki van from Mobilink which came equipped with a mobile library and other teaching aids. PKSS Students and staff were thrilled to receive this welcome gift which will go a long way in promoting "Education on Wheels" and further encourage reading and learning through the use of audio-visual aids.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure upgrades during this period included the following critically needed items:

- Three new class sheds in PK 8, of which one was brand new while 2 were renovated.
- A toilet each in PK 3 and 8.
- Shed drainage in PK 6.
- Wire-mesh fencing of PK 7.
- Tube-wells and hand-pumps in three schools, which provide much needed water to the entire communities.

Outstanding requirements include toilets in three schools, fencing, floor tiles, and matting. We continue to seek funding support for these items.

Community Mobilization

Community involvement is critical for our success. Parent-Teacher committees (PTAs) comprising five men and five women in each community, along with school staff, form an integral part of PKS operations. Together they help address issues, resolve any conflicts, and promote quality standards. Regular PTA meetings provide a sound platform for communication and interaction between parents and school staff. They also help to develop deeper community ownership of the schools, and assistance in guarding school property after school hours.

Examples of strong community ownership include a toilet built by the community in PK 8, plantation in PK 3, and provision of labour to build the shed and school fence in PK 7. PTA members also help keep up student enrolment. The past few years have seen a significant rise in awareness among parents regarding the importance of their children's education, and many parents now take keen personal interest in school matters – something that was hard to imagine a few years back.

Financial Summary

The Trust's operations are financed entirely by the generous donations of our patrons, some corporate supporters, individuals and Trustees. A nominal student fee was introduced in 2011 to ensure greater community ownership of the PKSS effort. This covers less than 5% of PKSS expenditures.

We project total Trust receipts (donations, fees and endowments) for FY2013-14 to be around Rs 7,506,000, some 12% lower than the previous year. We project total expenditures to be around Rs 7,933,000, a 13% increase over the previous year². The average cost-per-student is projected at Rs 5,680 (approx. US\$57) per year, reflecting just a 4% increase over the preceding year. The PKSS thus remains one of the lowest-cost, primary education delivery models in operation throughout Pakistan today.

The Trust's financial statements are audited annually by an independent firm of chartered accountants and posted on the Trust's website. Audited financial statements are available up to the last financial year 2012-13.

² These projections are based on 11 months of un-audited cash-based accounts (July 13– May 14), since Trust accounts for FY2013-14 have not yet been finalized.