



# Annual Report 2018

Pehli Kiran Schools



Pehli  
Kiran  
Schools

A JAQ Education Trust Initiative

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# Annual Highlights



## Our Enhanced Strategy

2017-18 was the year we enriched the Pehli Kiran Schools (PKS) strategy to deepen our impact on the communities we serve. Addressing the livelihood dimension is essential to help the youth in these neglected communities, break the vicious cycle of poverty. Our strategy will therefore involve:

- ✓ **Extending the Pehli Kiran (PK) Schools to the middle school level**, especially for girls in our more conservative communities, who face barriers in accessing middle schools, located at a distance, and thus drop out in higher classes.
- ✓ **Forging linkages with vocational and technical training institutes** for older youth, to help them develop skills that can improve their livelihood opportunities.
- ✓ **Introducing an after-school engagement program** to further broaden students' horizons, keep them productively occupied, and help them gain skills that will facilitate future livelihood prospects.

We also undertook surveys in three PK school communities, with help from Quaid-e-Azam University students, to gain better demographic data in designing the above-mentioned interventions. We will be posting the survey results on our website soon.

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## Our Stars

We are very excited to share some major developments:

- ✓ A PK student, Kanwal Gulshan Bhatti, has been selected to **participate in the Football for Hope Festival, in Moscow**, in June 2018. She is one of four finalists selected by Right to Play, for the Pakistan delegation, from a large number of programs. 48 delegations from around the world will be participating. Her family's initial trepidation has turned to excitement at this great opportunity and the enormous exposure it will bring for Kanwal.
- ✓ We are installing **solar panels** at five PK schools that currently lack an electrical connection. This will enable us to provide electric fans in our classrooms to give some relief to our students and staff during the scorching summer. This facility has been made possible by the combined donation from the manufacturing company, which gave a 50% price discount, and an institutional donor, which financed the balance costs. Students, staff and parents eagerly await the solar panel set-up.



## A Great Tragedy

With a very heavy heart, we also report on a horrific incident that occurred in one of our PK communities. An 8-year old girl, Samreen, who had just been admitted to PK-3, was raped and murdered in March 2018. PKS management and Board of Trustees provided active support to the bereaved family and the community in dealing with the aftermath of this heart-rending tragedy – from immediate needs to longer term legal, counseling, and post-trauma support. This tragedy further strengthens our resolve to continue work in these communities with renewed vigour – taking efforts beyond schooling, to broader awareness-raising on child protection, and more importantly, to work with male youth to understand and mitigate some of the factors that contribute to such criminal behavior.

# Key Progress Indicators

- ✓ **Student Enrolment:** stands at 1922 as of May 2018, in 8 PK schools, spread across *katchi abadis* in Islamabad. This is a 9% increase y-o-y.
- ✓ **Girls' enrollment:** increased to 43% of the student body this year [up from 41%] continuing an encouraging trend.
- ✓ **Student Attendance:** averaged 78% [a slight reduction compared to 81% last year].
- ✓ **Student-Teacher Ratio:** averaged 30:1, keeping in mind the need for individualized child attention in the Montessori program, as well as senior classes.
- ✓ **Staff Strength:** remained an average of 59 total over the year. This includes school teams as well as central office staff.
- ✓ **Academic Results:** 91% of students passed the PKS annual exam held in February 2018, and were promoted to the next class [compared to 90% last year].
- ✓ **Class 5 Federal Board exam:** 76 PK students, including 36 girls, passed the Class 5 external Board exam representing a 92% pass rate. This is our largest cohort of Class 5 graduates to date. We are greatly encouraged by the 100% pass rate among girl students in particular, and the fact that the 43% ratio of girls reaching class 5 has caught up with our overall percentage of girl students. A highly positive trend signaling parents' increasing willingness to allow their daughters to continue schooling through Class 5 and beyond.
- ✓ **Students Mainstreamed:** 470 PK students (26% of total enrolled) successfully transferred to formal public and private schools, [up 10% from last year], validating the PKS feeder role. This includes 73 students from Class 5, as well as 397 students from lower classes. Of the total mainstreamed students, 40% were girls [up from 37% last year] another encouraging trend.



## Academics: A blossoming Montessori Program

During the last academic year we deepened our Montessori program, which we implement by adapting a world-class global Montessori curriculum to the Pakistani – and our specific PKS – context. We expanded on our Science, Geography curricula, and strengthened our Urdu and English language programs, which we teach through a huge emphasis on phonics. We are proud to report that our students are making great progress in Math as well as reading.

- ✓ We continued to build on the transition to an authentic Montessori system, adapted to a low-cost setting. PK teachers underwent another rigorous annual Montessori training, along with refresher trainings spread over the year. We strengthened our lesson planning, and increased focus on teacher support and mentoring.
- ✓ We worked with parents to familiarize them with the Montessori methodology, through open houses and other activities, and encouraged them to visit school more often to observe their children interacting with Montessori materials.
- ✓ As student strength in higher classes increased, we focused more on senior classes, strengthening the transition from Montessori to the regular curriculum in classes 4 and 5.
- ✓ We introduced Class 6 in two PK schools with a high cluster of out-of-school older girls.
- ✓ We focused a great deal on inculcating values – in both staff and students through a range of curricular and co-curricular activities.

Our goal is to continue to provide PK students with high quality education, despite the challenges we face on the ground, including very limited resources, deep-seated cultural barriers and a daunting physical environment.

For more information about our curriculum, please visit our website at [www.pehlikiranschools.org](http://www.pehlikiranschools.org)



## Co-curricular Activities

These remain a cornerstone of the Pehli Kiran broad-based education model. PK students participated whole-heartedly in a range of activities, excelling at sports, arts, literary, and other events over the year.

- ✓ **Independence Day** was celebrated in each PK school with enthusiasm. Students performed songs, skits, poems, and tableau etc. - watched with pride by their parents.
- ✓ **National Book Festival** was hosted by the National Book Foundation. PK students thoroughly enjoyed being exposed to, and participating in, reading, art and other activities.
- ✓ **Sports Days**, were held in each PK school, followed by a combined Sports Day, sponsored by Cities for Children, UK. Students from all PK schools competed in races and games.
- ✓ **Women's Rights Day**, hosted by the Ministry of Human Rights at the Lok Virsa auditorium, provided much-needed exposure for our students.
- ✓ **International Children's Day** – also hosted by the Ministry of Human Rights, in which senior PK students gained valuable awareness on child rights.
- ✓ **Earth Day** was observed in all PK schools, in which students learnt about environmental issues through art.
- ✓ **Soup Day** – in all PK schools, where students enjoyed preparing different soups.
- ✓ **Science & Arts Projects** – provided valuable learning exercises in all PK schools.
- ✓ **Eid Milan parties** were held across all PK schools and greatly relished by all students.



✓ **Eid-ul-Milad-ul-Nabi** was observed in all PK schools – with naats and mithai.

✓ **Summer Book Reading**, hosted by the National Book Foundation, for senior PK students.

✓ **Annual Parents Days** – held in all PK schools, in which parents are not only given their children’s annual results, but they are also treated to delightful performances by their children.



✓ **Art Workshops**, facilitated by students of NUST (National University of Science and Technology) and FAST (National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences).

✓ **Football Coaching**, in collaboration with Right to Play, was extended to another PK school, with an enthusiastic response from not just the students, but their parents as well.



✓ **Environmental activities** - in which PK teachers and continue to plant trees, and flowering plants in an effort to beautify their more eco-friendly.



## Student Welfare

PK schools continued to provide Nutrition Support, Health Check-ups, and Hygiene with organizations that helped organize health, dental and hygiene camps. And provide a free weekly medical check facility for the community at one school. are available in all schools, and monthly prizes for cleanliness reinforce positive hygiene habits.

PKS provides books and materials related to academic and co-curricular activities free of cost. This year we provided uniforms and sweaters to students in five PK schools. PK students and parents welcome periodic food and clothes distribution, sponsored by a range of donors and patrons.



## Community Engagement

PK school teams intensified efforts to engage communities, building on the Community Mobilization Plans developed last year, which were tailored to the specific needs of each community. These plans included activities that not only engage parents in school operations, but also address broader societal issues that impact their children, including child abuse. We continue to bring dropouts back to school after they have been pulled out and put to work to supplement household incomes, as well as persuading parents to delay age of marriage, especially for girls.

PTAs (Parent-Teacher Associations) were strengthened through regular meetings. School communities continue to help resolve issues and contribute to school related expenses, including through their own labor for infrastructure provision.

Many PKS Alumni remain involved in PK school activities, while continuing with their respective studies and/or work. They are a key link to the community, providing important channels of communication.



## Infrastructure

Infrastructure expansion continued to accommodate the growing PK student body, including:

- ✓ two new classroom sheds, complete with flooring (in PK-6 and PK-7);
- ✓ two temporary sheds (in PK-1 and PK-2)
- ✓ one new toilet (PK-6)
- ✓ relocation of PK-6 school, which involved dismantling and reinstalling all classroom sheds, stores, and toilet.

All school structures underwent annual repair and maintenance. Three PK schools received support for renovations from students of Iqra and Hamdard Universities.





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## Management

PKS management experienced significant staff turnover during the year – a widely prevalent challenge among non-profits. We continue to strengthen PKS management systems, enlisting professional help in this process.

We have mainstreamed phase-1 of our digital database, which provides real-time online information on staff and student attendance and enrollment. As part of this effort, we equipped our PK principals with laptop computers and internet access, along with computer training. We plan to begin work on phase-2 in the coming year, during which the database will be expanded to include student academic and co-curricular performance records, to help us identify, analyze and respond better to systemic trends.

## Financial Summary

The average annual cost per student of Rs.7,700 (US\$75) makes PKS one of the lowest-cost primary education delivery models in Pakistan today.

For the current financial year (2017-18), unaudited accounts indicate the following position as of end April 2018 (10 months):

- To date receipts, are Rs.11.6 million (US\$101,000). We project total receipts up to June 2018 (12 months), to be Rs.12 million (US\$115,000). Over 80% of Pehli Kiran Schools' operating costs are funded through individual donations
- To date expenditure, is Rs.12.1 million (US\$105,000). We project total expenditures up to June 2018 (12 months), to be Rs.14.2 million (US\$124,000). This represents an 11% increase over the previous year.

For the financial year ended June 30 2017, JAQ Education Trust externally audited accounts show a total income of Rs.11.1 million and a total expenditure of Rs.12.8 million. The JAQ Education Trust's annual financial statements are independently audited by BDO Ebrahim & Co., a member of BDO International Limited. We are grateful to BDO for providing their audit services on a pro bono basis. The audited financial statements are posted on the Trust's website

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Thoughtful, **in-kind donations** continue to fill gaps and respond to important PK school and office needs. This year they ranged from academic support items such as books, stationery, school supplies, sports and art materials, and toys, to repairs and renovation of school infrastructure, discounted solar panels, internet devices, computers, slide projector, and office furniture, to improve PKS office efficiency. Transportation support for co-curricular activities facilitated exposure of many PK students to these enriching activities. Routine food distributions continue through the year.

## Final Thoughts



With each passing year we see our communities maturing, with continued exposure to an urban setting. Their changing attitudes include greater openness to sending and keeping their children, particularly daughters, in school. At the same time, the population density in our communities is increasing rapidly, and the resulting congestion is exacerbating new social and environmental stresses, one manifestation of which is a rise in violence. In this setting, the PK schools are playing a crucial role in engaging the children of these communities in productive pursuits, and giving them hope and direction.

Despite these challenges, we continue to make progress on all fronts, impacting the lives of the children and families we reach. This is well demonstrated in former PKS student Asia's story.

Such impactful and rewarding outcomes would not be possible without your continuing support, for which we remain ever grateful. It is our commitment to treat every rupee or dollar that you donate as a sacred 'imaanat', to be used as intended – for the deserving children.

Finally, we would also like to recognize the important role played by the large number of volunteers whose efforts are critical to our success. This year the volunteers have included students from five universities in Islamabad. Their enthusiasm and energy is heartening.

We would also like to acknowledge the services of our all-volunteer Boards both in Pakistan and the USA, whose valuable inputs continue to guide us in keeping our focus and making steady progress.



**This report covers the activities of the Pehli Kiran Schools (PKS), operated and financed by the Jamshed Akhtar Qureshi Education Trust, a non-profit registered under the Trust Act of Pakistan. A portion of the funding is provided by 'Pehli Kiran Schools', a US-registered, 501c-3 non-profit, since 2015. Donations to both these entities are tax-exempt in their respective jurisdictions. For more information about our operations, and how you can contribute, please visit our website: [www.pehlikiranschools.org](http://www.pehlikiranschools.org)**