

ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19



Pehli
Kiran
Schools

A JAQ Education Trust Initiative

Annual Highlights

2018-19 was an exciting year of growth for the Pehli Kiran Schools. We broadened our program horizons, gained wider recognition and accelerated our organizational development. Our middle school took off with a promising start. The first pilot batch of 32 female students completed 6th grade, with a 100% pass result, and have started 7th grade with fervor and renewed dynamism. Read more highlights below.



Alumni Associations

We formed PKS Alumni Associations in each of our school communities, which reflect the long-term, transformational impact PKS is having on individual and family lives. We gathered heartwarming stories of success, pointing to the hard work and endeavours of our former PK students, in the pursuit of their goals, and the role PKS played in that journey. We plan to put these stories together in book form: “Meri Kahani – Meri Zabani”, to share with you all. Two short stories are attached to this report.

School Partnerships

We deepened partnerships with public and private schools, leading to greater in-kind support and valuable new relationships. This included a structured volunteer program with a group of ‘A’ Level students from a private school in Islamabad (Westminster), who came on a weekly basis to coach PKS students in different subjects, supervised by teachers from both sides. We also received used textbooks in good condition from a number of government schools in Islamabad, for Classes 1-7, enabling a significant cost saving. We will be expanding both initiatives to more schools this year.



Annual Highlights



Increased Recognition

The PKS brand gained recognition, with a range of individuals and organizations reaching out to us with exciting opportunities for our students and offers of financial and in-kind support. In March, the students received an invitation to sing the national anthem at the inaugural session of a large World Bank-sponsored conference, at the Serena Hotel, Islamabad. PKS students will also be performing the anthem and a short play at the Annual Charity Bazaar organized by the International Foreign Women's Association (IFWA), at the Serena Hotel, Islamabad, in April 2019.

Senior government representatives also reached out to PKS to tap into our success at harnessing out-of-school children. The PKS experience, which demonstrates a successful 20+ year track record of achieving this, has a clear potential for gradual scale-up at the national level.



IN THE WORKS

Technology Integration

We are introducing technology into our academic programs to enhance quality and improve learning outcomes. Students will have a chance to interact with reading and math content on tablets, while staff will be able to access records, assessments, and M&E structures digitally. This will build upon an earlier digital system we developed for student and staff profiles, enrollment and attendance.

Vocational Training

Our vocational training program is emerging, as we gather data on community and youth profiles, map employers, assess market trends, and initiate dialogue with vocational and technical training institutes for potential partnerships and scholarship support.

Key Progress Indicators



2500

Students enrolled
44% Girls

79%

Average Student
Attendance

92%

Students who passed
examinations

28:1

Student Teacher
Ratio

582

Students transferred
to formal schools



Student enrollment has increased by 27% since last year and currently stands at nearly 2500 as of April 2019 in 8 PK schools, spread across katchi abadis in Islamabad. This increase reflects, in part, the increasing densification of these informal settlements.

The student-teacher ratio has decreased since last year, recognizing the need for greater individualized child attention in the Montessori program, as well as in more senior classes. The schools maintained an average of 60 staff across the year between school teams and the central office.

Of the students that sat for the Class 5 Board Exam, 43% were girls, in line with overall female representation in the schools. Increasing numbers of girls sitting for this board exam signal parents' willingness to allow their daughters to continue schooling through Class 5 and potentially even higher.

The number of students that were mainstreamed into formal public or private schools increased by 24% this year, validating the role of PKS as a feeder system serving traditionally out-of-school children. Of the total mainstreamed students, 40% were girls (up from 37% last year) another encouraging trend.

Financial Summary

Over 80% of Pehli Kiran Schools' operating costs are funded through individual donations.



Fiscal Year 2018-2019

As of March 2019, 9 months into the financial year, accounts indicate the following position:

Receipts

11.3

Rs. Million

US \$81,000

Expenses

12

Rs. Million

US \$86,000

We project total expenditures, up to June 2019 to be Rs.19 million (US\$136,000).

Target

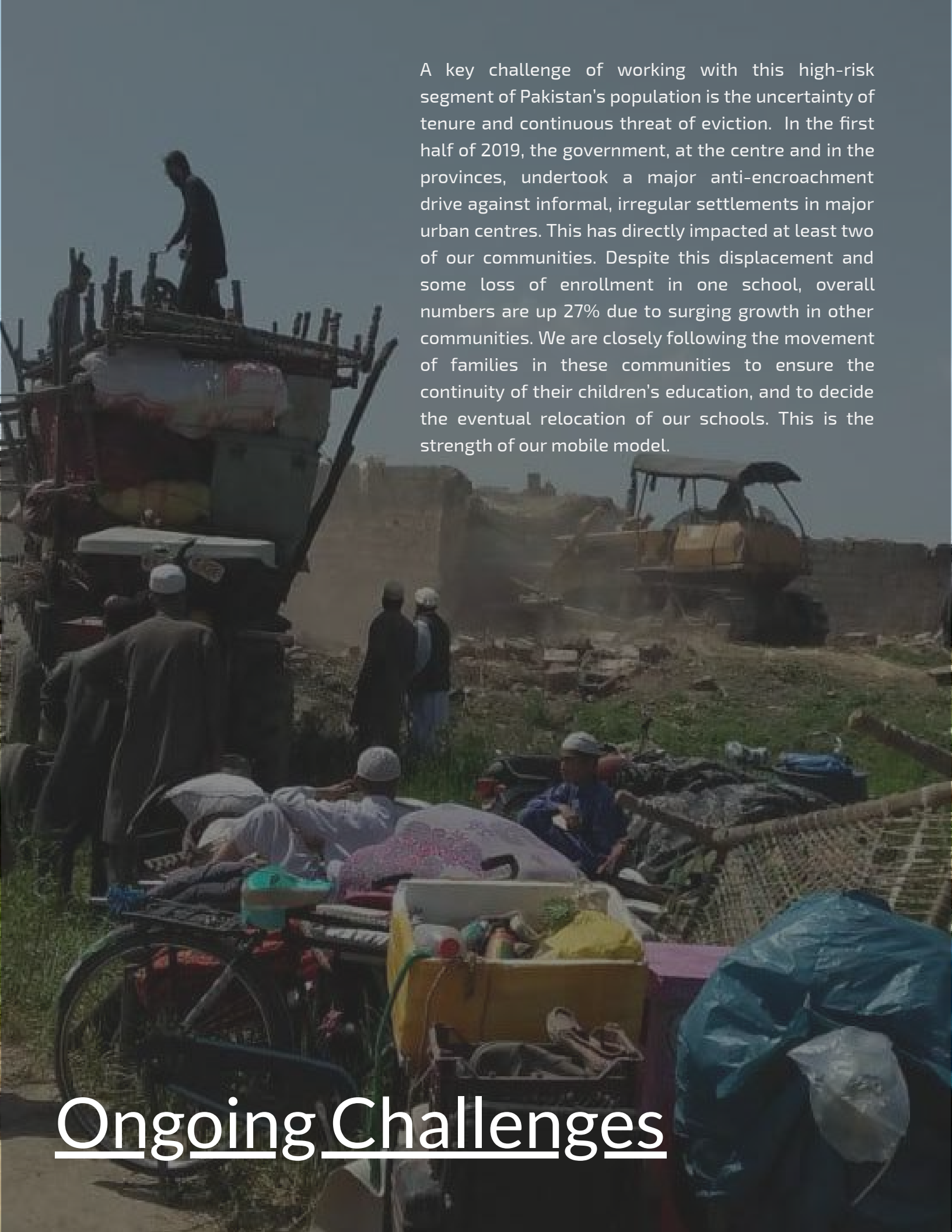
7

Rs. Million

US \$50,000

Fundraising target for the remaining part of the fiscal year

For the financial year ended June 30, 2018, externally audited accounts show a total income of Rs.17.8 million and a total expenditure of Rs.14.4 million.



A key challenge of working with this high-risk segment of Pakistan's population is the uncertainty of tenure and continuous threat of eviction. In the first half of 2019, the government, at the centre and in the provinces, undertook a major anti-encroachment drive against informal, irregular settlements in major urban centres. This has directly impacted at least two of our communities. Despite this displacement and some loss of enrollment in one school, overall numbers are up 27% due to surging growth in other communities. We are closely following the movement of families in these communities to ensure the continuity of their children's education, and to decide the eventual relocation of our schools. This is the strength of our mobile model.

Ongoing Challenges

Charting a Course Forward

Over the coming years, we will focus on the following:



1

PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR ALL CHILDREN: THE EXISTING PKS MODEL

2

MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR GIRLS: THE EXPANDING MODEL

3

HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

4

VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR PKS ALUMNI AND YOUTH IN OUR COMMUNITIES

5

SCALING UP THE PKS MODEL THROUGH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPONSORS

Meri Kahani, Meri Zubani



Meri Kahani | Street Kid to Chef

“Growing up as an Afghan refugee, I spent my time out on the streets with the other children collecting cardboard to sell with no access to school—until Pehli Kiran Schools (PKS) came to our area and established their school. It changed the entire course of our future,” says Abdul Wahab, 22.

Wahab’s parents are Afghan refugees who fled from Afghanistan in 1990 and settled in a refugee settlement in Islamabad. His father worked as a farmer while the children contributed to the family income by selling used cardboard. Children of Afghan refugees aren’t entitled to citizenship in Pakistan, hence they don’t have access to public schools. Without any schools in the neighbourhood, the children had uncertain futures. Pehli Kiran Schools was established with the aim of addressing this precise issue and bringing education to the doorstep of this community.

Wahab says that when he was 5 he joined the other children in the streets until JAQ Trust approached the community about opening up a school for the children. “The best part about the school was that it provided us with free education. Had they not done so, we would never have gotten any education,” says Wahab. He continues, “Initially, due to financial strains and sometimes carelessness, we often skipped school, but the school administration and teachers reached out to our parents and would often come to fetch us themselves.”

Since Pehli Kiran Schools are only primary schools, children have to enroll in a local public school after grade 5 for further education, but for Afghani children it is quite an uphill battle—they have to acquire a No Objection Certificate (NOC) and various documents from several ministries. Wahab says, “The demand of NOCs and different certifications by public schools is a main reason for Afghan children dropping out. We all have to go through a process that is both arduous and at times nearly impossible to complete. However, Pehli Kiran Schools helped us every step of the way when we needed these documents by accompanying us to all the government departments.”

After getting all the required documents, Wahab enrolled in a public school and completed his matriculation. Thereafter, due to financial constraints and family obligations, he gave up regular schooling. However, he registered with Allama Iqbal Open University as a private student and is currently an 11th grade student. Wahab also partook in a three-month culinary course, earning a diploma as a chef and is currently employed in a restaurant in Islamabad.

“Due to the lack of educational opportunities, it is essential for Afghan refugee children to learn vocational skills or we won’t be able to make ends meet. Having had basic education required to register for a culinary course, I’m now gainfully employed. I hope to become a leading chef in the country one day and also complete my education. All of this is because the Pehli Kiran Schools team believed in me and gave me the confidence to follow my dreams.”



Meri Kahani | A Father's Dream

Having faced poverty and hardships in life, Islam Khana's father was determined to provide his children with a good education, but he couldn't afford to send them to school. Pehli Kiran Schools (PKS) made this possible by offering free education to its students. Now, Islam Khana is a proud alumna of PKS.

Islam Khana was born to Ahsan Ghani and Irshad Begum in a village in Karak, Khyber Pakhtunkhwan, in 1997. Due to the lack of opportunities and extreme poverty in his native village, Ghani moved his family to Islamabad. He worked as a daily wage labourer while his wife collected wood to sell.

"Living in tough conditions had taught my father the value of education. He wanted to see his children succeed in life and achieve great things. So when I turned 5, he promised himself that even if he had to go without food for a while, he would, to ensure that I attended a good school," shares Islam Khana. "In those days, Pehli Kiran School #2, located in our community, was a ray of light for us. It provided free quality education to its students and also met our other needs. It is a one-of-a-kind school."

Islam graduated from Pehli Kiran school #2 in grade 5 and enrolled in a public school for further education. PKS had prepared her well for higher studies, and she credits PKS for laying a strong foundation for her future.

"When I took the admission test of a renowned public school after grade 5, I topped their merit list. It was all due to my years at PKS: the education given to us there had been no less than a private school's," she explains. Islam now has a BSc degree from Quaid-e-Azam University and wants to become a software engineer, though her family's finances don't allow her to pursue that dream just yet.

Nevertheless, she's extremely grateful for her journey so far. She feels that given her family's conditions and lack of opportunities for children with her background, she was lucky to have found a school like PKS, one that exposed her to a life that she could have only dreamt of.

