Pakistan Youth Initiative (PYI) 2
Engaging Youth for Building Community Resilience and Promoting Social Cohesion

“Providing Access to Education For Out of School Children”

**Name of Project:**
“Providing Access to Education For Out of School Children”

**Group Name:**
Kindness Squad

**Group Members:**
Anwar ul Haq, Ibrar Latif, Waqas Ahmed, Abdul Majid, Tilawat Afreen and Zarat Bibi

**Project Area:**
Five Union Councils of Islamabad including UC 44 Bokra, UC 45 Jhangi Sayedan, UC 46 Badhana Kalan, UC 47 Tarnol & UC 48 Sarai Kharbozoa

**Project Duration:**
25th January 2019 -15th March, 2019

**Beneficiaries:**
**Direct:**
Approx 400 (Local Elected Representatives, Principals of Educational Institutions, Students, Parents, NGO's/CBO's, Media, Influential's & Govt. Officials and other Stakeholders)

**Indirect:**
Approx 2000 (School Teachers, Parents and family members in the communities, Community members at large)
Main Objective of the Project:

To enhance access to education for street children

To build these children's self-esteem and give them basic education for a better living.

To sensitize parents and general community on the importance of education

Outcomes:

Enrollment in schools:
Enrollment of 29 street children in formal education institutions to develop their skills and knowledge.

Sensitizing parents and general community:
Communities, especially parents are made aware of the importance of child education. General communities are also sensitized to education of vulnerable and deprived street children.

Background:
The 'street children' phenomenon is a global concern whereby 150 million children around the world are living and/or working on the streets. Unprecedented global industrialization, urbanization, poverty and socioeconomic pressures are the major causes for the growth in the number of street children. In this context, children end up on the street for numerous reasons including parental landlessness, domestic violence, rural/urban migration, unemployment, natural disasters, civil unrest and family disintegration. An estimated 1.2 million children are on the streets of Pakistan's major cities and urban centers constituting the country's largest and one of the most ostracized social groups. As many as 44% children between the ages of 5 and 16 are still out of school.

Project Summary:

Social Action Plan (SAP) was designed to target those children who had never been to primary school due to poor socio-economic backgrounds, religious and ethnic compulsions, poor results, physical or mental challenges. Coordination meetings were organized with all key stakeholders and their cooperation and support was sought. Meetings have also been done with owners/administration of community model schools and private schools and they committed to support educating 2-3 street children free of cost. Community volunteers who have been trained played a vital role in identification and selection of most vulnerable and deprived children within their respective communities at each union council. 85 out of school children are identified and 29 enrolled in private and community model schools. Linkages have been developed with other civil society groups who are working on street children. Presence of sensitized Community Support Groups will sustain the outcome of this SAP in the long run. “Adopt a child” was included in plan with intent of sustainability.
Consultative meeting with key actors at each union council:

The main objective of the meeting was to orient key stakeholders and selected community group members regarding the implementation of Social Action Plan and to seek their support for smooth role out of the activities in the field.

In open forum discussion all stakeholders raised their points, shared their suggestions and committed their cooperation for implementation of this project. They raised and issue that it is very difficult to get admission in government schools and fees of private schools are so high that a poor person cannot afford it but an option of community model schools is open for such children whom we can enrol at earlier stage and later an advocacy campaign is needed for such out of school children.

Community youth facilitator meeting with trained volunteers:

To ensure that community youth facilitators and trained volunteers are on the same page, 5 meetings were conducted in 5 project union councils of Islamabad. These meetings not only enriched communication between different team members but also ensured better coordination among project team, during the meetings task were assigned to selected trained community volunteers for identification of out of school children which result in better outcome for the project, during the process of identification community volunteers took keen interest and shared the views of parents;

Its first time in our life that we heard someone is interested to teach our children for free of cost, as we marginalized people can't afford to teach our children as we barely meet our 2 times meal.

One of the community volunteer shared that it's a life time experience for me to go in the field and convince someone to teach his/her child for their self sustainability and betterment of their family. I feel really proud of myself to be a volunteer of PAIMAN and VSO.

Participants appreciated the efforts of PAIMAN and VSO and showed their support in identification of out of school children and suggested that CYF's along with community volunteers should do one to one meetings with parents as a result more than 100 meetings were conducted with parents of out of school children.

Mr. Allyas (Principal Sirsyed School-Tarnol) committed enrolment of 20 out of school children from UC 48 and 47. He also committed to adopt three children.

Malik Nasir- member CSG, suggested that PAIMAN and VSO should advocate for article 25A.
Awareness raising campaign through interactive street theatre:

To sensitize the community at large, an awareness raising campaign was launched by CYFs in the form of Street theatres. 5 street theaters were performed in 5 UCs in order to engage and aware local communities regarding peaceful coexistence, social cohesion and education. In these theaters, communities were not only made aware of importance of education, they were also sensitized regarding importance of education for street children.

Theatre performers were trained community volunteers and their peers, three themes were selected around which theatre shows were to be performed. Interactive theatre had three stages, the first stage was the preparatory stage in which stage and environment was set. people were invited to see the spectacle by beating drums. During the second stage the theatrical performance was actually staged, each character appeared on stage in full getup and delivered their part thus conveying the required messages. In the last stage audience were involved and asked to share their views and pledge to promote social cohesion and take initiative for out of school children.

After watching the theatre performance people commented that education is the only solution to prepare young generation against poverty, some people said that no doubt education is equally important for boys but girls education is more important and need serious attention by the government.

Adopt a child campaign:

85 out of school children were identified by youth volunteers for enrollment in community and private schools. After taking consent from parents and sponsor from school owners and influential's 29 were enrolled in schools. Influential's including elected representatives and school owners took this intervention very positively and contributed whole heartedly. A school kit comprising of school bags, uniforms, notebooks, stationary and curriculum was prepared and distributed to these children with the help of VSO & PAIMAN. One of the principal of a school appreciated the effort of PAIMAN & VSO and committed to enroll 2 students and at the same time ask government to step forward and work for these poor and marginalized individuals who cannot afford syllabus and uniform.

Coordination meetings with Ministry of Education:

A series of coordination meetings held with Rafiq Tahir, Joint Educational Advisor, Ministry of Education is another success of project. He appreciated CYFs efforts and demanded details of identified children by committing to extend his support for them. In another meeting CYF from PAIMAN Alumni Trust presented documents to his office. After receiving these documents he directed Dr. Tariq Cheema, Director General Tarnol region to provide curriculum for all identified 85 children.

School Kits Distribution:

At the end of SAF 29, School Kits distributed among the identified out of school children including school bags syllabus, copies along with other required stationary and uniform.