

Addressing the Vulnerable through Quality Learning & Protection – Drop in Centres for Ragpickers & Child Domestic Labor

Project Description

Two projects that began during the period 2004-2006 as a pilot have become pioneers in relevance, sustainability and replicability addressing the most vulnerable girls and boys of, migrant, displaced and minority communities in Rawalpindi, Islamabad and Lahore, Pakistan. The children engaged in ragpicking and child domestic labor (CDL) were denied opportunities for education, protection and dignity by their poverty stricken families and society at large. In CDL, girls' vulnerability is compounded by complexity and invisibility. In CDL a continuum of violence (low to high) is always present, from denial of food and rest, to trafficking, bondage and sexual abuse, including rape and murder. CDL cuts across all classes during economic crises as labor substitution.

The approach designed for the program has ensured a menu of low cost interventions for protection, care and capabilities enhancement through a variety of community support and learning solutions, crafted after careful assessment of child's current and previous knowledge through individualized portfolios and safer livelihood options. The 'drop in centre' approach is implemented with sufficient number of facilitator-teachers either in a government school or rented place providing flexibility for the children to 'drop in' for a 3 hour contact program. The program elements/steps are:

I. Children enrolled walk into a drop in centre, first visiting a wash basin with a mirror, soap, towel and a comb: clean themselves, comb hair manage a big smile walking with confidence to their teacher, who would then take them through a routine.

II. A 10 minute chatting corner encounter called the 'gup shup' corner to unload stories /news of the day from each child & providing counseling and gauging their moods

III. The child would then walk into the learning room appropriate to her/his level of education. Prior to sitting down the child would first go to the hygiene chart boldly displayed for the month, to put a star of cleanliness under the gaze of the children and teacher, 'a yellow, green, or red' depending upon the conditions of the hands, face and hair – a symbol of self management and trust building. Each month the first five children who accumulated the maximum yellow stars would get a small prize "a soap bar, a toothpaste, a brush a comb etc'.

IV. The formal learning or engagement with texts would begin and the child's learning would be fully tracked in the basic subjects in her/his individualized education portfolio a very important tool that would help the child and her family in mainstreaming to formal schools (government or private).

V. The learning options in the drop in centers range from :

v.i) A catch up program for the drop outs (ages 6-15) after careful assessment of their skills in : reading, writing and arithmetic and comprehension, the **catch up program** could be for grade 1 all the way until grade 9 and that meant teachers /facilitators who were preferably themselves at least with 14 years of education or graduates with knowledge of Pashto and a lot of patience. Each cluster of children has an especially tailored program adapted to learning levels. A minimum contact time of 6 months helps them

to get back to formal schools on merit. Sometimes it would be the school where the drop in centre was located and sometimes the local schools. The ITA teams ensure sufficient preparation of the department of education, schools heads to receive these children as per government's EFA policy, with care to ensure they are not picked at for being ragpickers or CDLs or due to different accents/dialects, 'pashto' or 'gypsy'. In formal schools a parallel whole school improvement program was initiated on government's request, applying many non-formal strategies of community participation, site – based/cluster based teacher training and assessment for sustainability of mainstream children.

v.ii) Readiness program for siblings, the very young (3-5 years) who were at risk and had never been enrolled so that they could be prepared to enter formal schools with confidence and good disposition. This comprises an ECE to cover all the milestones of emotional, psycho motor and cognitive development with extra language support to cover mother tongue, Urdu and English.

v.iii) Vocational training and livelihoods program (13-17 years) is a mixture of literacy (multiple literacies), vocational skills appropriate to gender and market demands, combined with lifeskills for adolescents/youth. The vocational programs are all certified and examined by certified personnel and efforts are made to provide youth with tools of trade for starting alternative safer livelihoods to supplement household incomes.

IT or computer literacy has been introduced where possible with great success.

VI. Each of the above interventions is supported by:

- A heavy community engagement through local Vigilance Committees (VCs) who support the program cycle and one VC is also running a centre on its own.
- Many opportunities are provided for creative expression: art, poster making with well known artists, poetry writing, theatre (interactive), script writing, play corners and field visits /picnics
- Health screening, early detection and primary health care program including referrals to secondary and tertiary facilities if required for TB, Hepatitis and Dog bites. A first aid kit with a tracking system is in each drop in centre. Regular visits by doctors and government linkages to public dispensaries for medicines.. (but govt. dispensaries are not equipped with all drugs) as well as other health programs such as Greenstar etc. Optimum efforts to link the children's families to health support and provide them awareness on maternal health, HIV Aids and hepatitis C and Dengue prevention.
- The lifeskills program crafted by two excellent partner NGOs has been full integrated, training all facilitators in pre and in-service training so that the 3 hour daily experience has all milestones in-built helping children internalize lifeskills n daily routines.
- A very difficult but eventually successful linkage to the government social safety net instruments of "Food Support Program/ Family support program" which provides a monthly minimum of Rs. 300(Sterling 2.5) per family to buy wheat. This segment is to be linked to another government initiative for a more substantive family support program through the Child Protection and Welfare Bureau (CPWB) with which ITA has a formal MoU for institutional linkage and support. In the CDL program, Rs. 250 (2 sterling pounds) monthly stipend is provided to all children.

- Advocacy has included three visits to the National Assembly, children meeting Ministers and the Prime Minister to present a Charter of Rights for child labor, and Child Domestic Labor be declared as the worst forms of child labor (WFCL) as per ILO Convention 182 . The advocacy has been with coalition partners. Documentary films and media coverage has been extensive.
- The project has worked alongside government with tremendous success at the national level Ministry of Social Welfare and Special Education (MSWSE) and the City District Government Rawalpindi (CDG) and formal institutional platforms were created for a National Steering Committee and a District Coordination Committee (DCC) for vulnerable children and child labor. This mainstreamed approach has led to mobilization of public funds /programs for the most vulnerable. The pilots of 1-2 years supported by ILO have been taken over by the government. ITA is the implementer and technical adviser for the program. The MSWSE has provided over Rs. 35 million for child domestic labor drop in centres and an equivalent amount has been allocated by the CDG Rawalpindi for mainstreaming of ragpicker program into a state run non-formal initiative for child labor under the Literate Punjab Program (LPP). The DCC continues as a policy platform beyond ILO project, for CDG Rawalpindi to support its most vulnerable and work towards a 100% literacy and EFA goals.
- For mainstreamed children ITA’s research program tracks them through case studies – pre and post stories.

The program has covered almost 5000 children with 64% girls, 42% were mainstreamed successfully in schools; the program led to 48% of complete withdrawal from the unsafe trades and 15% poverty reduction (recent ILO external evaluation). It is getting ready for scaling up across the country. A toolkit is under preparation by ITA.

Essential Statistics of the Best Practice	Total
Child Labor (CDLs and Ragpickers) Enrolled (04-17 yrs)	4634
Girls / Female Enrolled	64%
Mainstreamed	42%
Drop outs	10%
Pre-vocational	20%
Literacy/ Numerecy	25%
Stopped Working - completely withdrawn	48%

The total recurrent monthly costs for a drop in centre is Rs. 35,000 (Sterling 250 per month) covering 120 children : 1 -2 year program.

The children feel valued and secure in predictable and caring environment. They feel confident about their capabilities, comfortable identities, language and dispositions without any marginalization. They have become narrators about their empowerment and surprise many with discipline and creative skills. Many children and youth have gone into safer self- managed vocations viz. beauty parlors, mobile beauty services, garment making, plumbing, craft making /bags production. One group of youth is launching an environmental campaign business for replacing plastic bags with cloth reusable bags.. “Say no plastics and yes to LIFE”. This initiative is in its advanced stages of the business plan, product costing and

marketing strategy managed by the young girls themselves, teachers and ITA representatives as an enterprise of entitlements and social responsibility.

Idara-e-Taleem-o Aagahi (ITA) Public Trust – centre for education and consciousness

October 31 , 2008

NGO PROFILE

Title of NGO:	Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) Centre for Education & Consciousness
Address of Head Office:	67-A, Abid Majeed Road, Lahore Cantt, Pakistan
1 Postal	67-A, Abid Majeed Road, Lahore Cantt, Pakistan/ House No. 2 A St. 40 F-6/1 Islamabad
2 Tel #:	Tel: 042-6689832-1 Tel: 051-2824838
3 Fax # :	042-6665642 051-9244159
4 Email:	itacec@gmail.com
Name of Chairperson	Baela Raza Jamil:
Name / Designation of Executive Officer	Saeed ul Hasan Shah
Registration No.: (under Trust Act)	8499/3503 dated 30-Jun-2000
Registration No (under Act , XXI of 1860)	RP/3049/L/S/06/1542 (RP/711) dated 22 June 2006
Registration Agencies:	Registration Act, 1860, Government of Punjab, Pakistan and Trust Act
DUNS No <i>(D&B World database USA)</i>	64-547-9465 dated 20th August 2004
USAID IMCP Graduate	Certificate awarded on 5th April 2006
<i>PCP Certification</i>	PCP-2006/0102 awarded on 16 September 2006
<i>UK Registration Charity No : (ITA Public Trust UK)</i>	1093485
<i>ITA's Budget</i> <i>2005-06</i> <i>2006-07</i>	Rs. 39 million (Sterling 1 = Rs. 69) Rs 40 million (Sterling 1 = Rs. 115)
<i>Tax Exemption No</i>	I&E/84/236 dated 21 October, 2006

<i>Auditors</i>	Ford Rhodes Sidat & Hyder
<i>Bank Accounts Details</i>	Title of Account: Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi Standard Chartered Bank Main Boulevard, Gulberg, Lahore Account No. 01-5369428-01 To 06
Key Sectors worked in last 5 years	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="553 522 1453 659">1. Citizenship Education, Democracy, Human Rights, Conflict Resolution and Local Governance (Youth, Community, School Councils and teachers) <li data-bbox="553 659 1453 764">2. Formal Education : Whole School improvement Programme <li data-bbox="553 764 1453 827">3. Child Labour - / Non Formal Education <li data-bbox="553 827 1453 890">4. Child Domestic Labour - / NFE /Literacy & Vocational <li data-bbox="553 890 1453 995">5. Rag Picker Sector (Child Labour)- / NFE /Literacy & Vocational <li data-bbox="553 995 1453 1058">6. Health and Environment <li data-bbox="553 1058 1453 1121">7. School Enrichment Program & ECE <li data-bbox="553 1121 1453 1184">8. Private Public Partnerships in Education <li data-bbox="553 1184 1453 1247">9. District Markaz Education Planning (DEP) <li data-bbox="553 1247 1453 1310">10. Training/Capacity Building in Pakistan and Abroad <li data-bbox="553 1310 1453 1373">11. Enabling Relief & Rehabilitation Through Education (AJK)
Key Sources of Funding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="553 1400 1453 1463">1. United States Institute of Peace <li data-bbox="553 1463 1453 1526">2. ILO <li data-bbox="553 1526 1453 1589">3. Save the Children Fund UK <li data-bbox="553 1589 1453 1652">4. CIDA <li data-bbox="553 1652 1453 1715">5. US Embassy - Small Grant Program <li data-bbox="553 1715 1453 1778">6. UNICEF <li data-bbox="553 1778 1453 1841">7. UNESCO

	8. US DOL
	9. United States Institute of Peace (USIP)
	10. ITA CEC UK
	11. OXFAM
	12. World Bank
	13. Ministry of Social Welfare and Special Education
	14. International Philanthropist (<i>ITACEC UK, PAGH USA</i>)
	15. Local /Expatriate Philanthropists & Corporate Sector (<i>ICI, Pakistan, Nestle, Pakistan, Unilever</i>)
Geographical Scope:	All over Pakistan – AJK, FATA & Northern Areas