

Final Progress Report

Shaheen Public School

Hargesa – Skardu district, Pakistan

2010-2011



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By: Nazir Ahmad, Arjumand Nizami and Tahir Saleem

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1. Background of the School

The Shaheen Public School was established by Nazir Ahmed. The school is situated in Skardu district which is a 10 km wide and 40km long valley, at the confluence of the Indus River (flowing from near Kailash in Tibet and through neighboring Ladakh before reaching Baltistan) and the Shigar River. Skardu is situated at an altitude of nearly 2,500 m (8,200 feet). The town is surrounded by grey-brown colored mountains and sandy grounds, which hide the 8,000 meter peaks of the nearby Karakoram range.

Nazir Ahmed is a resident of Skardu district of Gilgit Baltistan region of Pakistan. Nazir has Masters Degree in Chemistry and Bachelors in Education. He has a prior experience of teaching in Army Public School (APS) in the heart of Skardu. APS is a well-known chain of public-private partnership schools in Pakistan run by Pakistan Army's Education Corps. Nazir quit his job in 2004 to pursue his goal to have his own education facility where he could freely use his experience in providing quality education in affordable price, besides securing his own regular monthly income. His intention was not to make money at any cost – and run education as a business. His idea was to give quality education equally comparable with APS but at a price which people are willing to pay and afford – and make sure that school can sustain itself. This led to opening of Shaheen in suburbs of Skardu for girls and boys.

The common perception in Skardu for quality education is associated with high priced private Schools. Government Schools on the other hand are very poorly equipped and are not doing a good job. A viable effort to improve the situation does not seem to exist. There is nothing between these two extremes. Hence many people from low income and poor families cannot even think of sending their children to private Schools. Hence this facility was established that is actually classified as a private School, but yet with different values than a business oriented private School in the main town. Hence it is clear that pupils had to pay certain fee - but nominal when compared to the others. For parents ending up paying for failed school years and additional tuition fee in case of sub standard schools, this school has a potential to bring them a successful break through. This is still an ambition, not yet fully achieved hence Nazir Ahmed has to go a long way to ensure that Shaheen has a name in high quality education. Nazir is determined to make the same standard of education available to those who can't afford to go to these schools.

Out of his own savings during his job in APS Nazir raised this system off the ground. He teaches in the school and also supervises the rest of the staff. Initially, the school was run in a rented building. Nazir and family occupied two rooms in the same rented building for his residence. As the number of pupil increased, some members of his family had to vacate one room and live in a tent within the school garden in order to allow more space for the school. Later, the entire family had to move and rent a separate house for their residence. Due to increasing rental prices, he had to change the school building to a cheaper place. Shifting was not easy, especially with increased number of pupil – 150 by that time. This



Shaheen School is situated in the suburb of Skardu town, an urban slum where a high majority of pupils is from war affectee families and migrants from the border areas - Line of Control (LoC) between Pakistan and India including the famous Siachen Glacier and Kargil. There is hardly any family who can afford to send their children to the private schools offering quality education in the town.

necessitated that the school has its own building. Nazir purchased a small piece of land in the school's name at the periphery a village communal pasture in Hargesa. The school received partial funding support from friends, Nazir's relatives and two charity institutions¹. With the available funds, 6 rooms at the ground floor were completed. Due to space problem, three sections were accommodated in the corridor and two small rooms. Piece by piece, bit by bit, Shaheen however, made a progress.

Since the beginning, all that is earned by school is either used in subsidizing war affected children or is used in saving sums for school building. Communities therefore extend a lot of volunteer support in several areas including making contribution for uniforms, paying electricity bills, etc. In order to make the system sustainable, and make sure that more girls and boys can be accommodated in the school, the school needed a good housing facility and toilets. Skardu is a harsh environment with its 2500m altitude above sea level. This school is a lifeline for people living in Hargesa and deserved to be strengthened. The school submitted a first note requesting for financial support in 2009 to Stichting Ondersteuning Meisjes Onderwijs Pakistan (SOMOP). After a detailed discussion on the project, budget and basic principles of support, the support was approved in April 2010. Stichting Ondersteuning Meisjes Onderwijs Pakistan (SOMOP) was also supported by Marthe van Rijswijck (Kansen voor Kinderen) for additional financial support.

2. Why support was extended to this school? The justification

1. The nature of support required by school (toilets, boundary wall, more space for classes) directly contributes to encouraging more girls' to attend school
2. This model is a self initiative of a local person, and is just focusing on education of girls and boys.
3. Skardu is a remote town. Social services including quality education are scarce here.
4. We do not see any other institution, including the government, providing quality education on affordable price in the near future (verified in first visit to the school).
5. The people living in this area give an immense importance to education even when they are very poor since their living is mostly based on off-farm employments.
6. A number of children in the school belong to war affected families.
7. The land belongs to the school and all investments will be secured in favour of the school's sustainability.

3. The progress – what was achieved?

a. The project progress and status

All the construction planned in the project proposal for 2010-2011 has been achieved. The construction was done in two years in two phases. During winter all the work has to stop due to very low (below freezing) temperatures.

a. As of 2010

1. First floor of the school constructed with 6 classrooms. They started functioning in the spring 2011.
2. A corridor ran in the middle of these classrooms – but open from both the ends.
3. Stairs from the ground floor to the first floor. The stairs needed a grill on both sides.
4. Classrooms and corridor walls painted.
5. Boundary wall erected and a gate installed. Finishing remained to be done.
6. 6 toilets (instead of 3) constructed. Not yet operational.

¹ In June 2007, Muraphie Foundation, a Kuwait based charity organization provided 5% of the construction cost of the six room building. Another 2% was provided by friends and relatives. In 2008, INFAQ foundation from Karachi Pakistan provided US\$2600 for purchase of computers and basic furniture.

b. As of June 2011

1. Washrooms work fully completed and now functioning (3 washrooms for boys and 3 for girls).
2. Classrooms window work (glasses, wire gauze with wood and painting) completed.
3. Electricity work completed (classrooms, corridor and washrooms).
4. Play ground² cutting work has started, but stopped in June now due to unavailability of wage labour.

A Final status of construction work as of November 2011:

A final 2-member monitoring mission was sent to school in November 2011 which noted as follows:

Monitoring Mile Stones

No	Tasks	Remarks
	Situation as of 2010	
1	First floor of the school constructed with 6 classrooms, already functioning.	Verified and seen. Ground floor: Nursery, Prep, Grades 1a,1b, 2 and office. First floor classes: Grades 3,4,5,6, 7,8
2	A corridor runs in the middle of these classrooms – but it is still open from both the ends.	Finished. now both the ends are closed - door on both sides in a manner that place can be expanded in the future.
3	Stairs from the ground floor to the first floor. The stairs need to be protected with a grill.	The grill is ready but not installed yet.
4	Classrooms and corridor walls have been painted.	Yes, verified
5	Boundary wall has been erected and a gate installed. Finishing remains to be done.	Done and completely finished
6	6 toilets (instead of 3) have been constructed. These were not yet operational in 2010.	All on ground floor. Completely finished. We saw 8 toilets, one side girls 4 and 4 on other side boys - sanitary installed and 4 were seen functional and the other 4 were waiting for final touches on plumbing work.
	2011	
1	Washrooms work fully completed and now functioning. 3 washrooms for boys and 3 for girls. Students are very happy. Especially girls, they were facing big problem, now they are happy.	4 (2 for girls and 2 for boys) are fully functioning. Soon the other 4 will also start functioning
2	Classrooms window work (glasses, wire gauze with wood and painting) complete.	Done
3	Electricity work is completed (classrooms, corridor and washrooms).	Done
4	Play ground, cutting work has started, but stopped in June now due to unavailability of labour. Otherwise soon to be in progress in July/August.	On 20th November still under work since the excavation work with boulders are enormous.
	Remaining in 2011	
1	Classrooms and corridor floor finishing work will start from 15 th July, 2011 when school will close for summer vacations (15 th July to 5 th August, 2011).	Verified, done and finished
2	Corridor remaining work in terms of finishing is continued (it will be closed from both ends).	Done, except stairs floor and grill

² Another source of funding

3	Playground work will also be done during July/August as the money received for playground was used for toilets and labour availability was a problem.	Will be finished by end of December
4	School board will be installed and boundary wall finishing will be done.	Done and seen
5	Staircase needs a grill on sides, will be done in July.	grill ready but not yet installed
6	Last few final touches in second semester.	

By the time this report is being written, the following has also been completed:

1. The stairs floor finished and grill installed.
2. The play ground leveled and finished
3. The other 4 toilets are also operational

Project administration expectations from the donor:

Letter April 2010	Our response
Prepare a detailed work plan for 2010, clearly indicating what activities will be undertaken in 2010 and the costs involved.	We prepared work plans for 2010 and 2011. Accordingly sent three progress reports and photos from time to time.
I understand that Mrs. Nizami will visit Skardu on May 8, 2010. After her visit and sharing her findings and upon receipt of the work plan 2010, the Foundation will transfer the first installment for 2010, being an amount of € 4.000.	One monitoring visit from Mrs. Arjumand Nizami and one from Mr. Tahir Saleem and Shahid Ali. One visit from the principle to Islamabad to discuss the progress and budget issues.
We expect that you keep us informed about the progress of the project, through narrative as well as financial reports. We would like to request you to submit these reports every quarter, starting with the second quarter of 2010. The reports can be short and to the point, and we appreciate receiving some pictures.	Four (including this final report) reports apart from frequent emails regarding progress and several photos
If there are any problems or the progress is less than expected, be so kind to inform us as well. It is common in any project that things go differently than planned, and we would like to hear how things are going.	Several changes have taken place during the period which were communicated from time to time. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It appeared during the start of the project that the first funds will arrive late. Since we were to make best use of season, we took loan from HBFC, this loan was provided by one of the neighbors and school member who could take loan on his personal guarantee. 2. 8 instead of 3 toilets were installed. This could be done through 2+2 master constriction and then partitions. 3. We received an additional funding support for the play ground from Ms. Arjumand Nizami. We added this activity in the project and it was highly appreciated by children. 4. Work was delayed from time to time due to unavailability of material or labour – but it was adjusted accordingly – fortunately all the work could be finished within the project period 5. We spent much more than envisaged – cost of construction continued to rise.

Impact of the project

Shelter from extreme temperature: Skardu experiences weather extremes, the temperature could reach minus 32 degrees in winter and 40 degrees in summer. Minus 16 degrees between November-February is considered usual. Construction of additional rooms accommodated many classes and provided a better environment to the pupils. Improved housing has added to quality of teaching in the school and has attracted more enrolment in the school by 34%.

Increase in girls' students: Two factors have enormously contributed to increase interest of parents for admitting girls in the school. One: There was no boundary wall in the past, and parents did not consider the school safe for the girls. two, there was only one functioning toilet for the school and for the staff. Children (particularly girls) had to go to the neighbors' houses for attending toilets. Yet another factor, not necessarily crucial but still worth mentioning was the quality of housing. With an over-crowded stuffed class arrangement and limited rooms, parents did not find much space for girls to seek admission. As one parent mentioned in the first meeting in 2010: *"the school does not have space for their current students (78% boys), what to talk of more girls"*. The overall percentage of girls has risen to 29% from 22%. Two things are important to note:

1. This percentage will be higher after the next admission (March 2012) since the toilets only became functional in 2011 when the first admissions had already taken place.
2. Already in grades Nursery and Prep, please check the proportion of girls vs boys (highlighted). We have achieved some balance in admission during 2010 and 2011. against this, in 2009, we had more boys admissions than girls

Number of pupils at present (grades and gender wise)

S. No.	Grades	Boys 2009	Boys 2011	Girls 2009	Girls 2011	Total 2009	Total 2011
1	Nursery	18	15	8	11	26	26
2	Prep	20	22	5	15	25	37
3	1 st (section A+B)	16	40	7	8	23	48
4	2 nd	18	28	4	7	22	35
5	3 rd	20	18	3	6	23	24
6	4 th	17	19	7	12	24	31
7	5 th	21	20	5	8	26	28
8	6 th	16	12	4	6	20	18
9	7 th	14	14	3	-	17	14
10	8 th	0	9	0	6	0	15
	Total	160	197	46 (22%)	79 (29%)	206	276³

Other positive impacts, not directly intended by the project:

b. Key Persons in the school Management

We have revisited the school management committee and made a few changes. According to new management committee, the Principal is no longer the President of the committee – which is a step towards accountability. The Principal's wife is no longer in the management committee. In the current composition, there are two women and six men including one with 22 years of development experience for providing sound guidance.

³ Drop-out over 2 years: 7 girls, 8 boys due to out-migration of the families.

Old committee

S. No.	Name	Position	Since	Salaried /Volunteer
1	Mr. Nazir Ahmed	President	2004	Volunteer
2	Mrs. Naseem Akhtar	G. Secretary	Do	Do
3	Mr. Shujaat Ali	Finance Secretary	Do	Do
4	Mr. Ahmad Khan	Vice-President	2005	Do
5	Mr. Ghulam Abbas	Member	2005	Do
6	Miss Shakeela	Member	2006	Do

New committee

S. No.	Name	Position	Since	Salaried or Volunteer
1	Mr. Muhammad Yousuf	President	2011	Volunteer
4	Dr. Jawad Ali	Vice-President	do	Do
2	Mr. Nazir Ahmed	G. Secretary	Do	Do
3	Mr. Shujaat Ali	Finance Secretary	Do	Do
5	Miss Rubab	Information Secretary	do	Do
6	Miss Rubina	Member	`do	Do
7	Mr. Ahmad Khan	Member	do	Do
8	Mr. Ghulam Abbas	Member	do	Do

c. Teaching staff

At the start of the project, the school had four female and six male teachers. As of now, there are eight female and five male teachers. This speaks for a conscious effort by the school to attract more girls in the school.

Old composition

S. No.	Name	Position	Since	Salaried /Volunteer
1	Mr. Nazir Ahmed	Principal	2004	Salaried
2	Mr. Mohd Shakeel	Vice-Principal	2004	Salaried
3	Miss Shakeela Bano	Vice-Principal	2005	Do
4	Mr. Zulfiqar Ali	Teacher	2004	Do
5	Ms. Saima	Lady Teacher	2005	Do
6	Ms. Fiza	Lady Teacher	do	Do
7	Mr Askari	Teacher	2006	Do
8	Ms. Tasneem	Lady Teacher	2005	Do
9	Ms. Arifa	Lady Teacher	2005	Do
10	Mr. Zeeshan Ali	Teacher	2007	Do
11	Mr. Muhammad Khan	Support staff	2004	Do
12	Ms. Nadia Bano	Support staff	2006	Do

New composition

S. No.	Name	Position	Since	Salaried / Volunteer
1	Mr. Nazir Ahmed	Principal	2004	Salaried
2	Mr. Muhammad Hadi	Vice-Principal	2010	Salaried
3	Ms. Fatima	Lady teacher	2010	Do
4	Mr. Nasir	Teacher	2011	Do
5	Ms. Marzia	Lady Teacher	2011	Do
6	Ms. Fiza	Lady Teacher	2009	Do
7	Mr. Askari	Teacher	2006	Do
8	Ms. Naila Bano	Lady Teacher	2010	Do
9	Ms. Arifa	Lady Teacher	2005	Do

10	Mr. Shabbir	Teacher	2010	Do
11	Ms. Yasmeen	Lady teacher	2010	Do
12	Ms. Naseem Akhtar	Lady teacher	2011	Do
13	Ms. Kulsum	Lady teacher	2011	Do
14	Mr. Shukoor Ali	Support staff	2011	Do
15	Ms. Razia	Support staff	2011	Do

d. Awareness regarding girls' education

Parents in this area cannot afford sending all their children to school, especially when they have a large family sizes. They generally prioritize boys when they are not able to send all children to schools and pay for their school and transportation charges. Shaheen is situated in the centre of this suburban and relatively poor community and saves transportation charges. Transportation charges are paid for attending better schools. Otherwise most students walk long distances to reach their nearest schools. This is another reason that girls are not sent school due to cultural constraints on mobility of females. Most pupils enrolled at Shaheen belonged to families migrated from border areas and remote rural areas where sending girls to schools is against tradition. Shaheen is working hard on the enrolment of the girls. Shaheen is working hard on the enrolment of the girls. Female teachers are trying to mobilize local community to send girls to school. It is expected that number of girls will increase in the coming years with improved housing and more awareness-raising by Shaheen. Another effort has been made through subsidizing school fee for girls (especially those having their brothers already enrolled in the school), here are a few examples:

Full discount on fee (no admission fee & no monthly fee)

Hajira of class in grade 5 (position holder of government school)
 Hussina Batool in grade 4 (position holder of government school)
 Surjuma Ali in grade 4
 Sabiqqa in grade 1
 Arooj Zehra in Prep
 Kinaat Fatima in grade 1
 Anila Batool in Prep

% Fee concession girls (100% concession on admission fee)

Samana Raza (76%)
 Alia (59%)
 Aqila (59%)
 Anila (59%)
 Sughra (41%)
 Yasmeen (27%)

8. Challenges in the project

1. Cement has always been short in Skardu. But this time acute shortage due to floods in 2010 and huge demand for reconstruction, Rates have gone very high (from Rs.530/bag at the time of budgeting to Rs.940/bag in December 2011) and dealers are asking high prices without regulation.
2. Transporters strike from time to time due to protest on soaring fuel prices, and for increasing their fairs. Our construction work also stopped for few days because we could not transport material.
3. Labor shortage due to a lot of reconstruction work in Skardu and labour demand in flood affected areas in neighboring province.
4. Huge water shortage during last few months, mainly due to long unannounced power cuts. Water is also being bought to use for construction work in large tankers which has extra cost (charged to school). Water is however available for the toilets.

5. Wood was very expensive – and also short – again due to a lot of reconstruction work everywhere.

9. Financial progress of the project

The detailed accounts are given in the excel sheet. The project has received 16000 euros from Holland (Rs.1,760,414). Rs.300,398 were donated by people in Pakistan/Switzerland and part of the money was meant for mainly leveling the playground. Therefore after giving an estimate of the playground, the rest of the amount has been injected in regular construction project which is being supported by the foundations in Holland. A digital camera was also purchased from this fund.

The entire approved component (6 classrooms, corridor, 3 washrooms/toilets and boundary wall) was designed on the basis of replicating the lower floor. This was the simplest possible construction, keeping in view the overall security and resistance to earthquakes. Costing was done on the basis of market rates available in December 2009.

The school also took loan from the bank in 2009 Rs.490,000 to initiate construction well in time. If the amount of loan is discounted from the shortfall – then the net short of the project ended money is **Rs.143,492** which is reasonable.

Attachments:

1. Photo folders (construction process, last monitoring mission)
2. An excel sheet of accounts
3. Photo comparison

**Photo comparison
(Before and After)**



Play ground



Stairs



Boundary wall



Toilets



Building itself



Outside and inside classroom