

Jamshed Akhtar Qureshi Education Trust Annual Report July 2011 to June 2012

2011-12 has been a year of significant change at the Pehli Kiran School System (PKSS), operated by the JAQ Education Trust in the *Katchi Aabaadis* (non-formal temporary settlements) of Islamabad, Pakistan.

In an effort to inject new energy and to raise learning standards, we introduced many fresh ideas and embarked on some major initiatives. Our schools have started looking different, and our students and teachers have been exposed to a range of exciting new experiences – both academic and non-academic. A video clip at this [link](#)¹ shows a glimpse of PKSS operations over the past year. For further details please visit the Trust's brand new website at [<http://jaqtrust.org/>].

The current scale of PKSS operations and the change in student enrollment over the past year is summarized below:

School	Location in Islamabad	Start Year	Total Enrollment (June 2012)	Total Enrollment (June 2011)	Change in Enrollment	
PK-1*	E-11 (Near Police Foundation Colony)	1996	0	84	-84	-100%
PK-2	Golra -R-Station	1998	205	157	48	31%
PK-3	F-11/12 Green Belt	1999	116	89	27	30%
PK-4	E-11/Golra corner	2006	206	150	56	37%
PK-5	F-11 corner/end Nazimuddin Road	2006	269	227	42	19%
PK-6	I-10 Green Belt	2004	150	122	28	23%
PK-7	H-11 Green Belt	2004	113	104	9	9%
PK-8	F-11/12 Green Belt	2006	276	240	36	15%
Total			1335	1173	162	14%
Proportion of Girls			38%	35%		

* While eight PK schools were operational at the start of the review period, our PK-1 community was forced to disband in Feb 2012 due to expanding construction activities in Sector E-11. About half the students moved back to their villages, while the rest relocated to other PK communities and enrolled in our schools there. As a result, we have temporarily closed down PK-1, and moved our teachers to other PK schools while we survey other communities to identify a suitable new location for reopening this school.

¹ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMzxDdNAsm0>

Academics and Student Welfare

Results

- **Total student strength** in the 7 informal community-based schools **grew by 14% to 1335 students, of whom 38% are girls** (up from 35% last year). This encouraging increase in girl-child enrolment is the result of a concerted effort, particularly in the Pakhtun/Afghan communities.
- An **average student attendance of around 82%** was maintained - a slight improvement over the 80% reported last year. The percentage is significant given the highly mobile and transient nature of these communities.
- **82% of the students passed the annual examinations** and were promoted to the next class (compared to 81% the previous year).
- **29 PK students, including 6 girls, passed the Class 5 exam** conducted by the Government's Federal Directorate of Education (as compared to 14 students last year). All have obtained admission into the formal Government school system and are continuing their education in class 6.
- In addition, **162 PK students from lower classes (including 41 girls) transferred to formal schools** during the year (compared to 115 students last year).
- PKSS continued to maintain a **Student-Teacher ratio not exceeding 30:1** in all classes to ensure quality learning.
- The Trust continued to **provide educational stipends to 29 deserving girl students** beyond the PKSS system, including 4 former PK students.



Quality Enhancement

Over the years, PKSS has actively pursued strategies to enhance quality education and improve learning outcomes, with a growing focus on competency-based learning. This year we commenced a concerted effort to move away from the traditional system of rote-learning.

Our teachers were provided intensive training and capacity building assistance throughout the year. Our partner organization Developments In Literacy (DIL) conducted subject workshops for teaching Math, Science, Urdu and Early Childhood Education (ECE). English teaching methodology training,



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provided through volunteer trainers, became a regular part of the weekly Teacher Helping Days (Saturdays). During the summer, student volunteers were assigned to help teachers strengthen their own and their students' English language skills.

We also launched an important initiative to improve our student assessment, syllabus setting and teacher performance appraisal systems, financed by a generous community social responsibility (CSR) grant from a corporate donor. This is expected to lead to an enriched and better resourced classroom environment; improved quality of teaching in classrooms, through better-equipped and motivated teachers; and students' enhanced learning, with a special focus on early grades, through the Early Learning Programs.

Student Welfare

The Trust continues to promote student welfare in every way possible, within its available resources, recognizing the substantial needs of the low-income communities we serve.

- We provide weekly **nutritional supplements** (seasonal fruit) in 6 PK schools. In addition, one of our patrons is providing a weekly daig of 'rice pulao' to the students at PK-8.
- We started a **vegetable garden** at PK-3, supported by an individual donor. This is being looked after by the students and parents, and the produce is distributed among the community.
- One of our patrons provided **uniforms** to the students at PK-8.
- We facilitated PK students' access to Government-sponsored **preventive health care programs**, specifically the Government's polio immunization and vaccination drives.
- We partnered with the Al-Khidmat Foundation to facilitate **weekly Health Camps** for the communities of PK-3, PK-4 and PK-8.
- We partnered with the Comprehensive Disaster Response Services (CDRS) to facilitate **Health Camps** for students at PK-5 and PK-7.
- We partnered with the Layton Rehmatullah Benevolent Trust (LRBT) to facilitate **eye-screening** for all PKSS students.
- While 90% of our students' school book needs were covered through text books provided by the Government Federal Directorate of Education's Regulatory Authority, the remaining **text books, note books and stationery materials** were provided by the JAQ Education Trust, and in some cases supplemented by parents.
- We provided **sports equipment and first aid kits** at all PK schools.

Livelihoods and Vocational Skills Training

The Trust recognizes that academic education needs to be supplemented by practical life-skills training, for older students, to help respond to the severe economic pressures faced by the *Katchi Aabadi* communities. Towards this objective and in response to the community's requests, the Trust continued

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a **vocational training program for older girl students and young women** at the PK-4 community. The women were provided training in tailoring, embroidery and small crafts.

We piloted the training of three older students through an **“Ustaad-Shagird” (apprenticeship) program**. The Trust plans to develop a more comprehensive, practical livelihood program for graduating Class 5 students in future.

Co-Curricular Activities

This has been a colorful year at PKSS, during which we undertook a range of interesting activities in collaboration with volunteers – both individuals and organizations. We organized a number of events across the PKS system, to provide our students various opportunities to showcase their talents and build more confidence, so that they are not shy of voicing their opinions, performing in front of an audience, and are able to share in team-spirit with their peers. These activities included the following, many of which were supported by corporate sponsors as part of their CSR activities:

Hamara School Project (November 2011)

This was a three-day activity designed to brighten up the appearance of our schools, to increase student enthusiasm, and to increase their sense of ownership of their schools. The first day was dedicated to making colorful learning resources on canvas sheets; the second focused on Iqbal’s poetry and the performing arts; while the third was dedicated to making murals based on the theme, “Meri Dunya, Meray Khwab” (My World, My Dreams). Volunteers from the Islamabad College of Arts and Sciences (ICAS), Telenor and Mobilink helped roll out the program simultaneously across all eight schools.



Sitaron Se Aagay Jahan (February 2012)

“Sitaron Say Aagay Jahan” (worlds beyond the stars) was a celebration of ten years of the formal registration of the Trust (whereas the PK schools have been in operation since 1995). Our Trustees as well as over 100 distinguished Friends of PKSS attended the open air event, and sat through it all despite the very chilly temperature. Students representing all PK schools gathered at PK-8 to present songs, skits and tableaux, while PKSS alumni, faculty, supporters and parents stepped forward to share their recollections and experiences.



Children’s Literature Festival – Lahore (November 2011)

Ruqqaiyya, a confident young Class 5 student of PK-8, was selected to participate in the national Children’s Literature Festival in Lahore – an experience she will never forget. The Idara-e-Taaleem-o-Aagahi (ITA), which has been supporting PKSS for several years, sponsored the PKSS Student, a Teacher (as escort) and a Trustee (as JAQ Trust representative).

Annual Days (April 2012)

Annual Days help recognize and reinforce outstanding student performance, inform and involve the parents and communities, and demonstrate what the *Katchi Aabaadi* children are capable of achieving. Special Guests of Honour were invited to distribute prizes among position-holders at each event.



Other events included celebrating Quaid-e-Azam Day and Christmas, in which PKSS’s Muslim students sent gifts to their Christian friends. “Summer Gala”, Mango Days and a Feast Day generated a lot of fun.

TEDx Kids (July 2012)

PKSS was honoured to host the first TEDx event held exclusively for children in Pakistan. The event was organized at PK-8 by a group of volunteers in collaboration with PKSS, with the theme “Aao Bachon Sair Karain” (Come, children, let’s take a trip). Speakers included artist, environmentalist and peace activist Fauzia Minallah, Soofia Asad from White Rice Communications, alternative educationist Nadine Murtaza and Umair Jaffar with his troupe of musicians.



All PK-8 students as well as older students from across the PK system participated in art, music, dance and drama activities and attended the talks, story-telling, and music performances. Participants also included children from Lettuce Bee Kids. The NGO Thaali donated lunch for all the students, teachers and volunteers.

Field Trips

Field trips were undertaken to expose PKSS students to interesting new experiences. Some of the trips organized during the review period included the following:

- Nature Study Camp for Class 5 students from all schools, organized by the Adventure Foundation;
- PK-2 trip to the Jungle Kingdom in Rawalpindi;
- PK-3 trip to the Islamabad Zoo and the Japanese Park for children;
- PK-4 trip to the Lok Virsa (Folk Heritage) annual Mela;
- PK-5 trip to Shakarparian and Lok Virsa Museum.



Summer Volunteer Program

A four-week program was designed to engage volunteers through social media, in different art-based activities. These involved the use of low-cost, no-cost and recyclable materials for creative purposes, as well as fabric painting to make marketable products.

School Infrastructure

The Trust made significant progress in its efforts to upgrade infrastructure at the *Katchi Aabadi* schools to more durable, low-maintenance, all-weather school structures. By June 2012 we were able to provide steel roofing and *pucca* floors in 9 of the 15 classroom sheds that house PKSS students. In addition, we constructed a *pucca* class room at PK-6 to meet the pre-condition set by parents in this conservative community to send their girls to school. A boundary wall was built at PK-8 with the support of the Mobilink Foundation.



Procurement of steel roofing and *pucca* flooring for the remaining sheds, and expanded safe storage capacity at the schools, is now underway - thanks to a grant recently received from the non-profit Association for the Development of Pakistan (ADP).

Community Engagement

Engaging with our communities is key to ensuring that the PK schools are fully “owned” by the respective communities, and that the parents are interested and actively involved, and hold the teachers accountable for effective delivery. It also helps provide a supportive environment, vital for the well-rounded growth and development of the students. This year the Trust:

- Initiated a token fee (ranging from Rs. 10 to Rs. 50 per month) in all *katchi aabadi* schools. This helps substantiate the demand for, and value of, our services, and contributes to the resource base.
- Continued to strengthen the PTAs (Parent-Teacher Associations). Regular PTA monthly meetings were held in all PK schools, including separate meetings for women wherever necessary, to encourage greater involvement of mothers.
- Established a PK Alumni Association of former PK students, who volunteer their time and inputs to assist with school activities.

Communications and Outreach

This year saw a substantial growth in our outreach and communications effort. Our new communications strategy has involved greater volunteerism and engagement of individuals and organizations, particularly via social media. Fresh communication materials have been developed, including a brand new website [<http://jaqtrust.org/>] and an updated brochure. Outreach has been extended to corporate donors through their CSR programs. These efforts have resulted in not only a sizeable increase in donations in cash and kind, but also significant awareness-raising and recognition of PKSS and the Trust. The PKSS and its activities have also been highlighted on various occasions in the national print and electronic media.

Finances

The Trust's operations are financed entirely by the generous donations of our patrons, philanthropists, and Trustee contributions. We are pleased to report significant progress in our fund-raising efforts during the year, partly as a result of a generous Rs 1.37 million grant received from a corporate donor. Based on the Trust's un-audited cash-based accounts for 2011-12, **our aggregate receipts** (donations, fees and endowments) **grew to Rs. 6,678,657**, an almost 100% increase over the preceding year. **Total expenditures were Rs. 5,275,265**, a 50% increase over the preceding year - partly on account of the 14% growth in student enrollment. Our average annual expenditure per student was Rs 4,207, about 32% higher than the preceding year.

In view of the significant volatility in our aggregate annual receipts year-on-year, any surplus balance remaining from donations received during a given year, is carried over to the next year.

The Trust's financial statements are audited annually by an independent chartered accountancy firm, and are posted on the Trust's website. The most recent audited statements available relate to the financial year 2010-11. These have been audited by the reputed Chartered Accountants' firm: Anjum Asim Shahid Rahman.

Inspiring PKSS Stories

Ghulam Abbas

Ghulam Abbas is an eighteen year old boy currently enrolled in Class Three at PK-2 school. A brave survivor of polio, he withdrew from school while still in the *katchi* (kindergarten) class. He returned to PKSS of his own accord ten years later, expressing an interest in learning to read and write.

In addition to performing very well in his studies, Ghulam Abbas expressed his dream of becoming a singer. PKSS staff, using social media, helped him locate a renowned music teacher (*Ustaad*), as well as a willing benefactor. Ghulam Abbas is currently receiving classical music lessons at Bloomfield Hall School. Most recently, he attended a workshop with the Institute for the Preservation of Music and Culture (IPAC), and gave his first public performance at the trendy Kuch Khaas venue.



A Pehli Kiran Family

The Yousaf family is originally from Sargodha, Punjab. Mr. Yousaf works as a driver in Islamabad, and all six of his children have been associated with the Pehli Kiran Schools at some time in their lives.



Naeem, the eldest, started school with the PKSS, but his education was disrupted when his *katchi aabadi* was demolished by the Capital Development Authority (CDA). The family shifted back to their village for a while and he lost a year of schooling. However, he is now studying in Class 8 in the Islamabad Model College for Boys (IMCB) and dreams of becoming a pilot. His brother Waseem was one of the brightest students under PK-8 Head Teacher Ghazanfar. He stood first in Class 5, and then went on to secure the top positions in Classes 6 and 7 at IMCB. He is currently with his brother in Class 8 at the IMCB.

Ruqqaiyya is a confident young girl who was always an active part of PKSS's co-curricular activities. She was selected to participate in the national Children's Literature Festival in Lahore in 2011 – a thrilling and educative experience she will never forget. She is now enrolled in Class 6 in the Islamabad Model College for Girls (IMCG). Anam and Noshaaba are both in Class 4 at PK-8, while little Hassan Raza is in KG Class. Their parents have always cooperated with PKSS and continue to support all their children in their academic careers.

About JAQ Education Trust

The JAQ Education Trust promotes literacy, numeracy, and primary education among children in some of the poorest and hitherto un-served, peri-urban communities in Pakistan, to provide them an opportunity to achieve their human potential and become productive members of society.

At present, the Trust delivers primary education to over 1,300 children annually, through the Pehli Kiran School System (PKSS), a network of eight non-formal, community-based schools. These schools are based in the heart of several *katchi aabadis* around Islamabad, operating in two shifts daily, catering to the needs of children in these marginalized communities. Using a low-cost, community-based approach, the Trust strives to increase children's access to mainstream formal schools, improve their health and hygiene status, and supplement their nutritional status. It works closely with the communities to ensure their involvement and to strengthen their long-term commitment to children's basic right to education.

Trustees, Management, and Staff

JAQ Trust's overall vision and policy guidance is provided by an honorary Board of Trustees. Day-to-day operations are the responsibility of the Managing Trustee, working through a committee of three Coordinators. Our dedicated Trustees continue to give of their time, energy and efforts with their committed volunteerism, especially their involvement in fund-raising, in-kind contributions and participation.

Academic Coordinator

Ishtiaq is responsible for all academic activities, including regular monitoring of teachers; staff development and mentoring; and supervision of academic affairs.



Administrative Coordinator

Munawar is responsible for providing the administrative support needed for trouble-free operations of the schools, including infrastructure, procurement, logistics, transport, and community engagement; IT and record-keeping; as well as interfacing with the accountant and the auditors.



Communication Specialist

Madeeha is responsible for internal communication and coordination, as well as CSR, partnerships, outreach, media interface, and the design and



implementation of extra- and co-curricular and volunteer activities and public events.

School Management Committee (SMC)

Head Teachers are designated at each school, with clear academic and administrative roles and responsibilities. Together, all the Head Teachers comprise the School Management Committee. The SMC meets at least once a month to review operational performance, share lessons learned and experiences between schools and formulate work plans for the upcoming time span. This increasingly decentralized structure helps the Trust to maintain close contact with the respective communities and to deliver education and related services customized to their specific needs.



Staff Employment and Benefits

- PKSS currently employs 26 teachers (19 women). Of these, 19 teachers work both morning and afternoon shifts at various schools.
- PKSS also employs four Teacher Aides, one of whom is a former PK student.
- We are currently providing financial support to 9 PKSS staff members who are pursuing higher academic qualifications.
- This year we initiated partial health coverage for our staff.
- Women staff are provided transport to and from the schools.

We are also gradually moving towards performance-based salaries and bonus payments for PKSS staff.