

# Community Mobilization Changes Attitudes – ASER Facilitates Case Study Multan

According to ASER 2011, in Multan District 25.5% children were out of school, 8% were dropouts while 17.5% have never been enrolled. One of the villages where the survey was conducted is Village Jugoo Wala. This village is about 40 km from Multan city. More than 85% people of this village belong to poor families and are dependent upon agriculture.

During a Baithk the community was shown that according to the ASER results a substantial number of children were out of school in Jugoo Wala. On probing into understanding why this phenomenon existed we found that parents preferred their children to work in the fields over going to school and the children who did go to school dropped out because of the maltreatment of the teachers with students.

Perturbed by this, ASER team decided to motivate the villagers on education and make them aware about the importance of education. Many people were reluctant to send their children to school because it would mean loss of a strong earning hand in their situation of poverty. Furthermore, ASER team decided to take the issue of maltreatment of students to the EDO.

We decided to leave and return after few days to convince the community again. We know these villagers could be influenced only through the involvement of effective members of their own community, so our first plan of action was to convince these effective and influential members of the community and then revisit the villagers.

A few days later we visited again and this time we took Mrs. Tahira Shafique (EDO Education) and Mr. Ahsan (a local landlord) with us. Mrs. Tahira Shafique explained the advantages of education to parents. She ensured the parents that cruel treatment of children by teachers would not be tolerated and if teachers were found guilty of violent behavior towards students they would be punished. Mr. Ahsan, the landlord, promised to provide uniform for the students and furniture for school to improve the conditions of education and give relief to the poor community.

Finally after much discussion and persuasion, villagers made up their minds and were ready to send their children to school. After a week, the Head Teacher of the Primary School contacted us and informed us that enrollment at the school had been gradually increasing since ASER's meetings with the community. Also, later on a meeting with the EDO revealed that the teachers who were involved in beating children were reprimanded and due to that their behavior towards the children had improved considerably.

ASER team is satisfied that because of community mobilization children's futures have been secured and teachers' attitudes have been changed.

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