

“Villagers Identify Problem and Find an Organic Solution, All By Themselves – ASER Facilitates”

Case Study - Bahawalpur

Enrolment levels in the village 45/DNB in Tehsil Yazman of Bahawalpur are extremely low. According to the ASER Data in this village only 20 % children go to government schools. During the ASER baithaks the cause of this low enrolment was investigated and ASER Team found that the main reason which keeps children away from schools is extreme poverty. Residents of the village are mostly involved in daily labor with minimal wages of Rs. 200-250 daily. The average number of dependants on a bread earner of the household is around 5 to 6 people. Due to these reasons, it becomes difficult for poor families to send their children to school.



ASER Team dug deeper into this to get to the root cause of this issue and found out that parents mostly complained about the compulsion fee of Rs. 20 that every child needs to pay every month. This fee basically feeds into the Fund for Development of Education, also known as Farogh-e-Taleem. Poor parents have difficulty paying this fee especially when 2 to 4 children of the household are attending schools. They said that buying uniform for the children is such a hassle which some parent undertake but that too as a onetime cost, but this monthly fee is something they cannot afford given the limited budget that they have. Villagers stated that if there was some way in which the fee was waived off they would be more than happy to send their children to schools.

Fortunately, all key persons of the community and the AEO were present for this baithak. AEO in his final remarks suggested that the amount of Rs. 20 can be paid from the SMC fund. He said that the community should itself identify the underprivileged and forward the names of those children to the SMC who can then fund their studies. Furthermore, AEO also appealed to the philanthropists of the community to step forward and help the poor in sending their children to schools.



To this appeal of the AEO, Muhammad Aslam (Head Teacher) GE/S 45/ DNB, came forward and said that he will help in identifying the underprivileged children along with the help of other community members and three members of the community agreed to 'adopt' a few children so that they pay their monthly fee. These individuals are Choudhry Basheer (Number daar), Choudhary Muhammad Yasir and Muhammad Iftikhar.

A few days later when the ASER Team revisited the village Muhammad Aslam showed us the list of children that the community had shortlisted who will be supported by the SMC funds. These children will be enrolled in school now and will start school after the summer holiday. Detail of the suggested students is below:

S.No	Student Name	Father's Name	Class	Financial position
1	Ahmad Raza	Muhammad Ashfaq	One	Very poor
2	Muhammad Tanveer	Khadam Husain	One	Very poor
3	Ghulam Haider	Muhammad Hanif	Two	Very poor
4	Muhammad Latif	Manzoor Ahmad	Two	Very poor
5	Ali Hassan	Aashaq Husain	Three	Very poor
6	Ilias Ali	Muhammad Rafique	Four	Very poor
7	Saif Ali	Zulfiqar Ali	Four	Very poor
8	Abdul Rehman	Muhammad Arshaad	Four	Very poor
9	Naseer Ahmad	Abdul Rasheed	Four	Very poor
10	Ali Raza	Abdul Hameed	Five	Very poor
11	Hamza Adrees	Muhammad Adrees	Five	Very poor
12	Ali Raza	Abdul Star	Five	Very poor
13	Farayad Ali	Umar Din	Six	Very poor

List prepared by: Muhammad Aslam (Head Teacher) GE/S 45/ DNB.

We are happy to see that through an ASER Baithak, a problem was identified by the community members themselves, and a solution to that problem also very organically emerged again from the community members themselves. ASER is really in the true sense a reflection of "Citizens on the March".

Naveed Iqbal

Bahawalpur