

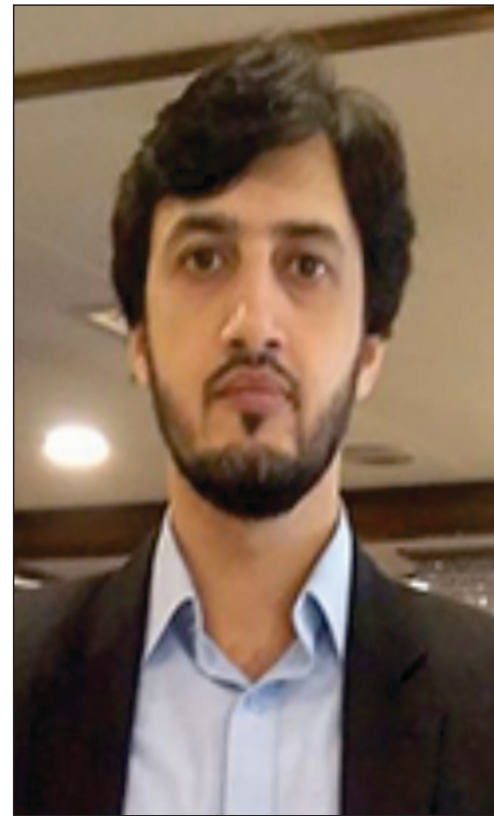
A PROJECT OF
LIFE SKILLS-BASED
EDUCATION

THE DEVELOPMENTALIST



Words of Patron

Mr. Mubashir Banoori
CEO, ACT



During the 2nd quarter, Aiming Change for Tomorrow, in collaboration with UNFPA, has achieved tremendous success in the implementation of a Life Skills-Based Education project. This success was the outcome of the commitment and productive work of our spirited young team and professionals and we were able to deliver a strong performance in the development of youth throughout Pakistan. Having a glance at the activities of this quarter, by engaging relevant stakeholders including federal and provincial education departments, ACT was able to develop a cadre of highly committed teachers on LSBE and trained 375 teachers from KPK, South Punjab and AJ&K. Moreover, we have also developed and reviewed the boy scouts' curriculum and incorporated a component of LSBE in it. Since boy scouts hold significant importance worldwide, there was a dire need to take this initiative to enhance their skills. So far, we have trained 100 scouts on LSBE to develop master trainers who will further train young boy scouts through the cascade training model. Similarly, with the technical and financial support from UNFPA, ACT also developed a manual for the young transgender trainers on Reproductive health and rights and trained a cadre of 16

transgenders from three districts of South Punjab i.e. Multan, Bahawalpur, and DG Khan. The purpose of this training was to create and equip a group of young trainers that could later work as master trainers to build the capacity of the youth and others in their communities on Reproductive Health & Rights (RHR). Furthermore, we have also designed research tools for the Assessment of out-of-school children in AJ&K. As nearly, Pakistan has the world's second-highest number of out-of-school children (OOSC) with an estimated 22.8 million children aged 5-16 not attending schools or receiving formal education. For this purpose, ACT trained researchers from three districts of AJ&K i.e. Mirpur, Poonch and Muzaffarabad. These researchers are on the ground to identify the structural as well as social factors for high dropout rates. To conclude, I am highly grateful for all the support provided by all of our stakeholders, donors specifically UNFPA and the government departments, both at the federal, provincial, and district levels, for extending their support in the promotion and implementation of the Life Skills-Based Education program as well as other services in various parts of Pakistan and AJ&K.

Words of Editor

Mr. Ali Abbas Bukhari
Program Coordinator



Skills-based education is a fundamental human right in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), specifically the right to education for children's full development. Educating children on LSBE further enables their protection from all forms of abuse such as physical or mental harm, injury or abuse, neglect or careless treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, and sexual abuse. This is therefore seen as a priority to the State because it is its responsibility to protect the youth from various forms of abuse and harm. States are also responsible for enacting all necessary legal, administrative, social, and educational safeguards. Life skills-based education (LSBE), aims at preparing the youth to face an unseen future further adding value to a large number of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) such as SDG 3- Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages and SDG 4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning.

In order to eliminate all types of violence against children, it is important to widen the impact of LSBE on children's lives. In collaboration with UNFPA, ACT has made every effort to take numerous actions in its quest to promote LSBE. These actions include; collaborating with the Pakistan Boy Scouts association to engage youth on LSBE on World youth day, training of trainers (TOT) for scouts on LSBE, and so on. Additionally, ACT and UNFPA held a consultative workshop for review and Development of PBSA curriculum on LSBE. This ensured that the curriculum was made more meaningful and effective so that LSBE is correctly established.

In conclusion, I want to express my gratitude to UNFPA in particular for extending their support for the promotion of LSBE on behalf of all of our stakeholders and donors. We promise to make the same efforts to inform more people about LSBE in the future days and months in order to bring about change for the better for our generation and Pakistan.



Teachers' Training on Life Skills-Based Education (LSBE)

LIFE SKILLS- BASED EDUCATION

Adolescence is the phase of life between childhood and adulthood – It is a unique stage of human development and an important time for laying the foundations of a good, healthy life. While this is the time for rapid physical, cognitive and psychosocial growth, most adolescents can not utilize their full potential due to a multitude of reasons. They are faced with many challenges and difficulties which they are, quite often, not equipped for as they require more than even the best skills. Due to this, the United Nations Education sector (UNESCO) introduced life skills as an important learning skill-set for young people. Life Skills-Based Education (LSBE) is a form of education that focuses on cultivating personal life skills such as self-reflection, critical thinking, problem solving and interpersonal skills. Furthermore, LSBE also equips young people with the skills to make responsible decisions for their health and well-being, and it empowers children and young people with knowledge and skills to make informed choices and lead a safe and secure life.

The Government of Pakistan realized the integral role LSBE plays in the lives of young people and, therefore, took necessary steps to incorporate it into their lives. The Government did so by signing relevant international treaties, such as the Convention on the Rights of Children – an international human rights treaty that sets out the civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children. This convention places a big focus on LSBE for school children and adolescents. Furthermore, LSBE was also incorporated into National Policies, such as Pakistan Youth's Policy and National Education Policy. For the further inclusion of LSBE in the Single National Curriculum, UNFPA and ACT International partnered up for a joint venture in regards to the curriculum of Boy Scouts, RHR training of transgender people, dropout records and out-of-school assessments. Moreover, with the partnership of UNFPA and ACT, programs were initiated to engage the National Curriculum Council (NCC) and the Federal Ministry of Education to include LSBE in the Single National Curriculum. These programs aimed to foster lifelong learning through the development of inquiry and independent learning skills. They also involved capacity-building support to NCC, national and provincial educationists and policymakers of provincial education departments on the LSBE.



REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH & RIGHTS

Women's reproductive health is related to multiple human rights, including the right to life, the right to be free from torture, the right to health, the right to privacy, the right to education, and the prohibition of discrimination. States have obligations to respect, protect and fulfill rights related to women's reproductive health. The Special Rapporteur on the right to health maintains that women are entitled to reproductive health care services, and goods and facilities that are:

- Available in adequate numbers;
- Accessible physically and economically;
- Accessible without discrimination; and of good quality

MESSAGES

Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Youth Affairs

Empowering the youth with an exceptional amount of space for participation holds the nation's success as everyone is encouraged and assisted to reach a successful life. The success of a youth's life will be invested in the nation's betterment. The importance of youth empowerment will evidently be seen in the development of poverty eradication measures, good education standards, good governance, crime reduction, national growth, security and technological empowerment. The Ministry of Federal Education understands the importance of Life Skills-Based Education (LSBE) in enhancing the capabilities of the youth in making vibrant and thoughtful decisions that play a significant role in enhancing their life patterns through sustainable living. Life skills education is equally necessary along with formal education and the inclusion of LSBE in the curriculum is a crucial step taken by UNFPA & ACT that projects the standards for teachers and learners. This encompasses the awareness among the students regarding a broad range of personal, interpersonal, psychological, social and cognitive skills that helps them manage their emotional well-being and enables them to make the right choices for a sustainable life. The efforts of Aiming Change for Tomorrow (ACT) in collaboration with UNFPA are highly admirable and appreciated at all levels.



Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam SAPM / Minister of State and Convenor National Parliamentary Task Force on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Life skills-based education (LSBE) is a form of education that focuses on cultivating personal life skills such as self-reflection, critical thinking, problem solving and interpersonal skills. Pakistan is one of the youngest countries in the world. According to the Pakistan National Human Development Report, 68% of the population is under the age of 30 and around 27% is between the ages of 15 and 29. This 'youth bulge' provides unique opportunities for the country's social and economic uplift whereby the latent potential of young people can be harnessed by providing openings for growth and personal development. As, Sustainable Development Goal-4 focuses on providing quality education at all levels thus, promoting Life skills among the youth of the country is the best initiative in this regard to increase youth's abilities and explore opportunities for networking, learning about different cultures, exploring new places and being an informed person who is fully aware and equipped.



Major General Muhammad Asghar, Director General Federal Government Educational Institutions

For the last years, Federal Government Educational Institutions have carved a distinctive niche in the education system of the country through the guidance and dissemination of valuable knowledge to a great number of students. Being mindful of the fact that education is the cornerstone for the development and progress of our country, our institutions are contributing by imparting quality education to a large segment of society. The basic goal of education is empowering individuals to make them realize their innate potential and talents. Life skills-based education is a prodigious step taken by UNFPA in order to make our children and adolescents productive and responsible citizens of our beloved country. The future of the country depends upon its youth and only imparting education is not enough in order to make them good citizens. But to teach them different life skills is a crucial aspect in forming the character of our youth, promoting their physical, mental and spiritual development and making them well disciplined, useful and good citizens so that they would become a greater human capital. Life Skills Based Education (LSBE) is the most important skill set that weighs out the most desired behavior and encircles the abilities such as solving hurdles and thinking critically, enhancing personality including self-awareness, and developing skills that are helpful at every phase of life. I am highly obliged that ACT in collaboration with UNFPA works together to promote these life skills among our children that are the assets of the nation.



Ms. Hina Chaudhry, Section Officer (I&C), School Education Department, Multan - South Punjab

In order to achieve national progress and unity, education is the most crucial area that needs to be strengthened. It has the ability to reassure societal and cultural change to achieve long-term development. Life Skills Based Education (LSBE) is extremely important in the education sector, and we recognize its potential in boosting the capacities of adolescents in making dynamic decisions that play a vital role in enhancing their life patterns through sustainable living. Youth are the future of the nation and to create positive social change, there is a dire need to involve young people in responsible, challenging actions. Engaging youth in planning and in making decisions will affect themselves and the people around them. Life skills are a component through which it is possible to polish these skills of the youth. As youth are agents of their own development, life skills-based education enables them to deal with the challenges of life by providing them with the strength to protect themselves against violence, abuse, or mistreatment. To promote life skills among youth, the efforts of ACT in collaboration with UNFPA are highly commendable and appreciated. I hope this will be a fruitful intervention for all educational institutions, teachers, students and parents.



A GLANCE AT ACTIVITIES

Signing of LoU between ACT, UNFPA & PBSA



With the unwavering support from UNFPA and other national and international agencies, the Government of Pakistan realized the importance of Life Skills Based Education (LSBE) among young people, in Pakistan. A national not-for-profit organization, Aiming Change for Tomorrow (ACT) will facilitate the partnership through the implementation of the planned activities. Mr. Sarfraz Qamar Daha, Chief Commissioner, Pakistan Boy Scouts Association said that this partnership is an important milestone achieved in further strengthening the scouts' vital role in spreading the message and culture of peace for a sustainable society. Mr. Mubashir Banoori CEO, ACT, mentioned some key achievements in the recent past while working for youth in collaboration with MOFEGPT and UNFPA. He highlighted the importance of youth development programs at a national level. He also acknowledged the cooperation and support of NCC for youth development and the promotion of volunteerism

For this purpose, LoU was signed between ACT, UNFPA and PBSA to promote youth development; in particular building awareness of life skills-based education (LSBE) among young people, in Pakistan. The government of Pakistan signed relevant international treaties such as the Convention on the Rights of Children which places focus on LSBE for school children and adolescents. Accordingly, the LSBE was officially made part of some of the National Policies such as Pakistan's Youth Policy and National Education Policy. In this context, UNFPA with the support of ACT has planned to develop a standalone curriculum on LSBE at the federal level with the approval of the National Curriculum Council. Since Boys Scout is known globally for promoting Life Skills, there is a dire need to integrate the component of LSBE into the curriculum of PBSA and to enhance the capacity building of junior and senior scouts with respect to LSBE and leadership.

With the continuous efforts being made by UNFPA and ACT to promote youth development in Pakistan, ACT and PBSA entered into a formal arrangement to provide support in developing/reviewing Boy Scouts existing curriculum and incorporating a life skills-based education component. The draft curriculum for the LSBE standalone component has been developed to equip young people (Boy Scouts) with the skills to make responsible decisions for their health, safety and well-being. A consultative workshop was organized to collectively review the draft for finalization. The purpose of the workshop was to take expert opinions on the draft of the curriculum and to incorporate the suggestions from the experts to develop a final version of

the curriculum for scouts. The workshop was attended by the educationists, PBSA officials especially from the training department, Ministry of Education representatives and LSBE experts. The representative from UNFPA also participated and shared their views.

Mr. Mubashir Banoori, CEO of ACT, officially commenced the event and presented the project highlights and brief on UNFPA and ACT work around the promotion of LSBE in Pakistan. The draft of the curriculum was presented by Mr. Khubaib Kayani to the LSBE experts and professionals. All the participants reviewed the curriculum and actively contributed their valuable inputs and suggestions to further strengthen the given context of the curriculum and make it more meaningful.

Consultative Workshop for review and Development of PBSA curriculum on LSBE



Training of Trainers (ToT) for Scouts on LSBE

In the context of untiring efforts carried out during the years 2020 and 2021 where both UNFPA and ACT were able to access & influence the national level policymakers of federal & provincial governments for LSBE inclusion in the Pakistan National Curriculum on one hand and developed a cadre of highly committed trainers on RHR on the other hand, there was a dire need to integrate and build on this spadework to ensure that LSBE is incorporated in the training curriculum of PBSA. ACT entered into a formal arrangement to provide support in developing/reviewing Boy Scouts' existing curriculum and incorporating a life skills-based education component.

After the development and approval of the boy scouts LSBE based curriculum, ACT organized one-day Training of Trainers (TOT) for scouts on Life Skills-Based Education. The overall objective of the ToT was to prepare the scouts for effective implementation of the new concepts of Life Skills. Through the LSBE orientation training, scouts were provided an in-depth understanding of the composition of LSBE as well as its implementation requirements. They gained a better understanding of its significance in the context of evolving situations and procedures to follow for effective understanding. The training was comprised of three sessions based on the "Importance of LSBE Quality Education" and "Orientation on Human Rights & Protection from Violence and Abuse". It is envisioned that these master trainers will further train young volunteers/scouts, to scale up the training process, through the cascade training model.

Collaboration with Pakistan Boy Scouts Association and United Nations Population Fund for Engaging Youth on LSBE on World Youth Skills Day



World Youth Skills Day is a day that celebrates the strategic importance of equipping young people with skills for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship. It is celebrated on July 15 every year, as it is a unique opportunity for policy partners, employers, development partners, and vocational and training educational programs to dialogue with young people about the skills needed as the world transitions into a sustainable development model.

The objective of this day was to shed some light on the necessary skills for the employment and entrepreneurship of young people and their strategic importance for the future. Along with learning skills, the youth is also encouraged to discover and establish their innate potential. Honourable guests delivered speeches and keynotes for the inspiration and motivation of young scouts. The event also provided young scouts an opportunity to meet high-profile professionals from different walks of life, such as: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on SDGs, Ms. Shaza Fatima, Director, National Curriculum Council of Pakistan Dr. Mariam Chughtai, International Program Coordinator of UNFPA Mr. Shrutidhar Tripathi, Director General Federal Government Educational Institutions (FGEI) Major General Muhammad Asghar Khan and Chairman, Center of Excellence at Allama Iqbal University Mr. Rafique Tahir.

The Developmentalist



Teachers' Training on Life Skills-Based Education in AJK, KPK & South Punjab

The training was organized in continuation of the Teacher's Training program of NCC with a particular focus on Life Skills Based Education. For this purpose, ACT, in collaboration with National Curriculum Council (NCC), Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training (MoFEPT) Government of Pakistan, developed LSBE-focused teachers' training manuals. The manual adopts an inclusive approach for the capacity building of teachers who teach students as an integrated subject and has been developed keeping Pakistan's educational demographic and socio-economic realities in mind. A great number of teachers have been trained on LSBE across Pakistan. These trainings were conducted mainly in the areas of AJK, KPK and South Punjab.

Through the LSBE orientation training, teachers were provided an in-depth understanding of the composition of LSBE as well as its implementation requirements. They gained a better understanding of its significance in the context of evolving situations and procedures to follow for effective understanding. Using the teachers' training manuals, the training ensures that teachers will be able to develop hands-on skills in the use of key pedagogies/ instructional methods required to teach Life Skill concepts with the help of textbooks and other resources. Also, teachers will focus on the appropriate ethical and social development of children and will be able to encourage fostering reasoning, problem-solving, critical thinking and creative skills among students.



The Developmentalist

ACT International along with other National and International Organizations working in Pakistan for the Prevention and Cure of Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer and the leading cause of cancer deaths in women globally. In 2018, 2.1 million new cases were reported, with 627,000 deaths. Pakistan has the highest incidence rate of breast cancer among Asian countries: one in every nine women has a lifetime risk of being diagnosed with breast cancer. Due to many misconceptions about the etiology of the disease and socioeconomic factors, Pakistani women have very low rates of early detection and diagnosis of breast cancer at advanced stages with fewer chances of survival. In rural areas of Pakistan, no formal health infrastructure is available for the rural population, further putting women in rural areas at higher risk of dying from breast cancer. The key to curing breast cancer is early diagnosis and raising awareness among the masses.

For this purpose, First Lady, Begum Samina Arif Alvi, has called upon the media, and national & international organizations working in Pakistan to make concerted efforts for raising awareness about the early detection of breast cancer among women, especially those who live in the far-flung areas of the country. The meeting was held at Aiwan-e-Sadar Islamabad, Pakistan where Mr. Mubahsir Banoori represented ACT International. During the meeting, the first lady highlighted the facts regarding breast cancer in Pakistan and was of the opinion that there is a dire need to make concerted efforts for the cure and prevention of this cause. Communities should be involved to create awareness about the early detection of the disease and screening facilities should also be extended to the maximum areas. October is seen as Breast Cancer Awareness month worldwide, however we all need to work to defeat this deadly disease by undertaking awareness activities throughout the year.



Training on Reproductive Health & Rights for Young Transgender Trainers

With the technical & financial support from UNFPA, ACT International has implemented Training on Reproductive Health & Rights (RHR). The purpose of this training is to create and strengthen the group of young trainers that could later work as master trainers to build the capacity of the youth and others in their communities on Reproductive health rights. The training was based upon innovative training methodologies for RHR to understand technical terms more effectively. For this purpose, a handbook on RHR, as a reference document, has been developed and also translated into Urdu for a better understanding of all the participants. Along with this handbook, a ToT manual has been prepared to guide young trainers to work as independent trainers. These master trainers in the future will further train young people through a cascade training model. The preparatory phase of the training was done in August 2022 and it was initiated in September 2022. The participants from three districts of South Punjab i.e. Bahawalpur, Dera Ghazi Khan and Multan participated in the training. The cascade training will be conducted for 40 transgenders in D.G. Khan and Bahawalpur in the next phase.





Flood Emergency Response Program

In wake of the catastrophic flood situation that caused large-scale destruction across Pakistan, ACT has initiated its Emergency Response Program. The floods have affected around 33 million people, killed 1,391 persons, and caused injuries to more than 12,700. According to NDMA, the floods also damaged 1.7 houses, 637,000 people were left homeless while 6.6 million people are in dire need of food and other necessities. 16 million children are affected while more than three million are at risk of malnutrition and water-borne diseases. The floods have severely damaged the livelihoods of millions of people, 3.6 million acres of crops have been destroyed and around 800,000 livestock is lost.

As ACT has been working with UNFPA focusing on youth and adolescents and engaging a great number of these people in different activities. The context of these activities has changed in wake of the catastrophic flood situation in Pakistan. In light of this situation, ACT and UNFPA planned their activities in accordance with the flood emergency response. However, ACT has already initiated its emergency response program with long-term planning and responded in the month of August 2022 and extended its support to the flood-affected people and provided food, non-food items and health services. In continuation of the flood emergency response, ACT and UNFPA joined hands together and provided their services by establishing "Women and Girls-Friendly Spaces". This also includes "Mobile Health Units" that intend to provide free medical services to flood-affected women in Rajanpur, South Punjab.

Training of Researchers in AJK for Assessment of Out of School Children



In Pakistan over 64 percent of the population is below the age of 30 years, one of the largest young populations in the world but currently, Pakistan has the world's second-highest number of out-of-school children (OOSC) with an estimated 22.8 million children aged 5-16 not attending school, representing 44% of the total population in this age group. In the 5-9 age group, 5 million children are not enrolled in schools and after primary-school age, the number of OOSC doubles, with 11.4 million adolescents between the ages of 10-14 not receiving formal education. Disparities based on gender, socio-economic status, and geography are significant; in Sindh, 52 percent of the poorest children (58 percent girls) are out of school, and in AJK, 78 percent of girls are out of school. Nearly 10.7 million boys and 8.6 million girls are enrolled at the primary level and this drops to 3.6 million boys and 2.8 million girls at the lower secondary level.

In view of the current situation mentioned above, there are very limited studies specifically in the context of AJK to identify the factors associated with the high dropout rate. Thus, ACT with the support from UNFPA has developed research tools to conduct the assessment of OOSC. For this purpose, 12 researchers have been trained on the developed research tools from three districts of AJ&K i.e. Muzaffarabad, Poonch and Mirpur. These researchers are now on the ground to identify the structural as well as social factors behind the high drop-out rates of children.

Meeting with Chairman of Council of Islamic Ideology to validate the Islamic reference material on LSBE



In order to contextualize LSBE in the Islamic perspective, it is important to provide support from the Holy Quran and Ahadith to relate it with the Islamic perspective so that learners should also consider it as their religious obligation. In order to strengthen the given context of LSBE, the Islamic reference material was made a part of the LSBE component. The meeting was held at the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) with the chairman of CII and other renowned scholars, to validate the Islamic reference material on LSBE.

The team of ACT & UNFPA met with the chairman, Prof. Dr. Qibla Ayaz, of the Council of Islamic Ideology and gave a brief presentation on the Islamic content of LSBE. The chairman approved the content and appreciated the efforts made by the ACT and UNFPA in this regard.

After getting approval from chairman CII, this Islamic material on LSBE was made part of the teachers' training manual on LSBE that is already developed for the capacity building of teachers who teach students as an integrated subject. In this respect, brochures and calendars have been designed on the Islamic notion of LSBE. This material has been disbursed among all the stakeholders including federal and provincial education departments and also used in training and other events on LSBE and RHR. This material will also be helpful for in and out-of-school children, parents and teachers' education on LSBE.



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Aiming Change for Tomorrow (ACT) is a registered not-for-profit rights based national organization focusing on women, youth, children and marginalized segments of the society.

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