

Solas

Educational Trust



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Spring Newsletter 2016

2015 was not an easy year for schools in Pakistan and the beginning of 2016 saw further attacks on education establishments with the shootings at Bacha Khan University in Charsadda, 21 miles from Peshawar. Solas has many friends in Peshawar and we share the sadness and shock that such events cause, but we are heartened by the resolve shown in Pakistan against extremism and increasing support being given to education. We hope that in 2016 more progress will be made in promoting education for all.

in 2015 Solas was pleased to secure the assistance and support of the **Umeed Foundation**, Islamabad, to progress developments at **Dolomuch Community Based School** and to develop training with the **Community Vocational Learning Centre Kosht**. The cooperation secured the construction of two classrooms, two washrooms and improvements to the school boundary wall at Dolomuch.



Health Education

In 2015 Solas secured a one year grant from the Scottish Government to conduct a feasibility study on health education. Solas has been working in partnership with the Professional Development Centre, Chitral, part of the Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development, Pakistan on this study.



As the study approaches an end Solas will review the findings with a view to taking forward health education within schools. However the task will be a hard one as there is currently no evidence of any school policy regarding health education. As the interim report on the work says, *“Therefore, the first-step towards the initiation of effective health education is developing a comprehensive-school based health education policy, and coming up with mechanisms that obligate the school leadership and teachers to follow the policy religiously. Without such a policy the sustainability and quality of health education cannot be maintained. The contents and other benchmarks of the school-related health policy should relate with local, community and school health-related issues.”*

Please visit the Solas website for more information.

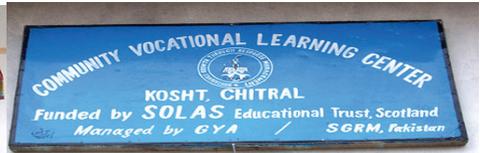
A mid term report of the feasibility study has been produced which can be viewed at the Solas website. To give a flavour of the contents below is a section of the evaluation.



Participants in the workshop on Health Education for Teachers

Comparing the teaching methodologies of teachers before and after the health workshop one can witness a major change in their pedagogies. For example, before the workshop the majority of teachers used lectures as the dominant method. After attending the workshop they started using child-centered teaching methods including discussions, role plays, stories, songs, poems and questioning. The use of the mentioned teaching methodologies provided students independence in learning opportunity, thereby enhancing their critical thinking, communication and problem solving skills. Furthermore, each teacher has taught at least two health lessons during the last 2 months. At the same time health messages are

being provided to the students during teaching of various subjects. Most importantly, all the teachers have developed a health education plan, containing concepts to be covered during the academic year and some have already gone ahead of the plan by teaching more topics as compared to what they had originally planned. This shows their interest in the project, which indicates the success of the project.



Community Vocational Learning Centre Kosht

Solas funded the construction of the centre and we are supporting the development of training there in partnership with the **Umeed Foundation, Islamabad**. The centre

has already run a number of classes for all sections of the community, including sewing classes, English language classes and computer training.

In March 2016 training will be provided by the Centre on Vegetable growing for 32 farmers. The farmers will get certified seeds for free to sow in the coming farming season and they can see the difference between certified and non-certified seeds. The farms will be visited later in the season and pictures taken to show to other people the benefit of using certified seeds and proper farming practices. Banners showing information about the importance of vegetable farming will be displayed in local markets and other public places.

A further 32 young people, equal numbers of male and female, from 8 village youth organisations will benefit from Youth Empowerment training. These participants will be encouraged to organise similar events for their youth associations. Some short video clips will also be made to share on facebook.

Aseel Forward College, Madaklasht, was established in 2011 to help the underprivileged people of the area. The aim was to provide standard education locally to those who could not afford to take their children to the city areas for education after their secondary education. The total numbers of students at the College is 67 comprising 46 female and 26 male students.

Currently the college is run in a rented building and they want to build their own college which will provide a better educational environment where the students can enhance their skills. With financial assistance from Solas the College should be able to complete the construction of the building.



Solas is pleased to have been able to assist the **Genius Public School, in Hatundi, Ajmer, Rajistan, India**. This is a departure from our normal support for schools in Pakistan and arose out of a historic link between Solas Educational Trust and the **Syeda Aamna Hashmat Ali Trust (SAHAT)**. SAHAT was established by one of the founding Trustees of Solas, Dr Syed Yousuf Ali, to the memory of his mother. The main objective of SAHAT is to reduce polarisation in society on the basis of religion and to increase tolerance towards each other through education, formal and informal.



Through a donation specifically for this school Solas was able to support construction work at the school which was then able to be upgraded from 8th to 10th class. This co-educational school has 590 students and has a special focus on the care of poor students and girls with the provision of free facilities such as books and transport.



Community Based Degree College for Girls, Garam Chashma: Solas is awaiting confirmation that the meets its criteria and, if so, we will be assisting this College in the future.

This is a not-for-profit organisation with a staff of 8. It was established in August 2003, by 16 social activists who became members of the BOG. Registered with the Board of Intermediate & Secondary Education Peshawar and Shaheed Banazir Bhutto University Sheringal, Upper Dir. The college enrolls over 40 students each year. However the College has no computer lab or computers, no high standard library and no well equipped lab. It is hoped that Solas will be able to assist this College in 2016.

A glimpse of achievements from 2015



Community Vocational Learning Centre Kosht



PROGRESS REPORT OF
HEALTH PROMOTION PROJECT AT COMMUNITY DOLOMITCH CHITRAL,
KHYBERPAKHTUNKHWA, PAKISTAN



FUNDED BY
SOLAS TRUST UK
IMPLEMENTING PARTNER
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER CHITRAL



Above - Scottish Government Funded Feasibility study - Health Education

Below - Solas and Umeed Foundation supported construction - classrooms, toilets and boundary wall



In May 2016 a Trustee, Patricia Fort (who did English language training in Chitral and Morder in 2010 and 2011) and the Administrator, George Rawlinson, will be in Chitral visiting the schools and renewing links with the Cluster group of schools in the area as well as seeing the work done in the Solas assisted schools and colleges.