

Keeping Things on Track: Continuing Education in Adverse Circumstances

Schools in IDP Camps help children continue education with support from UNESCO

Risalpur, Pakistan, 18 August 2009 – 47 year old Muneer Khan, the head teacher of the Benazir IDPs Camp Middle and Secondary School near Nowshera, is teaching Urdu to students. “It is very important that these children must continue their education,” says Khan. “So that the impact of the crisis can be minimized on their lives, and they can resume their studies once they return to their areas.”



Muneer Khan, takes a quiz from 6th grade students in the IDPs school at Benazir IDPs Camp near Risalpur.

With the help of the trainings we received; we can now plan lessons and manage multiple classes in a better manner” says Khan.

After the conflict between government forces and insurgents worsened, the Benazir IDPs Camp provided housing to 399 displaced families from Bajaur agency. However, with the return of 133 families, the number has now reduced to 267. The middle and

secondary school initially had 38 students, studying in grades 6th to 10th.

“We had a small number of students, but even then it was initially difficult for 3 teachers to manage classes in a period wise manner, but with the help of the trainings we received; we can now plan lessons and manage multiple classes in a better manner” says Khan.

UNESCO’s Emergency Response to IDP crisis, with USD 0.14 million in funds from Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), and USD 25,000 from UNESCO headquarters, provided access to education to 14 Middle and Secondary schools in 7 IDP Camps with the help of local and international non-governmental organizations. Educational opportunities were provided to 1057 IDP students. A total of 132 IDP students were supported through Provincial Education department for appearing in Secondary School Certificate board examination in examination centers near the IDP camps. In addition, trainings were conducted for teachers to enable them to start education in an emergency situation and emergency supplies were provided to the schools. The supplies included tents and educational learning materials such as text books, bags, reading writing materials, as well as teaching learning materials including registers, black boards, mats, and teacher furniture.

Four students from the 9th grade were facilitated and supported in the process of registration, payment of registration fees, transportation and provision of stationery for appearing in Secondary School Certificate board examination in centers near the Benazir IDPs camp. Khan is pleased with the help he has been able to provide to these students, “the school has only 24 students now,” he shares, “but it’s heartwarming to see them put so much effort in to their studies, I believe that education keeps them optimistic about the future and takes their minds off the crisis situation”.

The IDPs schools have provided the children with an opportunity to continue their education in a safe and secure environment, reducing the long term impact of the crisis on their ambitions and aspirations.