



Inclusive Education in Action

2013 - 2014

Project Completion Report

Voice for Making Education Inclusive
In Azad Jammu & Kashmir

Women Welfare Organization Poonch (WWOP)

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WWOP extends its courtesies and thanks to all the stakeholders without whose participation this project would not have been accomplished, especially UKAIDS & ILM Ideas for their encouragement and support.

Moreover the field district teams and the youth volunteers have set an exemplary method in reaching the targets in limited time, and WWOP acknowledges their efforts, for their dedication and commitment was a major ingredient in this project.

Apart from this we would like to express our gratitude to all the community members, especially time and listening to our message.

We wish all of the participating stakeholders success in future!

AJK has a much higher literacy rate (64%)* compared with Pakistan (58%)*, but situation of children with disabilities in AJK is not very different from children with disabilities (CWDs) from other parts of Pakistan. No policy on disability or education of children with disabilities exists in AJK. Children with disabilities and their families in AJK constantly experience barriers to enjoyment of their basic human rights and to their inclusion in society. The barriers they face are more frequently as a result of the environment in which they live than as a result of their impairment. Schools are not inclusive, teachers are not sensitized and trained, physical access to schools is difficult and policy makers are not sensitized about the issues of children with disability. There is an immediate need for evidenced based advocacy for creation of an enabling environment for children with disabilities to access their basic right of education without any barriers or exclusion

During the reporting period from 15th Dec, 2013-14th March, 2015 WWOP team staff hired, orientation of staff conducted, project offices established, project launching seminar organized, research on inclusiveness of educational services in AJK, formed district community forums, conducted district forums meetings, arranged monthly coordination meetings with public and private schools associations at district level, conducted meetings with district administration, organized quarterly state level forum meetings ,conducted district and state level report sharing seminars, awareness walks conducted and disseminated IEC materials, radio messages, weekly radio programs, inclusive education bill drafted and shared with policy makers.

WWOP is not for profit development and humanitarian organization formed in 1995 in Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) with its programming hubs in Islamabad, Punjab, Sindh, and KPK. Our commitment to empower the marginalized and vulnerable women and girls reflects our nature. We work closely with women, girls, and communities and engage them to influence those with power and ensure that poor and marginalized women and girls can improve their lives and livelihoods and are empowered, dignified, and prosperous citizens.

Our Vision

Mothers, sisters and daughters, empowered, dignified and prosperous.

Our Mission

We are struggling to end poverty and injustice by creating empowering solution for women and their communities.

Our Approach

- Disability
- Education and Life Skills
- Mother and Child Health
- Water and Hygiene
- Agriculture Value Chains & Food Security
- Economic Development
- Community Physical Infrastructure
- Life Saving & Resilience
- Natural Environment and Climate Change
- Disaster Management
- Gender Justice
- Campaigns for Social Justice

WWOP is working in all ten districts of AJK including, Punjab, KPK provinces of Pakistan. Since last twenty years WWOP is working for the rights of disabled.

Project Goals and Objective

This one-year research and advocacy project was implemented with the support of UKAID. Ilm Ideas was a three-year project by UKAID to award grants nationwide for the purpose of improving education for the children of Pakistan in classes 1-10.

The objective of the Education Voice & Accountability (V&A) Fund is was to improve the working of public and private basic education sector in Pakistan by providing grants to civil society organizations of all kinds to carry out research and to foster public demand for increased accountability and transparency in the education sector. The project has following three objectives;

The image displays three objective cards stacked vertically. Each card features a target icon on the left, a text box in the center, and a numbered circle on the right. The top card is red, the middle is dark blue, and the bottom is light green.

- OBJECTIVE 01**
To assess whether the educational services being offered in 10 districts of AJK are inclusive and meeting the requirements of children with disability by conducting study during the project.
- OBJECTIVE 02**
To sensitize communities and strengthen their voice for demanding inclusive and equitable education for children with disabilities through 9 months awareness campaign at district and state level in AJK.
- OBJECTIVE 03**
To ensure that access and equity for children with disabilities is mainstreamed within all education sector programs in AJK through advocacy with government and policy makers by using findings of study.

During the implementation period WWOP has conducted a research study to assess the existing conditions of educational institutions in AJK with a focus whether these educational institutions are meeting the requirements of children with physical disability. This study also focused on perceptions of communities and children about educational facilities.

06 | GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION / ACTIVITIES

The project was implemented all ten districts of AJK. For this project WWOP has divided the AJK in two regions i.e. North and South regions. North region consists of Districts Muzaffarabad, Hattian, Neelum, Poonch, Bagh, Sudhnoti and Haweli whereas South region consists of Districts Mirpur, Bhimber and Kotli. Two regional offices were established under this project. One office was established in Muzaffarabad and other in Mirpur.

Objective 1

Research Study to assess whether the Educational Services being offered are Inclusive or not and whether they are Meeting the Requirements of Children with Disabilities

1.1. Research on Inclusiveness of Educational Services

The major activity of this quarter was to conduct a research study to access whether the educational services being offered in 10 districts of AJK are inclusive or not and whether they are meeting the requirements of children with disabilities. To conduct this study

research tools were designed. These tools were shared with IIm Ideas team and were finalized with their consent. Separate



questionnaires were designed and printed for community, school teachers and district authorities. Data collectors were identified and given a two days training. A pilot study was conducted in Islamabad before going for actual study in AJK. In depth interviews were also conducted from persons with disabilities, their parents to know about the difficulties they face in the existing system. More than 550 schools were visited during the study. The comprehensive research study report has been published and disseminated.

Objective 2

Sensitization of the Communities and Strengthen their Voice for Demanding Inclusive and Equitable Education for Children with Disabilities

2.1. Formation & monthly meetings of district community forums on inclusive education

It is also in these difficult environments and unaware society to expect optimum results where the communities are not only un-aware of the development concept or the results of the achievements are beyond the expected capacities of the community where education of children with disabilities is not the priority of people. Therefore the project optimally capitalized on the effective role of parents, communities and stakeholders in promotion of education for children with disabilities. The District Forums on inclusive education in all 10 districts formed and strengthened through 90 monthly meetings with the involvement of parents, teachers, media, children with disabilities, district education department officials, govt. line departments and community members. Furthermore advocacy & mobilization remained the main focus of the project in this regard WWOP team members conducted



regular monthly district forum meetings and ensured participation of all members. The key role of the DFMs to raise voice for making education inclusive in all 10 districts of AJK and ensure access to quality education for children with disabilities. WWOP teams also discussed the inclusive education and disability in detail. WWOP had given a platform to community for raising voice to demand the right of education for children with disabilities. The purpose of formation of district forum and meeting with decided participants was to promote the culture of education but the specific goal was to get the facts and figures of the children with disabilities especially children with physical disabilities, to provide opportunities to education in formal schools.

2.2. Quarterly State Level Forums Meetings

WWOP organized 3 quarterly state level meetings at Muzaffarabad to connect the citizens' with the policy makers and public / education department authorities. The meetings held at state level with the active support of state level forum members in which all the stakeholders participated and engaged Education department, politicians, and media, influential /religious leaders, Teacher's Association, SMCs and civil society members.

Main objective of the forum was “Foundation of a real civil society through a vibrant platform for the civic to address their issues prioritizing the educational problems of children with disabilities and seek appropriate solution” and “connect citizens' with the decision makers and get commitment for legislation in regard to inclusive education and right of children with disabilities to education.

2.3. Alliance Building Workshop with Media

In order to strengthen partnership and build alliance with media 09 one day workshops organized at 09 districts of Azad Jammu & Kashmir with media representatives. One media workshop was conducted in last quarter. The purpose of this activity was to strengthen partnership at district level for project sustainability and fully media coverage of the issue.

2.4. Report Sharing Seminars at District level

In order to share the findings of research report with communities, media, stakeholders, local government representatives, district authorities, education department officials, policy makers and general masses about the situation of children with disabilities to inclusive education. The purpose of the activity is to aware all stakeholders to raise voice for making education inclusive in all over Azad Jammu & Kashmir. During reporting period 10 districts level reporting sharing seminars organized at all ten districts of Azad Jammu & Kashmir.

2.5. Development and Printing of IEC

WWOP communication team finalized, designed and printed IEC materials (8000 posters and 3000 fliers) for further dissemination amongst stakeholders and communities to highlight the issues of the children with disability in accessing quality education and the basic rights of the children to education. Throughout reporting period WWOP teams distributed IEC materials in different events.

2.6. Development of Documentary

During the reporting period the documentary film in supervision of WWOPs communication department completed documentary film on problems of children with disabilities right to inclusive education. After development of the documentary WWOP shared draft with ilm ideas team for review and feedback and get approval. Moreover, during meetings, seminars and forum meetings WWOP displayed documentary with all stakeholders and also disseminated through different TV channels in Azad Jammu & Kashmir like; City News, Kay 2 TV, Capital TV, Cable Network Channels.

2.7. CDs of Documentary and Case Studies for Dissemination

After development and approval of documentary from ilm ideas WWOP through competitive bidding process selected the media firm for CDs and produced and disseminated 1000 copies of CDs of documentary film. In this connection WWOP also shared 4 case studies with ilm ideas.

2.8. FM Radio Campaign (key messages and weekly programs)

4320

Messages by Radio.

Weekly 48 Programs



WWOP hired the services three prominent and popular local FM channels of AJK FM 105.4, FM 105.8 and FM 90. During the reporting period FM channels broadcasting 7 key messages on inclusive education on daily basis for wider awareness and also broadcasted weekly program introduction of voice for making education inclusive.

2.9. Awareness Walks

In order to attract the attention of the community to the problems being faced by the children with disability and the need to address these issues permanently WWOP team organized 10 district level awareness walks on inclusive education at Muzaffarabad, Hattian, Sudhnoti, Neelum, Poonch, Mirpur, Bhimber, Kotli, Haveli and Bagh Districts. The participants carried out banners and placards with messages about the issues and demand for the policy reforms to solve the issues of children with disabilities to inclusive education.



2.7. Display of Banners with Key Messages

In order to remind public to raise voice & highlight the issues of the children with disabilities to inclusive education. WWOP team developed key messages and displayed through banners at prominent places at district and state level for the community, stakeholders and policy maker to understand the problems of children with disabilities to inclusive education and to take up the collective responsibility for addressing the problems on priority basis to ensure the rights of children with disabilities to quality education. In this regard 100 banners (10 in each districts) displayed for wider awareness and sensitization.

2.8. Meetings with District Authorities

During the reporting period regional coordinators along with their teams conducted 180 meetings with district authorities and education department officials at targeted 10 districts of AJK to advocate authorities to take steps for resolving the problems of children with disabilities to inclusive education.

2.9. Meetings with Representatives of Private Schools Associations

During the reporting period regional coordinators along with their teams conducted 90 meetings with private school associations at targeted 10 districts of AJK to advocate them to take steps for resolving the problems of children with disabilities to inclusive education in private schools.

2.10. Billboards

During the reporting period WWOP displayed four billboards at prominent places of Muzaffarabad and Mirpur regions with key policy level key messages in regard to inclusive education and right of children with disabilities to education.

Objective 3

To Ensure that Access and Equity for children with disabilities is Mainstreamed in all Education Sector Programs through Advocacy with Government and Policy Makers by Using the Findings of the Study

3.1. Development of Advocacy Strategy

On the basis of research report the experienced consultant Mr. Aftab Ahmed Awan developed advocacy strategy and prior to development of advocacy strategy WWOP shared TORs with ilm ideas for approval and after approval TORs shared with Aftab Ahmed Awan to develop comprehensive strategy.

3.2. Two Days Training Workshop of Staff on Advocacy Skills & Use of Newly Developed Advocacy Strategy

WWOP conducted a two day training workshop in Islamabad to enhance the capacity of their staff in on the use of newly developed advocacy strategy, generating quality evidence and advocating effectively with the government for policy reform in AJK for making education inclusive for children with disabilities.

Mr. Aftab Ahmed Awan conducted comprehensive sessions on developing and implementing effective advocacy plans to influence relevant stakeholders for improved education policies and reform for access of children with disabilities to inclusive education. He covered a range of best practices that staff should engage at the district and state levels to affect change. The highly interactive sessions resulted in an improved understanding of all participants for developing evidence based advocacy for sustainable education reforms in AJK for children with disabilities.

3.3. Report Sharing Seminars at state level

On 30th Oct, 2014 one day state level report sharing seminar conducted by WWOP in collaboration with ilm Ideas at Muzaffarabad, Azad Jammu & Kashmir. The Chief Guest of the event was honorable speaker, Azad Jammu & Kashmir Mr. SardarGhulamSadiq Khan. In this event 130 participants from government, civil society, media, persons with disabilities and children with disabilities participated.

The president WWOP Ms. Najma Shakur expressed her gratitude to chief guest of the event and participants. After welcome note WWOP communication team presented documentary on inclusive education followed with the presentation of Mr. Aftab Ahmed Awan Technical Advisor WWOP on inclusiveness of educational services in AJK. Moreover, participants were given time for questions and responded with evidence based answering.

In this event official from government, civil society and media expressed their views regarding inclusive education and issues at state level. Lastly, the honorable chief guest speaker, Azad Jammu & Kashmir legislative Assembly Mr. SardarGhulamSadiq Khan expressed his views about inclusive education. He also announced job for women with disabilities and invited WWOP team to the upcoming assembly session of December, 2014 for presentation of documentary and findings of report with all members of legislative assembly to aware legislatures for future legislation.

3.4. Consultative Workshops

Women Welfare Organization Poonch (WWOP) carried out a study under the “Voice for making Education Inclusive in AJK” project to assess the existing situation with reference to inclusiveness of educational services in AJK with a specific focus on needs of special children. The study highlighted a situation where children with disabilities (physically challenged children) are almost denied their right to education. So as a second step to respond to this important

disparity, a series of three consultative meetings were organized to identify the critical gaps in the existing education policy in the state of AJK, The consultations facilitated in identifying key gaps and to come up with specific recommendations at a policy level to help improve the situation of inclusiveness in the region. The consultations were a welcome step following 18th constitutional amendment in Pakistan's constitutions, under which social subjects including education have been made provincial subjects. The state of AJK though is not linked to this change, however it has adopted the national education policy of Pakistan as its policy to remain in conformity with the provinces of Pakistan. The three consultations organized at a local hotel in



Muzaffarabad city were attended by all the important stakeholders (duty bearers and rights holders) including senior government officials from education departments, teachers, members of civil society organizations, journalists, lawyers, children with disabilities and their parents etc. A well-structured agenda was prepared for the consultations through

which the participants were initially orientated with the approach of inclusive education and the current situation. They were also presented the parts/ clauses of National Education policy 2009 related to inclusive education and were asked to identify the gaps and provide their inputs and recommendations. One of the key recommendation is to either prepare a new more inclusive education policy or update the existing education policy and insert a specific chapter on inclusiveness to ensure full integration of children with

disability in the current education regime. Another key finding was that although adopted but still even the national policy of 2009 is not implemented in the region/ state. Secondly, on a couple of places under priority area-II of the policy, which deals with the issues of access and quality of education, it is mentioned that measures will be taken for inclusiveness in future. However, no adequate focus is given to this highly important issue within existing policy. Therefore, still on ground no visible initiative has been taken. At the same time one major issue is non availability of adequate funds for implementation despite the lapse of almost 5 years. It is important to note that participants of all three consultations agreed that the existing support envisaged within the policy is not too much low as clearly the initiatives for the inclusive education are committed but the issue is, it has never been the priority area of the implementers. The participants of the consultations shared in-depth views about the issues faced by the children with disabilities (CWDs) as well as provided their inputs to come up with a more focused policy that may help in reducing the problems of CWDs and their families.

The major outcome of these consultations is in-principle agreement to either come up with a specific separate inclusive education policy or if this is not possible then a separate chapter should be included/dedicated in the main education policy to be developed for AJK in near future. Other recommendations include - a specific chapter may direct for incentive based support to CWDs and their families in getting education. The policy should also mention the friendly infrastructure development, teachers training to cater the needs of CWDs, transportation support to and from school and initiatives for attitudinal change at community and over all society level.

3.5. Development of Policy Brief

After formal procurement procedures for hiring of consultant, WWOP hired the services of experienced and well reputed policy

development consultant namely Mr. Atif Sheikh to develop policy brief on inclusive education framework of Azad Jammu & Kashmir. The policy review is being utilized and developed a policy brief which identified policies and challenges with existing policies and plans in AJK, and provided recommendations for legal bill. The aim of the activity was to draft a succinct policy analysis to be shared with policy makers and legislators in AJK.

3.6. Development of Inclusive Education Bill of Azad Jammu & Kashmir

After formal procurement procedures for hiring of legal consultant, WWOP hired the services of experienced and well reputed legal consultant for development of inclusive education bill of Azad Jammu & Kashmir in light of the report on gaps identified in educational policy, policy brief report and recommendations of consultative workshops. The legal consultant of WWOP developed inclusive education bill of Azad Jammu & Kashmir and shared with ilm ideas for review and approval.

3.7. Taking Forward Inclusive Education Policy Framework in AJK

Women Welfare Organization Poonch (WWOP) organized a state level event under its ilm ideas funded project "Voice for Making Education Inclusive in AJK" on 'Taking Forward Inclusive Education Policy Framework in AJK'. The purpose of the event was to share the comprehensive inclusive education framework, inclusive education bill and policy paper. Representatives from the Government, education sector, children with disabilities, NGOs, media and ilm ideas team were present.

Mr. Ahsan Rasheed, Project Manager WWOP, briefed participants about project activities, research findings and its progress.

Mr. Atif Sheikh, Lead Consultant briefed participants regarding inclusive education policy framework of Azad Jammu & Kashmir, its

targets, goals and strategies.

Ms. Nasreen Gul, Education Specialist, Ilm Ideas, spoke about inclusive education practices and its benefits for children with disabilities.

Lastly, Ms. Shaheen Kausar Dar, Deputy Speaker AJK Legislative Assembly, spoke about the inclusive education bill & its progress at departmental and assembly levels during the workshop and assured its cooperation for the approval.

3.8. International Day of Persons with Disabilities

In continuation of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities WWOP organized three awareness walks and seminar at Mirpur, Muzafarabad and Bhimber Districts under "Voice for Making Education Inclusive in Azad Jammu & Kashmir" Funded by Ilm Ideas

In these event persons with disabilities, children with disabilities, civil society organizations representatives, officials from government departments, media, political parties representatives, teachers, students and parents of PWDs participated.



01

OUTCOME

Enhanced awareness of gaps in education service delivery for children with disabilities

02

OUTCOME

Improved coverage of issues of children with disabilities in the media in AJK

03

OUTCOME

Strengthened voice of communities for inclusive educational facilities for disabled children

04

OUTCOME

Increased coordination with relevant authorities for highlighting needs of children with disabilities

IMPACT 1

We reached 150 policy makers so far shared with the research report findings, involved them in policy level seminars, meetings and mobilization activities and sensitized them in supporting revised inclusive education bill.

IMPACT 2

After sensitization of media clubs/associations so far they published 50 articles in different national and local newspapers on issues of CWDs and also given due preference in programs coverage.

IMPACT 3

Minister Social Welfare of AJK formally notified the forums to work as legal bodies for the rights of children with disabilities. The district forums also elected their office bearers and they are conducting their meetings continuously on monthly basis to raise voice for passing the inclusive education bill.

IMPACT 4

After continues meetings and coordination with authorities and policy makers WWOP taken signed commitments from policy makers and members of legislative assembly. The speaker of AJK assembly issued employment contract to the women disabled member of district community forum.



My Dream comes into reality.

My name is Sajid Awan and I am Principal of Read Foundation School at Hattian District. When I attended the 1st meeting of district community forum I was impressed by the work of WWOP and dream to construct ramps in my school and now my dream comes into reality and my school is now inclusive where children with disabilities enjoying their rights to education equally.



Community realized that Inclusion is important because everyone benefits from it

After implementation of different awareness and advocacy activities at Bhimber district the community realized rights of children with disabilities to education. In response the District Community Forum with the support and contribution of communities constructed ramps in city school Bhimber.



Making schools inclusive of Mangla Up-Raising Project

After first meeting of district community forum of Mirpur district, members wrote letter to the commissioner mangla affairs to order for under construction schools to make the schools inclusive. In response, the commissioner issued a letter to all concerned engineers to revise the mapping of schools in accordance with needs of children with disabilities.



A spark of hope in my life “the inclusive schools”

My name is Sobia Azam and I belong to Mirpur district of AJK. I used to go a government school where I was demoralized and discouraged for being not physically equal to the other children. The education was not a blessing but a condemn for me. The school didn't have facilities according to my needs so it was a hurdle for me, my fellows and my teachers. I felt deprived and unwanted though I wished to get education. At last I got fed up of behaviors I was suffering from, I left school.

The world was dark for me I was hopeless and parents were more than me. My parents attend meetings of WWOP and came to know about inclusive schools that I am enrolled in now. I enjoy all the educational activities as the normal students do.



The purpose of this report is to record the activities as they were undertaken by WWOP teams in the ten targeted Districts (Muzaffarabad, Mirpur, Hattian, Kotli, Haveli, Poonch, Bagh, Sudhnoti, Bhimber and Haveli) of AJK. The report focuses on the details of the activities as they were conducted/organized, the process of organizing and implementation at district & state level with the involvement of the local authorities and education department. Moreover, share the key findings of the activities with ilm Ideas team at the National level and to find any improvement. In addition, capture the spirit of activities and its impact on participants/departments and find out more efforts and improvement.



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Empowering Women

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