

Defying the logic of obedience!

By

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“I’m here to refresh the minds of children affected by floods” says a confident Ajmal 26, the caregiver at Child Friendly Space established by Plan Pakistan in collaboration with DOABA/ Indus Consortium at Tehsil Kot Adu UC Daira Deen Panah.



Floods are a recurring process for thousands of villages in Pakistan. Daira Deen Panah, is the exception. The village had its first encounter with floods this year.

“Meeting a flood can change the way you think, the way you act and the way you react” continues Ajmal who is fully equipped with the techniques required to communicate with any visitor.

Coming from a humble background from nearby village Machi Wala, the dedicated caregiver holds a bachelor degree.



“Here we have registered 53 boys and girls. We have two categories of students. The first comprises of children between 3 to 6 years of age and the second 7 to 12.

“The purpose of this centre is twofold: We try to lessen the negative impact of floods on children by promoting healthy activities for instance indoor and outdoor games and, we look ahead mainstreaming them in regular schools.”



Traditionally not many children in the village are inclined going to schools for legion reasons but most importantly for the lack of interest on part of their parents sending their children to schools, he observes.

“There is gender discrimination. Girls generally are discouraged attending schools.

“Contrary to popular perception that floods devastated us, I feel it has benefited us. Had there been no flood in the village, parents would never have listened to us,” he says.

I have been trying to convince parents to send their children to schools since years.

Only few followed me. Rest would have no problems seeing their children roam the village whole day. We were producing a new lot of uneducated youth every year. The floods changed all this.

Thanks to Plan Pakistan and DOABA/Indus Consortium that just provided us a space where children can come, sit, learn, and play. I hope forty out of currently enrolled fifty-three students will join regular school.



The community is very cooperative. There are only few parents who don't send children to our centre. Most try sending them always.

Even girls are coming here very actively. I have eighteen girls below seven years of age and fifteen twelve years. This is our strength if not success.

All of my students know what their needs are. What are their rights? And it's my resolve to continue this centre without external aid, because I myself have come a long way.



It was very difficult for a member of my caste to get education.

The society around is much closed. I come from the "Machis" tribe whom the feudal think are untouchable. The feudal don't know what I know, but I know they know.

I wish my student to know both. They shall opt for their preferred way, but without coercion I try wish again...



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