

SCRP's Innovative Construction Techniques Enhances Skills Among Construction Workers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

UK Aid and Australian Aid-funded School Construction and Rehabilitation Programme, Humqadam, is resolute to provide quality school infrastructure across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The success of the SCRП, however, hinges on trained, skilled, and professional construction workers who are the building blocks of good-quality infrastructure.

Arif Khan is a brick mason who worked at Government Girls' Comprehensive Model Higher Secondary School (GGCMHSS) Timergara, Lower Dir District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. Despite over a decade in experience, Arif only had access to informal, self-development initiatives in all his years in the construction industry. He often had to work under harsh conditions without safety regulations and with very little theoretical knowledge of construction practices.

GGCMHSS Timergara is one of the largest all-girls' schools in the Lower Dir District, catering to 1608 students. Humqadam-SCRП adopted the school for construction and has completed 05 new classrooms, 22 new toilets, 1 exam hall, 02 science labs, 1 IT lab, 1 staff room, and 1 principal's office, 1 clerk office, 1 guard hut, 1 soakage pit, and 2 store rooms. Meeting the school's urgent infrastructural needs meant that the construction workers had to be professional, efficient, and knowledgeable about Humqadam's innovation in construction technology.

"Prior to Humqadam, my skills as a construction worker were stagnant at best. I used to go to the site day in an out, perform my tasks for the day without any addition to skill development," recalls Arif of his previous work experience.



(L): GGCMHSS Timergara during last stages of completion

(R): Arif Khan explaining the role of SCRП in his professional skill enhancement

During his nine month stint at GGCMHSS Timergara, Arif Khan was provided on-the-job training on Humqadam's construction practices such as, the use of cavity walls (aka Chinese Bond) in brick work, correct ratios for concrete mixing, and mortar preparation with lime among other techniques along with strict compliance with health and safety measures. Arif feels he has gained considerable competencies for his future employment.

"I would consider every day working at the school site as a new learning experience in terms of the innovative techniques that can be used in construction. I also felt that the health and safety compliance was a hassle initially, but with time I realised how many accidents we avoided. I felt very proud as I had a part to play in improving our community school," said Arif.

Humqadam-SCRП is not only improving school infrastructure, but the programme is also fostering an environment of balanced skill development. The work force on-site gains valuable technical skills, including mastery of the materials, tools, and techniques. Through its construction and design philosophy, the UK Aid and Australian Aid funded SCRП hopes to be a blueprint that can be replicated and scaled up.

With an aim to improve infrastructure in government schools KP province of Pakistan, Humqadam-SCRIP through the support of UK aid And Australian Government has constructed 620 new classrooms and rehabilitated 1402 classrooms in 231 schools (as of July 2018). This programme is a part of the £420 million [Punjab Education Support Programme \(PESP\) II](#) and the £283 million [Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Education Sector Programme \(KESP\)](#), large and ambitious programmes which represent a collaborative effort between DFID, Australian Government (contribution only in KP province), and the provincial governments to result in more children in school and better learning outcomes.