

## Ensuring Gender-Responsive schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province through Safe and Secure Infrastructure

Humqadam School Construction and Rehabilitation Program (SCRP), through the support of UK Aid and Australian Government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, is reviving Girls' Higher Secondary Schools (GHSS) by provisioning missing facilities including new classrooms, toilets, exam halls, laboratories, libraries, store rooms, staff rooms offices, etc. and also rehabilitating existing infrastructure.

Gender disparities become especially pronounced in girls' higher secondary schools as health and environment-related barriers put pressures on female students to eventually drop out, making attainment of educational outcomes a far-reaching goal.

With only a few GGHSS in every district of KP, majority of such schools are some of the only all-girls education option for a lot of people. Located in densely populated areas, GGHSS are often overcrowded, in disrepair and lack basic facilities. The premise of Humqadam-SCRP interventions in GGHSS were construction of well-ventilated, well-lit, and safe classrooms, hygienic toilet blocks and addressing the missing infrastructure facilities. These infrastructure provisions also include ramps and a wheel-chair accessible toilet in each school in order to be truly inclusive across the board.



(Left) Before and after pictures of GGHSS Chamkani (Right) and GGHSS Shahbaz Garhi (Bottom) showing school buildings prior and post-Humqadam interventions

*“A classroom cannot be made a true learning space until the essential infrastructure requirements are met. A student will be motivated to learn if the school has broken walls, cracked roof and suffocating atmosphere. The feeling of insecurity and over-crowdedness cause students’ learning curve to greatly decline,”* said Ms. Farzana, Principal GGHSS Chamkani, District Peshawar, KP province.

Improved infrastructure and facilities have already started showing better results. The student to classroom and student to teacher ratios have gone down significantly, resulting in a more conducive learning environment. The parents and the larger community have also responded positively and picked up on the momentum for girls’ education as attendance rates have risen to nearly 90%. All four completed GGHSS have had an increase in enrolment rates as well. These indicators show that removing environmental and physical barriers to education can go a long way in addressing disparity for girls (See table below).

School Name	District	Enrolment		No. of classrooms		Average Attendance	
		Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
GGHSS Chamkani	Peshawar	1077	1152	17	21	70-80%	90-95%
GGHSS Comprehensive		1159	1274	27	27	60-70%	95%
GGHSS Shahbaz Gari	Mardan	1077	1248	10	24	60-70%	90-95%
GGHSS Katti Gari		570	670	10	14	70-80%	85-95%

In KP province, 31 Government Higher Secondary Schools (GHSS) have been completed, out of which four are GGHSS, by Humqadam-SCRP as of March 2018. Humqadam- SCR P sees quality construction and addressing missing facilities as an investment in making accessibility, equity and gender equality at the heart of the school systems in KP province.

With an aim to improve infrastructure in government schools KP province of Pakistan, Humqadam-SCRP through the support of UK aid and Australian Government has constructed 376 new classrooms and rehabilitated 1100 classrooms in 189 schools (as of March 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.