

Badam Primary Model School

Badam is a mountainous village in district Mardan that is restricted from urban services because of its isolation. Weak communication links, lack of access to roads, and scarcity of water inhibit its economic progress. Most of the community engages in agriculture as there is little room for occupational diversity due to an absence of a proper educational infrastructure.



The government schools functioning in the community were not adequate, suffering from rampant teacher absenteeism, dilapidated infrastructure, and an outdated curriculum leading to poor educational experience for the students. In May 2013, OSDI set up a Temporary Learning Center to bring access to quality education for the children in Badam. The school

130 students enrolled immediately for regular lessons in Mathematics, English, Urdu and Pakistan Studies from 4 full time teachers. Prior to opening of the school, some of the children had to trek long distances to other government schools in the nearby village Pirsai. *"Most of my money was spent on the travel fare to the school in Pirsai. I avoided going to school when I did not have enough money or if weather was bad."* a student commented on why he was not getting a formal primary education. Every morning, classrooms at the school are abuzz with enthusiastic students learning their lessons. *"We started with students who could not even spell the name of Pakistan correctly, now they can read newspapers and book with ease,"* tells a jubilant Zaubair Khan, one of the teachers employed at the school.

Aside from academic education, the children are also oriented in becoming model citizens in their communities. The children of the school recently took part in a cleanup campaign, collecting and disposing garbage from the streets to create awareness about community cleanliness. The school children would also be planting trees to promote awareness about the environment in the coming months.

The students who are benefitting from the education can in future have more options for employment other than agriculture and livestock, improving incomes and economic prospects of the community as a whole. In view of the overwhelming positive response from the community, OSDI plans to convert the Temporary Learning Center into a properly registered school.