

## NCHD Temporary Learning Sites (TLS)

Hidayat Bibi, 35, like many mothers, is worried about the future of her 13 year old son, Hashim. She belongs to Jalawan, one of the many villages near Swat that got cut off as the floods washed away many bridges and roads. Floods have damaged or destroyed most of the schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Schooling has come to a halt. Summer vacations has been extended to accommodate those who have had to flee their homes to escape rushing waters, or who have lost their homes altogether. After losing her husband a year ago, she has pinned all her hopes on her teenage son. “I want him to get good education and become a doctor” says Hidayat Bibi.



However, looking at the disrupted educational facilities due to severe floods, Hidayat Bibi is worried. She does not know when the schools will reopen and how her son will be able to catch up with his interrupted studies.

“My son is very intelligent and has lots of interest in his studies. But sometimes he asks difficult questions to which I have no answer. When his father died he asked me – ‘Why did God take away my father? Is He angry with me?’ - What can you tell a child when they ask such questions?”



Hashim echoes his mother’s concerns. He says he misses his school and hopes that it is still standing. He worries for the well-being of his friends and teachers also, but most of all he is worried for the trees he planted some months ago as part of 'NCHD’s tree plantation campaign' in his school.

“My friends and I watered the plants in recess and sometimes put manure on them to help them grow healthy and strong. I hope the waters have not destroyed them.”

It will take months for schools in the flood affected Swat to be repaired and reconstructed, while complete rehabilitation of educational infrastructure will likely take years. Until then, the future of school children is uncertain.

In a country where adult literacy rate is 62% and only about 60% of children finish primary school, it is important that schools are repaired and reconstructed as quickly as possible. For a nation hit by calamity after calamity, education may be the only hope for a better future.

NCHD is trying hard to save children's time by operating Temporary Learning Sites (TLS) in all its relief camps. TLS aims at providing children with opportunities to engage in positive learning activities, addressing psycho-social needs of the children in post flood trauma scenario. Children will be meaningfully involved employing joyful interactive exercises helping them to recover from trauma, and to be prepared to take their place in routine life activities.



UNICEF will provide School in a Box and Recreational Kits for use at the TLS. It will also train teachers in addressing the special educational needs of the affected children.

During rehabilitation period in future, NCHD will provide assistance to Govt. teachers to run the affairs of damaged schools using alternate options. It will also train teachers to manage post traumatic syndromes and facilitate the process of transition from stress to normalcy amongst students. Along with it, classroom activities will be progressively shifted to formal studies, with the initial focus on playful light content student centered activities. Partly damaged buildings may be repaired earlier, and the regular schooling activities may be shifted to the repaired buildings/classrooms. Wherever required, government shall provide text books on priority basis.