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**PAKISTAN**

## SUCCESS STORY

### Ushering in a new era of reading and learning in Sindh

**Paving the way for children in Sindh to read every day in their classrooms**



With the issuance of the official notification, it is envisioned that by 2018, the USAID Sindh Reading Program will have helped 450,000 students in grades 1 and 2 improve their ability to sound out letters and words, moving toward full reading comprehension.



SRP is investing in the continuous professional development of teachers, production of local reading materials, and sourcing of ICT-based solutions to overcome the challenges facing young readers.

In what is being called a “groundbreaking achievement” for the Provincial Government of Sindh in Pakistan and the U.S., a 35-minute reading period has just been instated for all public primary schools in this Pakistani province of more than 40 million people. “The introduction of daily reading classes in primary schools is happening for the first time in the history of Sindh’s education sector,” said Tameez-ud-din, Program Director for the Sindh Basic Education Program (SBEP).

SBEP is a government-to-government initiative between the U.S. and Sindh governments, with the aim of improving reading scores of 450,000 grade 1 and 2 children in the province by 2019, among other objectives. Under the larger SBEP program, the Sindh Reading Program (SRP) funded by USAID and implemented by Chemonics International has spearheaded data collection, dialogue, and problem solving with the Sindh Government around early grade literacy. Chemonics and partner School-to-School International conducted a baseline early grade reading assessment in a representative sample of more than 6,000 third grade students in 2014, and found that 32 percent of students were unable to read a single word of grade-level text in Sindhi or Urdu languages.

This Fall, working closely with SBEP and the sister Pakistan Reading Program, SRP engaged in vigorous advocacy with key policy makers, culminating in the submission of a formal request for a standardized reading period to the Reading Steering Committee of the government. A series of meetings and round table discussions yielded a positive response from the Secretary of Education, and on November 2, 2015, Sindh’s Education and Literacy Department (ELD) issued a notification to all primary public schools to include a 35-minute reading period in their classroom schedules on daily basis. The reading period defines specific time for teachers to use scripted lesson plans and supplementary learning and teaching materials provided by USAID.

“We are taking the quality of education in the province to the next level, where our children are introduced to highly creative and enterprising methods of teaching and learning,” said Mr. Tameez-ud-din. “I congratulate our teachers for helping us reach this decisive moment. This is an achievement of those parents as well who send their children to school in their pursuit of a quality education, inspiring us to do more and do better.”

#### Telling Our Story

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