

### PAAS FOUNDATION PROJECTS IN 2024



*Seerana Kals, Azad Kashmir, March 2024: The site for PAAS Foundation's first school in Azad Kashmir (topmost building, center) seen against the backdrop of the snow-clad Nanga Pir peak*

### PAAS FOUNDATION PRIMARY SCHOOL, SEERANA KALS

In 2024, PAAS Foundation is set to expand its operations and initiate new projects in Seerana Kals, a mountain village in a remote part of Union Council Rangla, Bagh District, Azad Kashmir. Located at a height of around 7500 feet in the Himalayas, Seerana Kals is home to about 100 households.

Seerana Kals was selected as a site for a number of PAAS projects following a survey of 8 villages in Union Council Rangla. The communities of all the villages surveyed evinced keen interest in PAAS Foundation's projects. However, Seerana Kals was ultimately selected because of factors such as its remoteness, the severity of the weather and the lack of a paved road, making it hard for locals to access facilities such as healthcare and education.

Foremost among PAAS's new projects is a primary school for the children of the community. At present, the children of Seerana Kals walk to the nearest school in Union Council Rangla - a walk that takes an hour and a half - making it difficult for the youngest children to access school, particularly in colder months. The PAAS Foundation School, which will initiate operations by the end of June 2024 is situated within the village itself and is within walking distance of most of the houses. Additionally, the school will provide employment to women from the community by recruiting and training locals as teachers and staff. Beginning its operations as a primary level institution for children aged 4 to 6 years, the school will later add middle and senior sections as its students move into higher grades.

### PAAS FOUNDATION NUTRITION PROJECT, SEERANA KALS



According to the report, *Intersectoral Nutrition Strategy for Azad Jammu and Kashmir (2016-2020)*, jointly published by Unicef and the Azad Kashmir government, there are high rates of stunting and wasting in the region, with 31.7% stunting and 17.6% wasting observed in children aged 0-5.

*Seerana Kals: A view of village houses spread over the mountainside*

Seerana Kals is the site for PAAS Foundation's 2024 nutrition program, a six month long pilot project focused on households in the village. The objectives of the pilot project include:

- Providing essential nutritional interventions and micronutrients to children aged 0-5
- Helping families create a practical, sustainable food system that promotes a healthy diet, initially through basic food support for a period of 3 months, accompanying the provision of livestock, seeds, etc. to establish a degree of self-sufficiency in food
- Providing nutrition related education to mothers, and encouraging preparation of food in appropriate ways

The pilot will be a small-scale project focusing on the households of children attending the PAAS Foundation school in Seerana Kals. Around 10 of the lowest-income



households with children aged 0 to 5 will be approached and invited to participate in the pilot program. Initially, 30 children will be inducted into the nutrition program and provided interventions along with general food support for the entire household.

Depending on the outcome of the pilot project, the nutrition program will later be expanded to other households in the region.

#### PAAS DISPENSARY AND LAB COLLECTION UNIT, SEERANA KALS

In May 2024, PAAS is setting up a dispensary in Seerana Kals which will serve the local community as well as nearby villages including Ser Bagla, Jalalee and Mulach. The dispensary will be supervised by a Lady Health Visitor (LHV), or female community health worker who will dispense basic medication and also provide care and advice to women patients. At present, there is no medical facility or dispensary in the area.

#### PAAS ADOPTS A SCHOOL IN CHAPRIAN, AZAD KASHMIR



*Students and teachers of the Chaprian school stand in their makeshift classroom which currently has no walls and no furniture for students*

In 2024, PAAS Foundation is adopting a small school in the village of Chaprian in Union Council Rangla. The school began as a stopgap measure organized by a local NGO (non-governmental organization), following the devastating earthquake of 2005 which destroyed almost all the infrastructure in Bagh District. Due to a lack of funding, the

school has remained a makeshift arrangement. In common with other villages in the mountainous area, no road leads to Chaprian and it is difficult to access other areas on a daily basis. The makeshift school - the only school in the vicinity - is an open-air 'classroom' with no shelter in rainy or cold weather.



During a survey of the area, the village community invited PAAS Foundation to take over the school in the current year. The adoption of the school will be based on collaboration between the community and PAAS Foundation: the village community is banding together to build a schoolroom while PAAS will provide teachers' salaries, furniture, books, teaching materials and educational oversight. At a later stage, PAAS will also construct another classroom for the school.

*(Left) Students of the Chaprian school sit and study on chatais (mats) in their open-air classroom*

## UPDATES FROM DEH LOON KHAN, BADIN, SINDH

### COMMUNITY HEALTH SESSIONS AT THE PAAS HOSPITAL



An important focus of the PAAS Hospital in Deh Loon Khan is on creating community awareness, particularly on issues pertaining to women's health. In addition to providing medical care, Sehrish, nurse and midwife at the PAAS Hospital, leads weekly sessions on hygiene and women's health.

*(Left) Sehrish conducts a session with women from the community*



## BRINGING MICRO-SCHOOL STUDENTS INTO THE MAINSTREAM



Students at the PAAS Micro-School in Deh Loon Khan, Badin are transitioning from electronic tablets to paper and pen. This is in line with community preferences and will prepare students for mainstream education using the government syllabus.

*(Left) Female students at the PAAS Micro-School read from textbooks*

## PHONICS WORKSHOPS AT THE HOUSE OF LIGHT SCHOOL, PIND BEGWAL, ISLAMABAD



In February 2024, on behalf of PAAS Foundation, Anika Khan led a series of workshops on phonics and phonological development for teachers of the House of Light School (HOL), a free school in Pind Begwal for students from low-income backgrounds. Currently, PAAS is sponsoring 3 students at the school.

*(Left) HOL teachers attend a session on phonics led by Anika Khan*

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## PAAS FOUNDATION

HELP, HEAL AND UPLIFT

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