

Social Impact



Contents

Introduction	10
Context	12
UN Sustainability Goals	13
Karachi, Pakistan	16
Issues & Challenges	17
Pakistan Village School	18
Community Centre	19
Opportunities	21
Ashoq's Apprenticeship	22
Teacher Teela	23
Gender Equality	24
School for Girls and Boys	25
Village Women Hosting	25
Conclusion	34

Foreword

The story of how Nyami Studios began will always be a nostalgic one. It was as simple as a combination of like minded *individuals sharing a passion*, finding themselves in the same place undergoing a construction project in rural Zambia led by CAUKIN Studio, building a kindergarten.

Conversations and talks of the future & dreams were discussed between newly formed friendships which lead to 'we could do this ourselves too'. On returning to the UK, *Nyami Studio was born*.

With the foundations laid out for us by CAUKIN Studios we stepped into our own and started developing a plan of action. After a few weeks of intense research and searching for a project which aligned with our goals and values we did not expect to have a project within three months of starting up.

Pitching our idea to RIBA Gold Medalist Yasmeen Lari was a pivotal moment in securing our partnership. She was inspired by our passion and commitment to creating inspirational architecture which not only benefited the community it was built for but also the individuals who partake in the design and construction.

Originally from Pakistan, I have a strong personal connection to this project. To be able to give back and support a community I am part of was a fulfilling experience and I am eager to continue doing more. One of the many dreams migrant parents have is giving back to their home so I know this was a special project for my parents too.

As we wrap up this year with this report, we are not closing the door on Pakistan. Our relationship with the team in Karachi is flourishing and we will continue working on providing the underdeveloped areas with the tools they need to live sustainably and with dignity.

A big thank you to Yasmeen Lari and the Heritage foundation of Pakistan for believing in us and providing us with a platform to undertake our inaugural project. We would also like to thank Corstorphine & Wright for their continued trust, support and enthusiasm in Nyami. & we could not have done this without the support of our families and friends. Thank you for being in our corner every step of the way!

I hope this report inspires you to believe in yourself to do more, because you can.



Muneebah Shaheen
Co-Founder

I will end on my favourite saying:

“Do the work that feeds your soul, not your ego.”

About Us

Nyami Studio is a design studio that aims to implement sustainable designs in under developed countries. The projects will emphasise community development - socially and economically - while increasing the awareness of the construction industry's environmental impact.

We believe in education which teaches through real life situations and creates a collaborative platform for solutions. We strive to communicate the importance of sustainable carbon zero design and its long term benefits. Our current live projects are focused on creating safe and inspirational spaces which nurture young minds and are self sufficient and sustainability.

We want to make a difference in the lives of both the communities we help and the individuals who engage with our projects.

In such a short time we are still in disbelief over how much we have achieved! We hope this report captures the extent of impact projects can have over so many individuals.

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Statement of Intent

At Nyami studios our vision is to create positive social change, using locally sourced material and encouraging community involvement which shapes a sustainable built environment.

We do this by always referring back to our motto - *Build, Inspire, Repeat.*

Build

Deliver impactful projects worldwide, addressing education, women’s empowerment, and children’s welfare. While our focus remains on these areas, our long-term vision is to expand, aligning with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

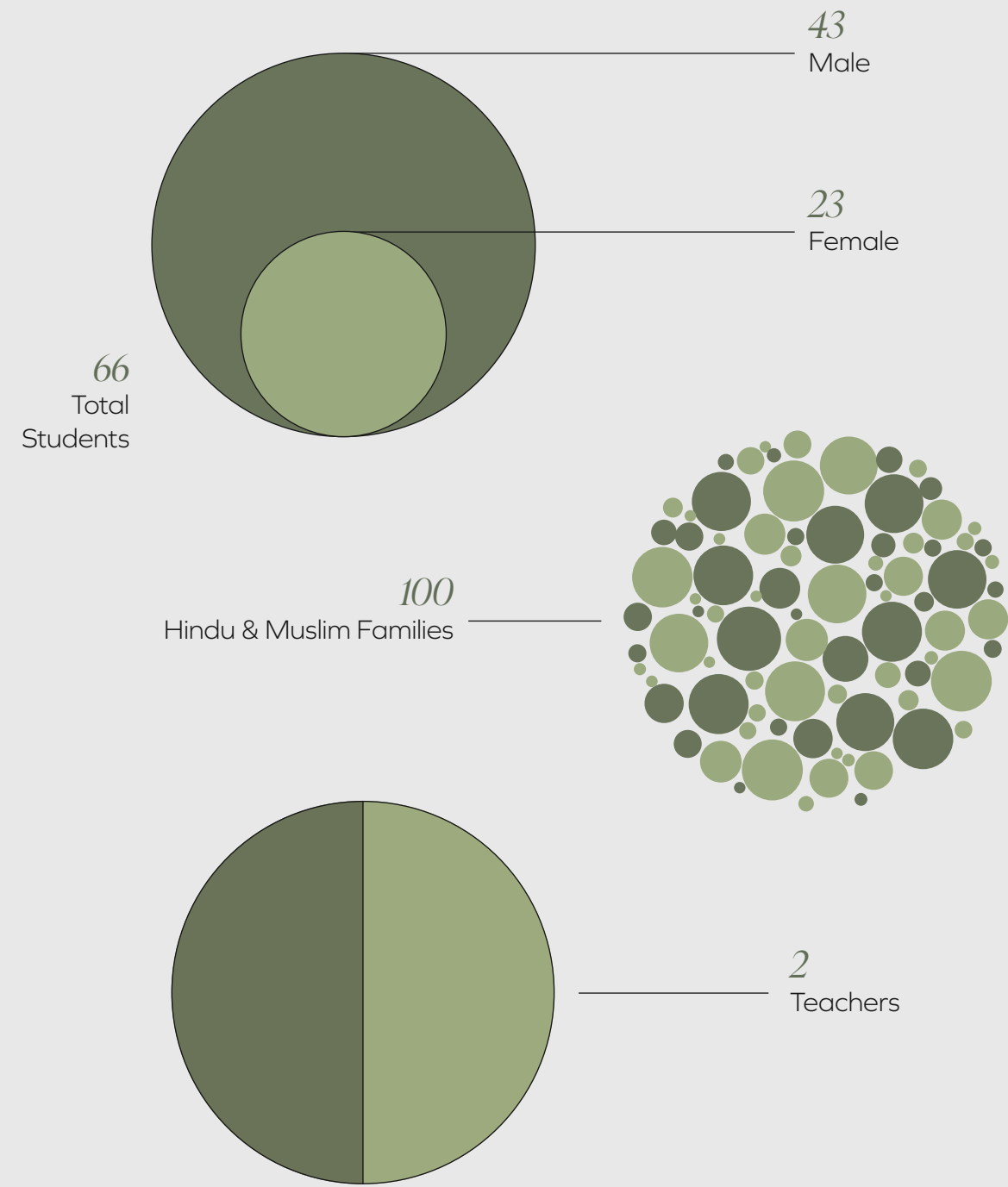
Inspire

Roll out participation/ volunteering opportunities within the companies that sponsor us. Give seminars & workshops in universities to spread the word of what we do and ignite more passion into the industry. Work in schools at different ages providing workshops, showing architecture in a new light that is not often in the spotlight.

Repeat

Ensure the longevity and impact of our projects by continuously refining our approach, learning from each build, and sharing knowledge across communities. Develop sustainable models that can be replicated, empowering local communities to take ownership. Strengthen our network of collaborators, sponsors, and volunteers to create a cycle of positive change that extends beyond each individual project.

Summary of Impact 2024



Introduction

We are delighted to present the culmination of our inaugural projects in Karachi. This comprehensive report aims to document the *social impact* achieved and encapsulates our journey, highlighting not only the tangible outcomes but also the intangible yet *invaluable changes* witnessed.

From fostering inclusive growth to empowering individuals and communities, our endeavours have made a lasting impact, transforming stories and sparking meaningful change.

At Nyami Studio, we're more than just a design firm, we're on a mission. Our focus on research-based design initiatives propels us to charge towards sustainable solutions in underdeveloped nations. Our projects aren't just about buildings; they're about building communities. Through our work, we're committed to eco-conscious development and economic upliftment, and we aim to raise awareness about the construction industry's environmental influence while directly benefiting community structures.

Education is at the core of what we do. We advocate for hands-on learning and teamwork to drive innovative solutions. Our ambition is to focus on sustainable, zero-emission design and its enduring impact. Every member of our team is driven by a shared passion to make a significant difference, touching the lives of both the communities we aid and the individuals who journey with us towards a brighter, greener, and more equitable tomorrow.



Context

Challenges we currently focus on and address:

- Democratising quality design for all, not just the privileged few
- Enhancing access to education, healthcare, clean water, and sanitation

We have multiple *long-term goals* which include:

- Participate in diverse design and construction ventures globally by collaborating with various NGO's.
- Establish a team of consultants dedicated to promoting and sponsoring social value initiatives aligned with our profession.
- Conduct educational workshops and seminars for students from college to university level as well as those already in the industry, enriching their understanding of environmentally conscious architecture.
- Develop a collaborative platform for active participation in projects with a focus on sustainability and social value.
- Empower local workers in developing regions with education and tools for self-reliance and sustainable growth.

UN Sustainability Goals

The key sustainable development goals we currently *target* are:



The key sustainable development goals we are *working towards*:



Karachi, Pakistan

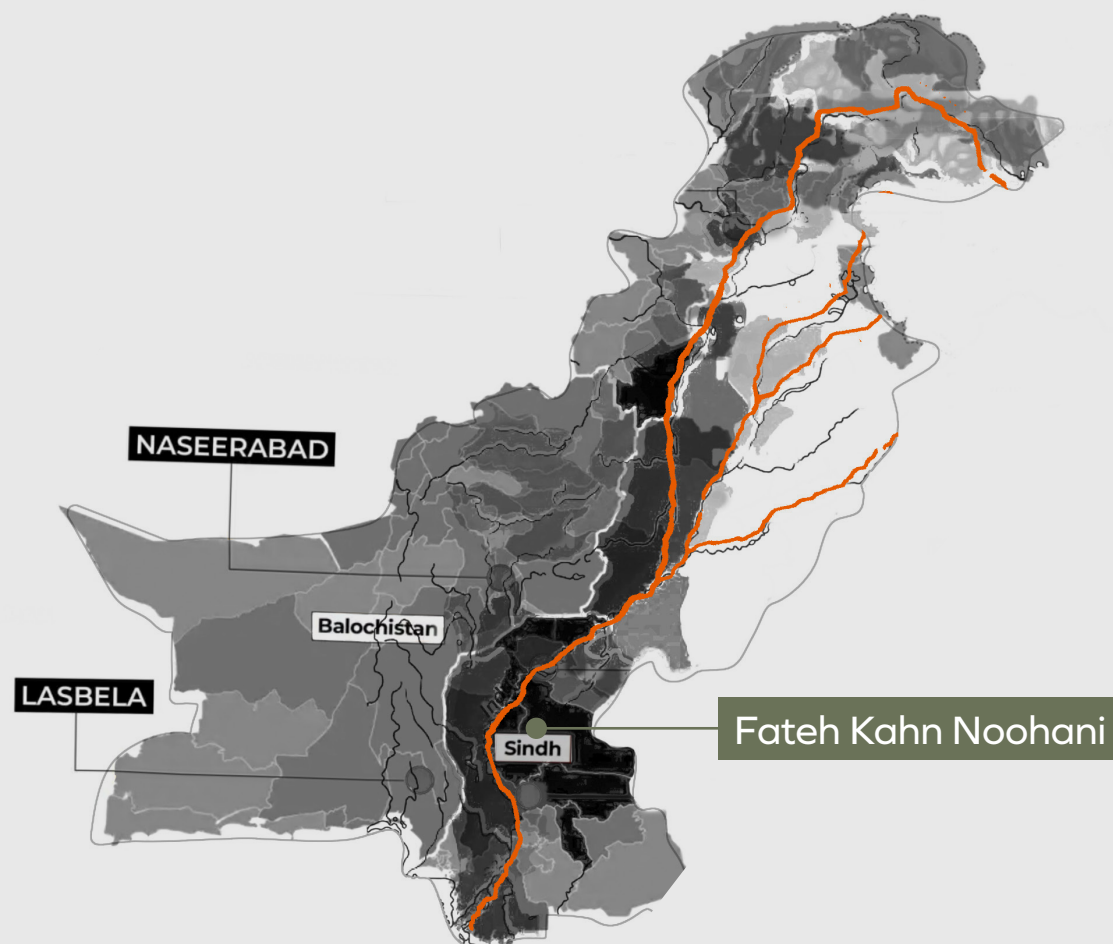
Through extensive research and analysis of the post-flood scenario, we identified education as a critical area in need of attention, particularly for girls who face significant barriers due to societal norms.



Karachi, Pakistan

Key Facts:

- Human Development Index 2022 - United Nations Development Programme: Pakistan ranks 157th out of 191 countries in the Education Index, reflecting low educational attainment levels and limited access to quality education.
- An estimated 22.8 million children aged 5-16 are out-of-school.
- Only 67% of Pakistani children complete primary school.
- Poverty is the first and foremost reason behind so many children in the country not attending school. According to World Bank, poverty rate in Pakistan stands at 37.2% (\$3.65 /day) as of 2023.
- Estimates of the number of out-of-school children in Pakistan range from 20.3 to 22.1 million children.



Issues & Challenges

Infrastructure

One of the most glaring issues in Pakistan's education system is the lack of adequate infrastructure and facilities in many regions, which impedes students' access to education. Many schools in Pakistan lack basic facilities such as proper classrooms, sanitation facilities and clean drinking water. Dilapidated infrastructure not only affects the learning environment but also compromises students' health and safety.

Urban-rural

The literacy rate for urban areas is much higher than that for rural areas, reflecting the urban-rural divide in terms of economic development, infrastructure and services. The urban literacy rate is 74%, while the rural literacy rate is 51%.

Primary School Enrolment

According to UNICEF, primary school enrolment rates in Pakistan have improved over the years, with approximately 89% of boys and 86% of girls enrolled in primary education as of 2018. However, disparities still exist, particularly in rural areas and among marginalised communities.

Secondary School Enrolment

Secondary school enrolment rates are lower than primary enrolment rates in Pakistan. According to the Pakistan Education Statistics Report 2019-2020, the net enrolment rate for girls at the secondary level was 46%, compared to 54% for boys.

Dropout Rates

Dropout rates remain a concern, particularly for girls. According to UNESCO, the primary school completion rate for girls in Pakistan is lower than that of boys, with many girls dropping out of school due to factors such as early marriage, household responsibilities, and lack of access to secondary education.

Geographical Disparities

Access to education varies significantly between urban and rural areas in Pakistan. While urban areas generally have better access to schools and educational resources, rural areas face challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, teacher shortages, and long distances to travel to school, particularly for girls.

Barriers to Girls' Education

Girls in Pakistan face various barriers to education, including cultural norms favouring boys' education, early marriage, lack of sanitation facilities in schools, and safety concerns while traveling to school. These barriers contribute to lower enrolment and higher dropout rates among girls, particularly in rural areas.

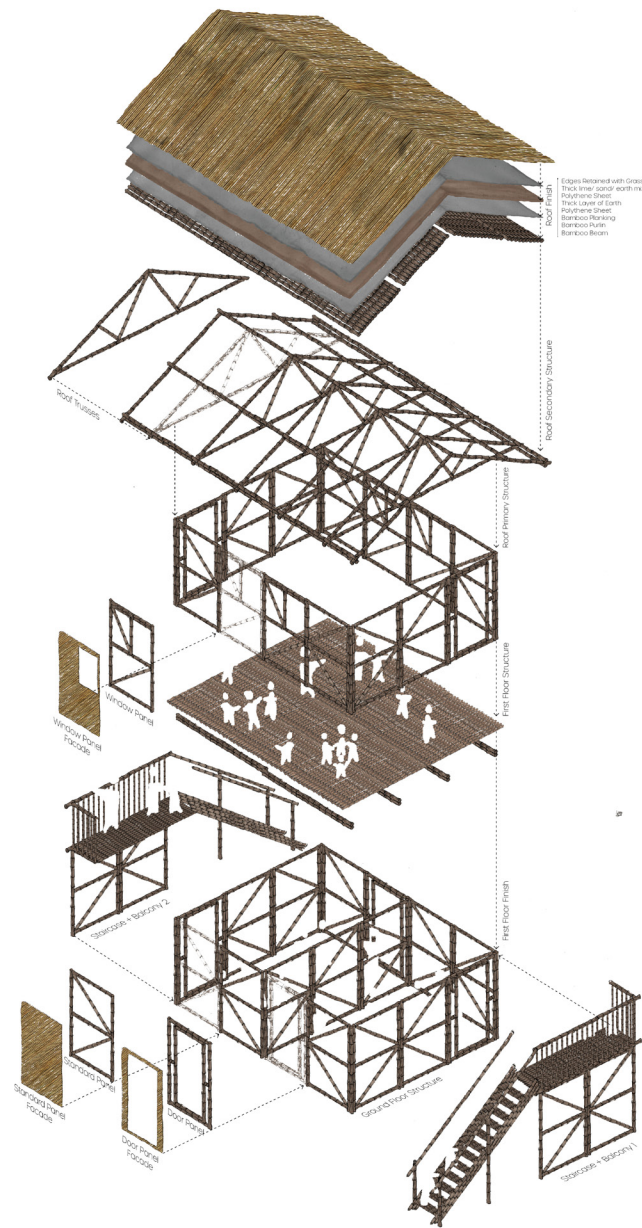
Pakistan Village School

Nyami Noohani School

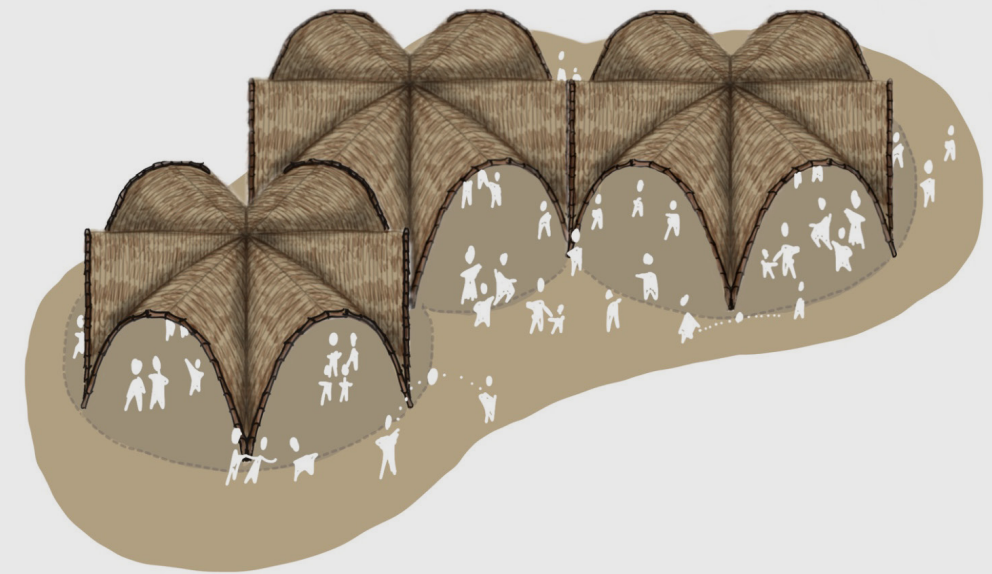
In 2022, unprecedented floods wreaked havoc in Pakistan. Although the initial emergency response has subsided, millions of people still desperately require humanitarian aid and critical services.

The area's most severely affected are home to some of Pakistan's most vulnerable population, particularly children who were already grappling with malnutrition, inadequate access to water and sanitation, and low school enrolment rates. The aftermath of the floods, which included the loss of crucial infrastructure like schools and medical facilities, has further exacerbated the plight of many children, depriving them of access to both education and healthcare.

This project focused on designing and constructing a school in a village located in Sindh. The adaptable modular design established a model for the community, enabling them to construct similar facilities in other villages independently. Moreover, integral to this project is the emphasis on local capacity building. By involving villagers in the construction process and providing training in construction techniques and project management, the project not only delivers a place of education in villages lacking such infrastructure but also serves as a platform for job creation and skills development. This approach empowers local communities to take ownership of their development, fostering sustainability and transforming lives beyond the immediate scope of the project.



Community Centre



The Juliet Community Centre

The Juliet Centre was designed as a multi-purpose community hub, providing a space for women's workshops, education, and vocational training. With solar-powered lighting, it remains accessible beyond daylight hours, supporting long-term social and economic development.

A core element of the project was ensuring that the design and construction process reflected local traditions and materials, reinforcing cultural identity while embracing innovation. The centre's hand-crafted bamboo arches and locally sourced tiles celebrate Sindh's rich heritage while demonstrating sustainable, low-carbon construction techniques. Workers travelled from surrounding areas to take part in the project, staying in the village to immerse themselves in the process and learn from traditional craftsmanship. By incorporating both traditional skills

and modern design, the Juliet Centre stands as a symbol of resilience, adaptability, and the enduring strength of community-led development.

More than just a building, the Juliet Centre represents a lasting partnership between Nyami Studio, the Heritage Foundation of Pakistan, and Pono Village. It stands as a testament to collaboration, cultural identity, and social impact through architecture.



Opportunities

Building in the villages creates several opportunities for local villagers, including:

Employment Opportunities:

Incorporating bamboo as a primary construction material for the structures offers employment opportunities for local villagers both skilled and unskilled in bamboo craftsmanship. From harvesting and processing bamboo to constructing the projects framework and furnishings, there is a range of roles that require expertise in bamboo manipulation and construction techniques. This creation of jobs can help alleviate poverty and improve livelihoods within the community.

Skill Development:

Participation in the construction process offers a valuable opportunity for villagers to gain practical skills in construction techniques, project management and teamwork. These skills can be transferable to other projects and employment opportunities, enhancing their long-term prospects.

Empowerment and Ownership:

Involving local villagers in the construction process fosters a sense of ownership and empowerment within the community. By contributing to the building of structures within their own villages, villagers feel a deeper connection to the project and are more likely to take pride in its completion and maintenance.

Entrepreneurial Ventures:

The projects stimulate entrepreneurial ventures within the community. Villagers may identify opportunities to provide goods and services to support the construction process, such as supplying materials, catering for workers or offering transportation services.

Education and Training:

Beyond the construction phase, the projects themselves becomes a hub for education and training. Local villagers may have the opportunity to receive further education, training, or attend workshops conducted at the school & community centre, enhancing their skills and knowledge.

Community Development:

The presence of the projects can catalyse broader community development initiatives. It may attract other organisations or resources to the area, such as healthcare services, clean water initiatives, or agricultural programs, further improving the quality of life for villagers.

Overall, building the school not only provides a physical structure for education but also opens a range of socio-economic opportunities that can positively impact the lives of local villagers and contribute to the sustainable development of the community.

Case Study: Ashoq's Apprenticeship

Ashoq, a motivated individual from the local community, has embarked on a transformative journey as a trainee project manager under the mentorship of Meirdad, the project manager of the school construction project.



Through mentorship and practical training, Ashoq did not only learn the intricacies of running a successful project but also contributing to the advancement of sustainable practices within the community.

Ashoq's growth exemplifies the potential for local talent to thrive and drive positive change within their own communities. His journey underscores the importance of mentorship and hands-on learning opportunities in empowering individuals to enact positive change. As Ashoq continues his journey, he stands as a role model and inspiration for the future of sustainable development in his community and beyond.



Ashoq gained invaluable hands-on experience in project management and the utilisation of sustainable materials such as bamboo.

Case Study: Teacher Teela

Teela, an 18-year-old with an extraordinary talent for artistry and a deep passion for geometry, eagerly steps into a new chapter of his life. With the completion of the school project, Teela sees his dream of becoming an art teacher within its walls materialise.



His years of dedication to honing not only his artistic skills but also his understanding of geometry, which intricately influences his art, have prepared him for this moment. As he steps into his role, Teela not only embodies the transformative power of education and community support but also symbolises the breaking of deep-seated social barriers.

Teela's Hindu background working within a predominantly Muslim school highlights the progressive nature of the community, where inclusivity and acceptance transcends religious divides. His presence serves as a living example of unity in diversity, showcasing the ability of individuals to come together for a common purpose regardless of cultural or religious differences.

Teela's journey represents a significant step towards fostering harmony and understanding within Pakistan's diverse society, emphasising the potential of education and creativity to bridge divides and build a brighter future for all.



Gender Equality

In Pakistan, gender equality remains a *significant challenge*, deeply rooted in cultural norms, socio-economic disparities, and institutional barriers.

Women and girls face discrimination in various aspects of life, including access to education, healthcare, employment, and decision-making roles. Patriarchal attitudes and traditions often limit women's opportunities for advancement and perpetuate gender-based violence and inequality.



In terms of education, gender disparities persist at multiple levels. While there have been improvements in recent years, particularly in primary school enrolment rates, girls still face significant barriers to accessing and completing education. Factors such as poverty, cultural norms favouring boys' education, early marriage, lack of infrastructure, and security concerns contribute to lower enrolment and higher dropout rates among girls. Furthermore, disparities in educational quality and resources perpetuate gender gaps in academic achievement and skills development.

Despite efforts to promote gender equality in education through policy reforms and initiatives, implementation challenges persist, including inadequate funding, insufficient teacher training on gender-sensitive pedagogy, and limited access to safe and inclusive learning environments for girls. Addressing these issues requires comprehensive strategies that address not only access to education but also quality, relevance, and inclusivity, ensuring that all children, regardless of gender, have equal opportunities.



Case Study: School for Girls and Boys

The flood-resistant school constructed by Nyami Studio exemplifies our dedication to promoting gender equality and inclusivity. Recognising the gender disparities prevalent in education, particularly in disaster-prone areas like Karachi, we have implemented comprehensive measures to ensure equal access and opportunities for both genders within the school, notably:

- By collaborating closely with villagers and school staff, we have facilitated inclusive dialogue and participatory decision-making processes to identify and address gender-specific needs and concerns.
- Through a series of workshops and training sessions, teachers were equipped with gender-sensitive approaches, empowering them to create a supportive learning environment that values and respects the contributions of all students, regardless of gender.
- We worked with villagers to challenge gender stereotypes and promote community acceptance of gender equality principles. This included engaging local leaders and influencers in discussions on gender equality and encouraging the active involvement of both men and women in school governance and decision-making processes.

By integrating gender equality into every aspect of the school's design and operation, from infrastructure planning to curriculum development, we have created a transformative educational environment that not only withstands natural disasters but also fosters social resilience and empowerment.

Case Study: Village Women Hosting

As we explored the intricacies into the societal gender norms prevalent in the country, particularly within rural communities like the one we stayed in, we recognised the importance of addressing gender disparities and promoting women's empowerment.

We engaged in extensive dialogue with local communities to understand their perspectives and experiences and, by drawing upon the invaluable insights gained from these interactions, we explored various avenues for women's involvement in our project.

One impactful approach was our collaboration with strong village mothers who graciously hosted and supported us during our stay. These remarkable women not only provided us with hospitality and care but also served as invaluable sources of knowledge and guidance, offering unique perspectives on community needs and priorities.

Their involvement in the project extended beyond mere hospitality, as they actively participated in discussions and decision-making processes, contributing their expertise and insights to our efforts to promote gender equality and empowerment.

Through their leadership and support, we were able to create a more inclusive and equitable project environment, one that recognises and values the vital contributions of women to community development and resilience.

Nyami and their construction team



Nyami Noohani School under construction



Completed Nyami Noohani School





Conclusion

After a whirlwind first
year, we have learnt a lot.



Conclusion

We've delved into the realm of social value work, exploring its *multifaceted dimensions* and the *profound impact* it can have on whole communities.



In pursuing our social impact initiatives, we've used design expertise and experience to address pressing social and environmental challenges. By prioritising community growth and sustainability, we are not just constructing physical infrastructure – we are fostering resilience and empowerment within local communities. Through our collaborative and inclusive approach, we demonstrate the potential of design to act as a trigger for social progress.

Our discussions on gender equality in education has shed light on the vital role of inclusivity and empowerment in building more equitable societies. By recognising and addressing the systemic barriers faced by women and girls in accessing education, we help with unlocking their potential and driving broader societal change. Initiatives that involve local communities, such as the engagement of village mothers in project hosting and decision-making, exemplify the importance of grassroots involvement in shaping development outcomes.



As we reflect on these topics, it becomes clear that social value work is not just about implementing projects; it's about fostering meaningful connections, amplifying voices, and sparking sustainable change. It's about recognising the inherent dignity and worth of every individual and working collaboratively to create a world where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.



As we navigate the complexities of social value work, we remain passionate in our commitment to empathy, inclusivity, and solidarity. By harnessing the power of collaboration, collective action, and innovation, we can create lasting positive change that reverberates beyond the confines of our desks, enriching lives and communities around the world and we will continue to champion initiatives that prioritise people and the planet, striving to build a more just, equitable, and sustainable future.



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