



# ECW-First Emergency Response, Learning Conference Report-By Acted



## Learning Conference Education Cannot Wait (ECW) First Emergency Response 2022

VENUE: SERENA HOTEL ISLAMABAD, SHEESH MAHAL III  
30 JANUARY 2024



2/10/2024

**ECW-First Emergency Response, Learning  
Conference**

**Venue: Serena Hotel, Islamabad**

**Date: 30 January 2024**

## Executive Summary

The devastating August 2022 flood severely impacted education in Pakistan, leading to the destruction of 30,389 schools, with many serving as shelters<sup>1</sup>. The First Emergency Response (FER) 2022 Project, funded by Education Cannot Wait aims to support 82,480 children in some of the worst flood affected districts of Sindh, Balochistan, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Led by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in 12 districts of Sindh, Balochistan and Punjab, and Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED) in 11 districts of Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the FER able to support 100,055 children through establishment of temporary shelters, alternate learning pathways, rehabilitation, dewatering and disinfection of schools.

ACTED and its consortium partner, International Rescue Committee (IRC) is implementing Education Cannot Wait (ECW) in the selected districts of Awaraan, Nasirabad, Jaffarabad and Sohbatpur in Balochistan; Jacobabad, Kashmore, Sanghar, Umerkot in Sindh; and D. I. Khan, Nowshera, Swat in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The overall objective of the project is to support 41,680 children, who have dropped out of school after the unfortunate floods of 2022 or have never attended school. ACTED and IRC, able to support 51,940 children in the worst-affected districts, provided them with quality education, provision of teaching resources and materials, Mental Health and Psycho-social Support and gainful life skill training to enable their smooth transition to mainstream schools.

Additionally, UNICEF, overall objective is to support 40,800 children in Dadu, Khairpur, Naushahro Feroze districts of Sindh, Rajanpur and Dera Ghazi Khan districts in Punjab, and Kachhi, Jaffarabad, Jhal Magshi, Lasbela, Khuzdar, Nasirabad, and Sohbatpur districts in Balochistan. UNICEF, along with its implementing partners such as the Indus Resource Center in Sindh, the School Education Department in Balochistan, and the Sanj Preet Organization in Punjab, has successfully provided learning opportunities to 48,115 children.

To celebrate the achievements and share learnings, ACTED in collaboration with Education Sector Working Group (ESWG), organized ECW Learning Conference Event with its partners and stakeholders. The event took place on Tuesday, January 30, 2024, at Serena Hotel, Islamabad. All the key stakeholders from the education sector from across the country participated actively in the event marked by interactive sessions. List of participants and departments is annexed.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/schools-more-2-million-children-pakistan-remain-inaccessible-due-devastating-floods>

Participants at the conference included the representatives of the Federal Ministry of Education and Professional training, Education Sector Working Group members, larger civil society and INGOs working in education sector. Education secretaries from all the four provinces contributed during the panel discussions highlighting the need for more of such projects and also scaling up the project to respond to areas where there are still many damaged and nonoperational schools.

The Chief Guest, Deputy Secretary International Cooperation, Ms. Sumaira Muneeb expressed that ECW has made a significant change in the flood affected areas. The improved data is an evidence that a large number of children have been brought back to school as a result of ECW program effort. Therefore, such well-coordinated efforts should continue in future as the need is much larger than the scale of intervention.

All the provincial education directors present at the event committed to full support and assistance in terms of providing updated data to the agencies and organizations implementing such projects to ensure success. Moreover, Acted and UNICEF team presented the data highlighting the over achievements of the targets and lesson learned that can be used for future programming and successful interventions.

Conference pictures can be visited on [link](#)



## Conference Highlights:

A structured and well thought agenda was developed in close coordination with Education Sector Working Group and ECW grantee UNICEF, ensuring representation of all the key stakeholders and participation from larger audience comprising government official, NGOs representatives and Civil Society members.

### 1. Welcome Note:

The event began with a warm welcome by Acted Country Director, Sarfraz Laldin, setting the tone for a significant and informative series of interactive sessions that followed. He thanked all the esteemed guests from the Federal Education Ministry, Provincial Government Education Department, CSO and INGOs.

Sarfraz presented Acted's strategy of humanitarian response, worldwide. He appreciated all the government departments across the provinces, how they supported while sharing updated data that highlighted the needs and demands from the flood affected areas, which helped Acted in timely and effective response.



### Overview of FER:

To give the background information about the conception of FER 2022 in Pakistan, the process of its development and the role of the ministry and the provincial government education departments, Ehsanullah, Education Coordinator, UNICEF, presented slides explaining the collaborative and



## ECW –FER Development Process Roles and Responsibilities

<b>EiE Sector Working Group (ESWG)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Facilitated the development process</li><li>Liaison with all the stakeholders (at Federal and Provincial level)</li><li>Ensures open communication</li></ul>
<b>Strategic Advisory / Steering Committee Group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provides technical contributions regarding programme design</li><li>Defines the scope and focus of the FER</li><li>Continuously provides strategic advice</li></ul>
<b>Grantees Selection Committee</b>	<p>Comprised of independent stakeholders that review applications and select grantees</p>



competitive process from the conception of the project to its design and implementation phase. He also shared the response priorities and target population through the following presentations:

**Target Population and Programme Focus**

- Up to US\$ 5 million available
- Minimize interruption to learning
- Girls and boys including adolescents most affected by flooding
- Need based approach based on humanitarian data prioritized geographical location

### Interventions

**Pakistan 2022 Response Plan Priority Activities**

- Establishment of TLC/alternate learning modalities in flood-affected districts, including second shift schooling and distance learning education
- Teaching/learning materials
- Dewatering, cleaning and disinfection of schools
- Training of teachers on MHPSS, multigrade teaching and teaching in emergencies
- Training and mobilization of SMCs on MHPSS, safe reopening and functioning of schools.
- Cross sectoral arrangements with WASH, Child Protection and Health Clusters for water, latrines, PSS, child protection, nutrition, and health and hygiene

**Convergence with ECW standards**

**Gender responsive and accessible (disability inclusive) interventions**

**Recommended ECW interventions**

- Gender and disability -
- Mechanisms to address school-related gender-based violence, and GBV risk mitigation measures in/around schools
- Interventions to promote teacher wellbeing & teacher's MHPSS
- Early learning and play-based interventions
- Working with other sectors or clusters – GBV, Gender WG

### 3. Projects Overview:

A detailed overview of the ECW-funded project was presented by Sadia Hussain, Team Lead Education and Protection at Acted, outlining the geographical coverage, scope and objectives of the project. She further highlighted the vision and mission of Acted, globally as well as in Pakistan by presenting its 3-Zero Strategy and interventions in Pakistan. Sadia also shared the larger education portfolio of Acted across Pakistan that has synergies with the ECW program.

**ACTED**

We want a 3Zero World:

**ZERO EXCLUSION  
ZERO CARBON  
ZERO POVERTY**

We need to think local and act global to achieve greater impact for a 3Zero world.



Later Sagheer Ahmed from UNICEF Balochistan explained the three key outcome of the project using the following slide:

#### 4. FER Lesson Learned, Challenges Presentation

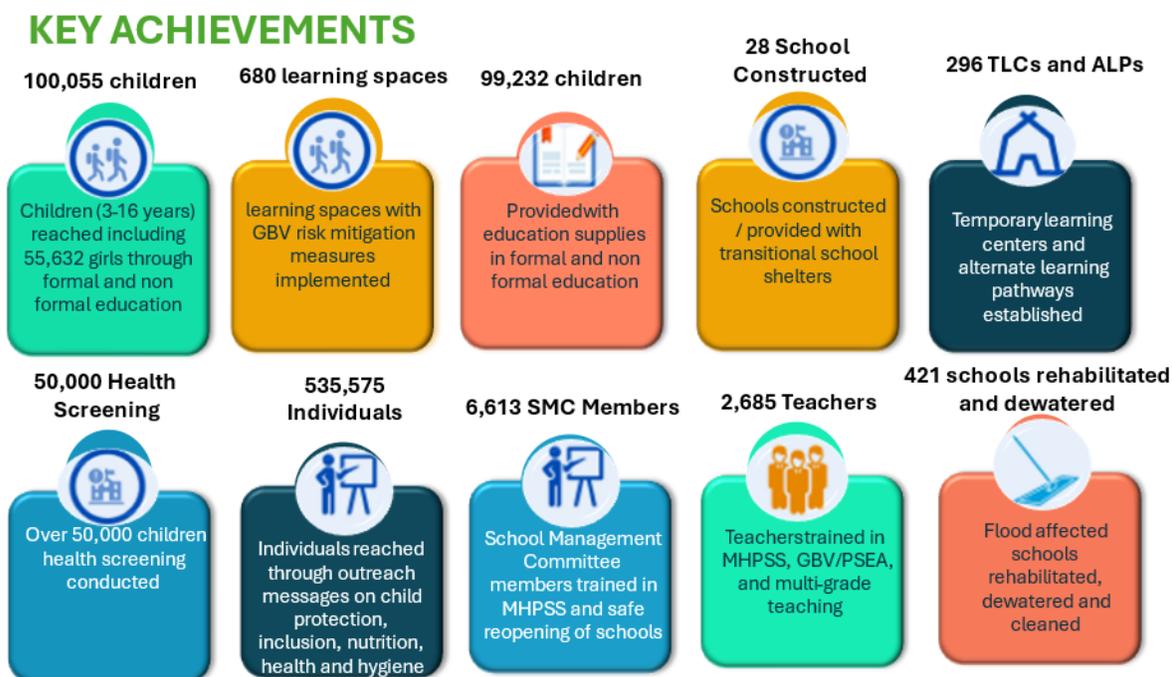
Insight into the First Emergency Response 2022 project was presented by Muhammad Akram, Education Officer from UNICEF Sindh, emphasizing key achievements, challenges faced, and lessons learned.

The joint presentation included the highlights of challenges and lessons learned from the impact of integration of WASH, health screening, disability and inclusion, community engagement into the project and the buy-in from the government stakeholders and the Ministry.



#### Key Achievements:

The First Emergency Response 2022 project achieved significant milestones, reaching 100,055 children (3-16 years) including 55,632 girls. Education supplies were provided to 99,232 children and teachers, 680 learning spaces with GBV risk mitigation measures implemented, while 28 schools were constructed or provided with transitional shelters, 258 schools were rehabilitated, and 163 schools were dewatered, cleaned and



disinfected. Additionally, 296 temporary learning centers, alternate learning pathways were established, and over 50,000 children underwent health screenings.

**Challenges Faced:** Several challenges were encountered during the project, including supply and demand gaps, limited funding, accessibility issues, delays in obtaining necessary approvals, inflation, non-availability of local teachers, retention of learners, and health and hygiene concerns in remote and rural schools.



## Challenges

- **Supply and Demand Gap:** The scale of damaged schools (30K+) either fully damaged (8K+) and partially damaged (21K+) across the country is extremely large and requires additional funding
- **Accessibility (Delay in validation of fully/damaged schools due to access issues)**
- **Delays in securing No Objection Certificate (NOC)**
- **Inflation**
- **Non availability of local teacher, particularly female teachers in remote locations. Mobility issue of non-local female teachers**
- **Missing facilities**
- **Retention of learner**
- **Health and hygiene issues in remote rural schools.**
- **Bridging the gap for learning loss**
- **Limited focus and resources on wellbeing, protection and safety**

### Key Lessons Learned:

The conference highlighted key lessons learned, emphasizing the importance of early preparedness and response, community engagement, collaborative partnerships, continuous monitoring and evaluation, inclusive design, infrastructure resilience, coordination, communication, and integration of gender, protection, and inclusivity.

### Key Lessons Learnt



### Key Lessons Learnt



## 5. Virtual Tour/ Live Tour of Learning Centers in Remote Areas of Sindh

An innovative virtual tour showcased learning centers in remote areas, providing a live glimpse into the activities, resources, and engagements with learners, teachers, and the community.

The virtual tour effectively conveyed the positive impact of the First Emergency Response

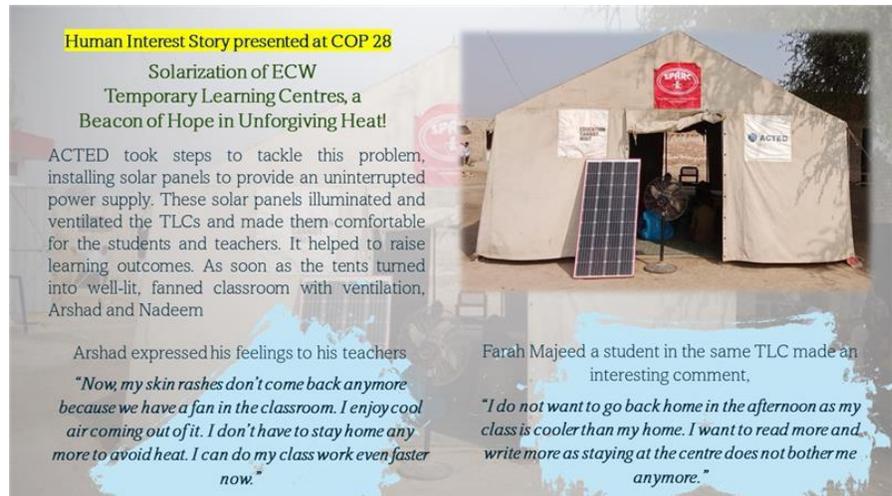
2022 project regarding the learning centers in remote areas. It highlighted the collaborative efforts of ACTED and its implementing partner in Sindh, Sami Foundation, providing a comprehensive view of improved educational facilities, engaged communities, and transformed learning experiences.

During the virtual tour of learning centers in remote areas, conducted by the Senior Education Advisor of Acted, Ms. Sadia Adeb, conference participants were treated with a unique firsthand experience of the activities, materials, and engagements taking place. The innovative concept showcased the impact of the project on learners, teachers, and the community in a live setting.

Teachers shared their experiences, emphasizing the effectiveness of training in multigrade classroom teaching. Teacher expressed how this training made them more adept at handling multigrade classes, incorporating knowledge about classroom management and the use of low-cost materials to enhance the quality of education.

The Chairman of the School Management Committee (SMC) expressed gratitude to ACTED and Sami Foundation for their cooperation, highlighting the improvements witnessed in running the centers. A once-closed school building now hosts a large tent class, creating an environment where children come regularly and actively engage in their studies. A parent from the SMC shared their journey, expressing thanks for the opportunity for their younger children to receive education in the village, eliminating the need to send them to other cities to get the education. He expressed,

*"I never thought that my children would go back to school when our village was totally destroyed in the flood and the school was totally damaged. I feel so happy now that our children are back to school and learning."*



A TLC teacher further highlighted the additional amenities provided by the project including swings for recreational purposes. Joyful scenes of children playing on the swings were shared, emphasizing the importance of such facilities for their physical and mental well-being. Safety measures, including soft soil around the swings and regular checks were noted to prioritize children's safety.

The project's contribution to building a washroom was acknowledged as a significant factor in the increased enrollment at the school. The facility not only addressed hygiene concerns but also played a role in making education more accessible to the community.

## 6. Panel Discussion:



Education Resilience & Inclusion Experts engaged in a dynamic dialogue, addressed the key aspects of post-flood, needs, challenges and mitigation strategies employed in the ECW project. **Samina Altaf, Director of Education from KP S & E Education Dept**, highlighted provincial strategies for children unable to return to damaged schools. Insights from KP's flood response were shared, emphasizing transferable success stories for other provinces. The discussion encompassed post-flood educational strategies, disability inclusion, disaster risk reduction, and community motivation.

During the panel discussion, Disability Expert **Munazza Gillani, the Country Director Sightsavers Pakistan** emphasized the heightened importance of attending to children with disabilities in emergencies. She addressed the challenges of ensuring disability inclusion in extremely poor communities where infrastructure and cultural norms may not be supportive. Gillani also highlighted the significance of recently collected learners with disability data in the Annual School Census (ASC) and its potential impact on future decision-making processes.

**Abdul Khaliq, Chief Planning Officer from Balochistan Education Department,** discussed integrating disaster risk reduction (DRR) into the curriculum and teachers training to raise student awareness. He shared insights into the current stage of this initiative. Additionally, he addressed teacher preparedness for future emergencies, drawing lessons from the recent flood devastation in Balochistan, with a focus on improving responses in emergency.

**Dr. Ubaidullah, Secretary of School Education in South Punjab,** highlighted the region's readiness for future flood emergencies based on lessons from 2022. The discussion also included assessing damage, addressing reconstruction, and implementing strategies to motivate communities, especially girls, to return to education post-2022 floods.

**Sehr Qizilbash** directed the conversation towards gender mainstreaming in Education in Emergencies (EIE), emphasizing the lessons learned from integrating Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) as a cross-cutting theme in First Emergency Response (FER).

### **Recommendations from Panel Discussion**

The panel discussion provided a comprehensive exploration of crucial topics related to education resilience and inclusion in the context of post-flood challenges.

The insights and recommendations shared by the panelists contributed to a deeper understanding of the strategies and considerations required for effective education responses in emergencies. The key recommendations from the expert panelists included:

- Address the disconnect between special education and mainstream education.
- More focus on disability and inclusion during the emergency response as children with disability are more affected during any disaster.
- The annual school census 2023 data on children with disability is a breakthrough in informing education practitioners for designing inclusive programs.
- Extension of project activities so that gender gap and demand-supply gap could be further reduced.
- Need for not ignoring mandatory school safety program.
- Need for investing into teachers' capacity building.
- Focusing more on training students for climate and disaster resilience and response.
- ECW project should continue for at least one more year as the devastation for much bigger than the response. Many schools are still fully damaged and a large number of children are still out of school.
- ECW should be used as Best Practice of interdepartmental and interagency coordination to inform future programming.

- There should be a mechanism for sharing provincial experiences of good practices during flood response.



## 7. ECW Documentary Screening:

The conference featured a compelling documentary, providing a visual journey that effectively portrayed the impactful field activities of the project. The footage showcased the fresh and happy faces of learners, vividly reflecting the active involvement of the community, teachers, and learners in the project's activities. This visual representation underscored the positive effects and engagement fostered by the initiative. The full documentary is available on the following Acted YouTube channel:

[Education Cannot Wait - First Emergency Response in Pakistan | Acted \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

8.



### Keynote Speeches:

The keynote speech was delivered by the Head of Reform Support Unit of Sindh, Mr. Junaid Samo. Being the custodian of data, he highlighted the need of maintaining correct data and how this evidence-based data serves in responding to the emergency situations.

We at RSU maintaining all the intervention data of flood response in schools. This is helping the province and monitoring and helping the interagency coordination.

*Mr. Junaid Samo, Head of Reform Support Unit of Sindh*



### 10. Representation-ECW Geneva:

The event connected with the ECW Secretariat in Geneva through live video call which was represented by Robert Edward Dutton, Emergency Manager. Edward highlighted the importance of education on a global scale, reinforcing the significance of international as well as local collaboration in addressing educational challenges.



Robert Edward Dutton, Emergency Manager, ECW Geneva Office, speaking through video link at the event.

## 11. Closing Remarks by Chief Guest:

Ms. Sumaira Muneeb, the Deputy Secretary, International cooperation at the Federal Ministry of Education and Professional Training was invited as the Chief Guest at the event. Ms. Sumaira is well aware of ECW project from its inception till its successful implementation. She shared how the Ministry supported in designing this effective program right after the floods of 2022. She expressed that the main success of the program is because of the full ownership of the government. She also stated that the ECW Steering Committee and the working group played a key role in continuous monitoring of the program and its results that helped the implementing agencies achieve not only the set targets but in some areas they over-achieved in terms of children supported. She informed the audience that the need is still huge as the impact of floods was so intense that there is a large number of schools that are still damaged and not operational. Thus, such initiatives should continue to serve the out of school children.



“Data of out of school children has significantly improved through this ECW project. It targeted the children who dropped out of school due to floods of 2022. The data is showing that a large number of those children are now back to schools which is a big achievement.”

*Ms. Sumaira Muneeb, Deputy Secretary, International Cooperation, Mistry of Federal Education and Professional training.*

## 12. Thank You Note:

The conference concluded with gratitude, acknowledging the collective efforts and contributions that made the project successful, by Jeanne Frechede. Jeanne, the Program development Manager at Acted, thanked the Ministry, the government educational departments and the other esteemed gusts from the UN, CSO and INGOs for their active participation and contribution to the event. She assured the stakeholders that all the feedback gathered from the participants will feed into program designing for education projects at Acted.



## Conclusion:

The ECW Closing Learning Conference served as a platform to share insights, challenges, and successes of the First Emergency Response 2022 project. It brought together diverse perspectives, fostering collaboration and understanding to address the educational needs of flood-affected regions in Pakistan.

## Annexure 1. Agenda of the Event

<b>Registration / Meet &amp; Greet with Morning Tea</b>		10:00-10:30
Welcome Note and Opening Remarks	Sarfraz Laldin, Country Director Acted	10:30-10:40
Overview of ECW- FER 2022	Ehsanullah, Education Coordinator-ESWG-UNICEF	10:40-10:50
Key Achievements-ECW-FER by Acted and UNICEF	Sadia Hussain, Team Lead Education and Protection-Acted  Sagheer Ahmad, Education Officer, Balochistan	10:50-11:05
Lesson Learnt from ECW-FER by Acted and UNICEF	Muhammad Akram, Education Officer, UNICEF	11:05-11:15
Virtual Tour of Project Sites	Sadia Adeeb, Teaching and Learning Advisor-Acted	11:15-11:25
Panel Discussion by Education Resilience and Inclusion Experts	Moderator: Sadia Hussain, Team Lead Education and Protection- Acted	11:25-12:00
Open Q&A session	Audience Moderator: Uzma Turan, Digital Learning Expert	12:00-12:30
<b>ECW- FER Documentary Screening by Acted</b>		12:30- 12:40
ECW Secretariat Remarks	Robert Edward Dutton, Emergency Manager, ECW Geneva Office	12:40-12:50
Keynote Speeches	Keynote Speakers	12:50-1:15
<b>ECW-FER Documentary Screening by UNICEF</b>		1:15-1:20
Closing Remarks by Chief Guest	Federal Ministry	1:20-1:30
<b>Lunch</b>		1:30