

## Lighting a Path in Pakistan

*Innovations Case Narrative:*  
Bareeze and CARE Foundation Pakistan

*Hold high the torch!  
You did not light its glow—  
’Twas given you by other hands, you know.  
’Tis yours to keep it burning bright,  
Yours to pass on.  
For there are other feet we must guide,  
And other forms go marching by our side;  
Their eyes are watching every smile and tear  
And efforts which we think are not worthwhile,  
Are sometimes just the very helps they need,  
Actions to which their souls would give most heed;  
So that in turn they’ll hold it high and say  
“I watched someone else carry it this way.”  
Hold high the torch!  
You did not light its glow—  
’Twas given you by other hands, you know.  
I think it started down its pathway bright,  
The day the Maker said: “Let there be light.”*

Being an entrepreneur and an educator for the last 27 years, every time I have faced any obstacles in my path, these words have given me the motivation to continue. In both roles, I have sought to influence change through example, learning everything myself before teaching it to others, inculcating a constant drive to innovate, and a firm commitment to quality in every endeavor that I undertook. This has helped me establish a discipline that has allowed me to give adequate time to Bareeze and CARE, enabling both ventures to grow simultaneously.

Bareeze began as a personal challenge, even a dare, to make an absolutely Pakistani product that could meet the world’s highest standards of quality. In 1985,

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*Seema Aziz is the Founder and CEO of Bareeze and the Founder and Chairwoman of the CARE Foundation.*

my brother and I, using modest resources, started Bareeze in a basement in a market area in Lahore. Now, 27 years on, the retail network of Bareeze has expanded into one of Pakistan's largest retail chains, with a presence throughout Pakistan and in several other countries through over 400 points of sale and a team of over 5,000 employees. Almost simultaneously with my efforts to help build the family of garment and textile brands, I have sought to provide quality marketable education to the young people of Pakistan through the welfare foundation I established in 1988: CARE Foundation. CARE started with one school and now operates 225 free schools, educating 160,000 of the nation's children. We train all of our schools' teachers, and ensure that the highest standards of education are met in each one of our schools. The joy of creation and a strong impulse to serve those in need drives me today, as it did when we began.

#### “MADE IN PAKISTAN”: THE BUSINESS FROM 1985 TO THE PRESENT

When I decided to start Bareeze with my brother, everyone laughed at the idea. People thought we were crazy to believe that we could produce a high-quality product in Pakistan. However, we were young enough and crazy enough to think that we could do it. The first woman in my family to go into business, I did not even have a business background or an education in textiles and design; however, the motivation to make world-class embroidered fabrics drove me to start Bareeze 27 years ago with my brother.

At the time, expensive textiles in Pakistan were mostly foreign products, since the fabrics produced in the country were not comparable in terms of quality and design. My father had set up an embroidery unit with two Swiss embroidery machines, like those used around the world to produce Swiss and Austrian embroidery of the highest quality. Over a hundred such machines were in use in Pakistan, but still the product they were sending to the market was low quality and did not compare to those produced elsewhere in the world. It hit me that the same machines could be used to produce high-quality fabric in Pakistan. After all, the Swiss and the Austrians were using them to produce amazing products. Quality is not entirely determined by the machines; the people standing behind them matter more. We tweaked the machines and ensured that the people operating them were trained to be efficient and to do quality work, spent about eight months on product design, and spent our own money for it to be manufactured.

The idea immediately encountered critics. People said a high-quality product could not be produced in Pakistan, and we were sure to fail. The fabric of Bareeze proved the critics wrong. We ensured that each stage of production would be carried out immaculately. From choosing and creating the right quality of pure cotton cloth to quality thread and the detail of embroidery, each process was monitored and evaluated. For quality dyeing, we had to find a vendor and train him so that he would conform to our standards. None of the small dyeing units that we could afford at the time could fathom the idea that we actually wanted colors that would not bleed or fade on the first wash. That created an additional problem: - our prod-

uct was too expensive. Quality, however, is expensive; we paid more per yard just for dyeing than it would cost to buy dyed cloth.

We had overcome one obstacle but still had to find a way to sell our fabric to the Pakistani customer. We got offers for our entire stock, which the buyers would then have stamped with “Made in France” or “Made in England” and sell locally as imported goods. Instead, we stamped “Made in Pakistan” on each yard of our fabric. We preferred to have our fabric sit in stores than to sell it under another name.

Taking a leap of faith, we bought a shop in the basement of the Shadman Market, a foreign fabric market where all the smuggled products turn up. Women went there to buy fabrics, whether smuggled, imported, or local, so it was the best place for a new brand to be introduced. We designed the store to fit our product line: elegant and functional, with straight clean lines and nothing over the top. This design stood out in the crowded market and attracted customers to the “unique” store. We quickly developed a reputation as the shop that sold fabric that we

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imported but called Pakistani. Everyone who walked in would not believe that we had made it ourselves, in Pakistan. I had to show them the designs and carefully explain the process before they would believe it was Pakistani. Then they would exclaim, “Oh! Then it’s too expensive!” They were willing to pay any price for foreign manufactured fabric but were reluctant to pay for Pakistani products of the same quality. People do not understand that it is expensive to produce quality. Using the right dyes, the right fabric, and the right embroidery makes a product expensive. Not to mention the added cost of 100 percent quality checking at every stage of production.

The business grew quickly. At the end of 1985, after only six months, we opened the second Bareeze shop in Karachi. It followed our visit to a trade exhibition in Karachi where Bareeze met with a great response and we sold out our entire stock on the first day. Everyone who walked in appreciated our fabrics and many women thanked us for giving them pure cotton to wear. The climate in Pakistan makes synthetic fiber unbearable. But in the 1980s, cotton was not considered fancy enough for party or evening wear. Women preferred “American Georgettes” and Chiffons, which were all polyester mixes. Since imported goods dominated the market, no one had tailored their product to fit the climate and needs of the Pakistani consumer. Bareeze started as a pure cotton enterprise to do just that. We

developed beautifully embroidered cotton fabric that took the market by storm, and today we are credited with establishing cotton as suitable for chic party wear.

After our shop in Karachi, we had to maintain our momentum. At the time, the concept of a chain or brand did not exist in Pakistan. Business owners would sit in their own shops and sell the products themselves. We had always employed and trained staff to run our stores, and with our third and fourth stores, we had completely broken away from the traditional business model; we started the concept of franchising with our store in Rawalpindi. We quickly created another store in Lahore and then Islamabad, and by then we were on our way to becoming the

first textile chain in the country. To manage our brand in partnership operations, all our stores, whether company owned or franchised, look exactly the same. Additionally, we created standard rules of operation for how the franchisees should work, operate, and sell the product, including the look of the store and how they would hire and pay the employees. At first, people did not always want to go by these rules, and we had to manage many franchises ourselves. We found it much easier to allow franchisees to simply invest in a shop while we managed the systems and ran the stores. And with the popularity

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of the product, as we opened one store after another, a very strong and positive brand awareness was created within Pakistan, with Bareeze becoming a household name.

We were the first company in Pakistan to stand behind our brand completely. Being a pioneer in many ways, Bareeze has influenced change through example; succeeding as a brand by empowering the customer, and providing them with the best quality and awareness of their rights. Customers have always received the utmost respect and care from us and we listen to their complaints until they feel completely satisfied, taking back any defective fabric immediately and ensuring that the defects are analyzed and do not occur again. The first fabric brand in the country and now the largest retail chain, standing behind our product was absolutely a pioneering concept that has enabled us to come this far.

As our popularity grew, it felt natural to expand our chain internationally. We opened a store in Dubai, the first Pakistani brand to do so, and received an overwhelmingly positive response from the market. We went on to open stores in Abu

Dhabi and Sharjah, and we now have six stores in the Middle East. Eventually we opened a store in Malaysia and three in the United Kingdom. We were conservative with our growth in the early years. We believed in buying every store instead of renting them, and expanded our business entirely by reinvesting profits. However, as the business has grown, we have become more confident and liberal in our approach.

In a further quest for quality, ten years ago we set up a dyeing and finishing unit to ensure the quality and finish of our product. Since we no longer outsource these processes, we can directly monitor them, and this has made a huge difference to the quality that we can produce. The unit has made a name for itself in the market, doing work for local and international buyers apart from our own product lines.

We evolved from a pure fabric brand to a ready-to-wear brand in 1994 with the introduction of Leisure Club, a casual ready-to-wear line for children from ages 4 to 15. The brand was an immediate success with both boys and girls. Over the years, the garment industry and consumer market in Pakistan have evolved, creating demand for other kinds of apparel and textiles. Bareeze has led these changes, raising people's desires through constant innovation and introducing exciting new concepts in Pakistan's market through several other brands, all made in Pakistan and all of unmatched quality. Soon after Leisure Club, we started Minnie Minors, a line of clothing for children from infants to age five; it has allowed us to expand into manufacturing a line of soft toys. Our Mom 2 Be brand is the first in Pakistan to market and produce maternity clothes for the expectant mother. We also expanded our apparel line to include Chinyere, the largest chain of designer wear in Pakistan, which provides prêt-a-porter, casual, formal couture, and bridal wear collections. Urban Culture offers casual western wear for youth, while Working Woman caters to women looking for professional apparel, and Kayseria provides designer printed fabrics. Bareeze has also diversified into home furnishings through Home Expressions. Bareeze Man was recently added to cater to the needs of young men. This past summer, we added Rang Ja to the family of apparel brands, showcasing clothes inspired by rich colors and youthful cuts, combining traditional Pakistani craft with Western cuts.

These new brands, as well as our new dyeing unit and our expanded manufacturing capabilities within our embroidery mills, have helped us to stay competitive and to grow in the Pakistani and international market. At present, we have 400 points of sale around the world. Market needs are always evolving, and we like to be one step ahead of the trends so that we don't just follow but create them. Our growth continues through innovation and an absolute commitment to quality—to always provide the best to our customer.

#### BAREEZE MODEL: MICROENTREPRENEURSHIP

Sefam, Bareeze's parent company, has always pursued socially conscious brands that produce high-quality goods and use local resources. Therefore, we have tried

## Rukhsana Rasheed

Rukhsana Rasheed is one such woman. When she was only 16, her father died and she took on responsibility for her entire household, postponing her education to earn money for her family. She spent a year looking for work, to no avail, because she had no education or skills. Then a woman from her neighborhood brought her to the office and we entered her in a program that would teach her to embroider. At her age, suddenly thrown into a factory environment, she found the experience daunting and nearly gave up. But her supervisor encouraged and mentored her through her training period. She started work as a helper, completed her studies on the side, and then joined the smocking department. There she learned how to smock dresses and started to take work home with her. Now she manages the department. The team that she leads goes into neighborhoods and finds women who want to do this work; they then train them and give them work to take home. This approach works because many women cannot leave their homes to look for work; even if they can, they don't know where to look. With us, they receive training and can earn a living. The women start with a couple of dresses each week; as they develop their skill, they take on more work and find more women who can share it with them. Rukhsana's sister is in school and takes on weekly work to support her education. Her brother finished college and works in the IT department at Sefam.

Through the program, 50 other women have started their own small businesses. They take work from the company each week and distribute it among women in their neighborhoods.

Bushra Ashraf is another such woman. Divorced from her husband, she lives with her parents, children, and two younger sisters. She took on embroidery work from her neighbors and sewed their clothes to make a living, but still did not have enough money to run her household. Then she found out about Sefam, came to the company, and learned the trade. She taught her sisters and three other girls from her neighborhood how to smock, and they started to take on bigger and bigger orders from Sefam. Currently she finishes 20 sets per week, or about 180 dresses.

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our best to support and develop the skills of people working with us every step of the way. Our promotion of entrepreneurship among our vendors best expresses this intention, as we help our partners create more jobs in their field. We also actively seek other vendors who can grow their ventures, and provide them with the technical and financial help they need to do so.

A core philosophy behind the company is to produce locally and develop and train local talent. Frameworks that support entrepreneurs, like microenterprise and social enterprise models, help to build capacity and generate job growth. With our brands, we have always tried to stimulate the local market. Despite the fact that it is cheaper to outsource some of our production to neighboring countries, we



keep production local. At first we provided work to women in underdeveloped areas. We would advertise and train women and then give them work to take home. As they became skilled, we would give more work so that they could train more women, and thus the work expanded. When we first started making dresses for little girls, for example, I wanted to make smocked frocks, but to my horror I found out that there was no trained workforce to do this on a large scale. So we trained women to meet our production needs. Over time, we developed a whole team and established a separate department for them.

Sefam has maintained its commitment to community growth and development since its inception. We actively go into communities to look for workers; word of mouth brings many people seeking help in developing their businesses. Through the ups and downs of the world economy, Sefam has done very well. We never compromise on quality and all our production is done by local workers. When I started the first brand under Sefam, no one believed that a local Pakistani company could produce such quality. But, by encouraging and developing microenterprise ventures, we have created more jobs.

However, I still believe that only education can solve all the problems of unemployment. Every person who has worked with us indicates that his or her child's education is their number one priority. They know that only through education can their child become a productive member of the global community.

PROVIDING QUALITY EDUCATION:  
CARE FOUNDATION, 1988 TO PRESENT

In a country with illiteracy rates as high as 69.4 percent for women and 40.2 percent for men, people have few opportunities to escape the spiral of poverty and unemployment. The picture grows darker when one learns that "literacy" is defined as a person's ability to sign his or her name. This means that even many in the "literate" population do not actually have an education that will enable them to get a job or be productive members of society. I first realized that only education can empower the underprivileged and marginalized segments of society, and provide a solution to most problems facing Pakistan today, when I entered the Sheikhpura district of Pakistan to help the victims of the terrible flood of the Ravi and Chenab rivers. Some friends and I borrowed a jeep and went through the water to deliver food, water, and medicine to those most affected by the catastrophe. In one area where hundreds had lost their homes, we committed to an effort to rebuild and collected money to assist in reconstructing 75 homes.

On my visits to Sheikhpura to oversee the construction work, I felt like the Pied Piper; a trail of half-naked children, with runny noses and matted hair, followed me everywhere. The children were always covered in dirt since the entire area, just 15 miles outside of the cultural capital of Pakistan, Lahore, had no running water or electricity. I asked the women, "Why do they follow me around?" "What should they do?" "Why don't they go to school?" Their reply shocked me. "There is no school" they told me. I asked them whether they would want a school

to be constructed there. They all replied in the affirmative, going as far as to tell me to stop construction on the homes if need be and construct the school. It made me realize how desperately keen everyone was to somehow create a better life for their children. I realized that the floods could come again and could knock down the houses we built. Each time that happened, these affected communities would have to rely on someone like me to help them rebuild. But besides the resources, what made us different from one another? My education had empowered me, and that made all the difference. If the people from these communities were educated, they would not need me to champion their cause, they could themselves work for their

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rights. The realization hit that these people would be helpless once again unless they possessed what no flood could take away from them: education. The people could help themselves and improve their lives if only they had the education to do so.

I knew I had to build a school there. When I floated the idea, I met with opposition. Statistics on the hundreds of government school buildings standing empty were shown to me to prove the point that the poor did

not want an education. At that time—and I am sure this attitude persists today—many had bought into the belief that the poor do not want to study or achieve. But I knew they wanted an education. To deprive them of an education meant failing to provide them with a basic right. I have never met anyone who does not love their children as we all do, or does not share the same dreams for their success and welfare. But differences in opportunity lead to the differences in outcomes and livelihoods.

I asked family and friends for contributions. Fortunately, I managed to get the money together, convinced a donor to donate land, and we built a school. In January 1991, when CARE 1 opened its doors, 250 students were standing outside and they enrolled eagerly on the very first day. The same children with the runny noses and matted hair were lined up for a chance to a better life. The concept of equality of opportunity drove us from the beginning. After working in the community for months, I had realized with absolute clarity that education was the only equalizer that would provide them with the ability to stand on their own feet. However, for it to be a true equalizer, it has to be an equal education. Pakistan has a two-language system, and access to English creates divisions between economic classes, with the less privileged not having access to an English medium education.



I was determined to give these children an equal education, just like I had when I grew up. To make things more difficult, 95 percent of the population was completely illiterate. Another obstacle was finding qualified teachers to teach in the area. Getting teachers from Lahore was not an economically viable option. We advertised, set minimum criteria, and started accepting applications from the area. After recruiting, we trained the teachers ourselves, a practice that we follow to this day. The children came in all sizes and ages, so we had to make special arrangements for the older children, who moved through the material much more quickly and learned much faster. After six months of hard work from everyone at the school, the children began to do really well. When we first started the school, we had to provide the students with clean uniforms, and every morning we did a basic lesson on teaching hygiene and cleanliness rules to get the students washed, combed, and ready for school. Within six months, the children had picked up the routine and become neat and clean. They were completely changed students, enthusiastically participating in all school activities.

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Word spread that there was a school where education was happening, real education, and the next year, we enrolled 450 children. The year after that, 850. We were falling over ourselves to add to the infrastructure to accommodate the huge flow of students to build more rooms. By the fourth year, we had to start a second shift to accommodate the flood of children. Things went very well; within five years, the first group of students took the graduation exam and got a 100 percent result. By then we had another piece of donated land, ten miles on, and built our second school. The process was much easier, thanks to our experience with the first school. We picked the best three of the best teachers and administrators from the first school and sent them to work on the second one to hire and train the new staff. The most talented people from the first school were picked and sent to work on the second one. Soon after, we did much the same thing to create a third school, 50 miles away in Muridke Narowal, a very underserved rural area.

In 1995, the parents of some of the girls who had graduated from CARE 1 suggested we build a college. I resisted, thinking that the school was what I had set out to do. I asked the parents to send their children to another college nearby. They, however, insisted that CARE provide college education, as there were no other colleges in the area and the girls could not go to the city. We were already successfully running the three CARE schools at the time, however, and the students needed to study more. Having started a process, we had to let the students continue to suc-

ceed, so we built a college. With that, we offered 12 full years of school for students who previously had no access to any educational opportunities. By then we knew that this experiment had become hugely successful. So far, CARE has opened 16 purpose-built schools with excellent educational facilities in the rural areas around Lahore, Gujranwala, Sargodha, Kasur, Dera Ismail Khan, and Sheikhpura.

In Pakistan, however, you cannot educate a few thousand children and think you have accomplished anything. At present, seven million children of primary school age are not in school. With every passing year, we are losing more children to the darkness of illiteracy. Thus, with the vision of reaching every child in Pakistan, we pioneered a model of public-private partnership in the education sector.

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Through this model, we adopt government schools and run them. In the first step, we provide all the infrastructural support that the school requires, ensuring that the building is up to our standards and that there are toilets, clean drinking water, labs, and a library available for the students. Most importantly, however, we put in our management system and teachers to supplement the existing teachers in the schools. Our management ensures proper monitoring and evaluation of the school to ensure that a

standard of education is maintained. As a result, dropout rates fall and children receive the education they deserve. The project is scalable, replicable and cost effective. Our graduates are doing really well. Nearly every year, our students get positions in the school leaving exams, and also get admissions into the best colleges in the country, and graduating from there with honors too.

The school adoption project started in 1998 when the government invited CARE to adopt some of the government-run schools in Lahore. The government of the time recognized that the government-run schools needed intervention. They had visited the CARE schools and knew the work that we were doing, educating between 3,500 and 4,000 children through our schools. The invitation involved bringing some of the government's schools under the foundation's management and control, so I went to visit the schools in question. What I saw horrified me. The schools were a mess: no drinking water, no lights or fans, no floors or ceilings, and heaps of garbage strewn about instead of furniture. Nearly all the children sat on the floor on little bags they had brought from home, dressed in their neat little uniforms as they waited for an education that would never happen. I agreed to take on ten of the 25 schools they had offered me, but under the condition that I could monitor the education and train the teachers myself. After months of negotiations, they complied, and on September 1, 1998, we entered, completely ready and with everyone trained.

CARE's Own Schools	Government-Adopted Schools	Government Non-Adopted Schools
<b>Enrolment Increase</b>	<b>Enrolment Increase</b>	<b>Enrolment Increase</b>
N/A	1100% in some cases, 240 % overall	43% over 10 years
<b>Dropout from Class 1 through to 10</b>	<b>Dropout from Class 1 through to 10</b>	<b>Dropout from Class 1 through to 10</b>
2.6 %	12.6 %	Varying figures, 96%
<b>Matriculation pass rate</b>	<b>Matriculation pass rate</b>	<b>Matriculation pass rate</b>
91%	80 %	60%

**Table 1.** Comparison of CARE and government figures in education

Resistance came from the teachers’ unions, which were surprised to see the motivation of CARE teachers and the quality of education we imparted. In a meeting called at the town hall, the union representatives claimed my young team had too little experience to tackle the longstanding issues of poor quality education and high dropout rates at the government schools. One union representative said that in his school of 300 children, 23 percent had passed the qualification exam—and he seemed quite proud of that figure. This appalled me: we had always shot for 100 percent graduation rates at our schools. Any objections that they raised, we handled professionally, never compromising on our standards and rules. They allowed us to continue, based on the results of CARE’s own schools. The government schools that we adopted showed marked improvement. Teachers started complying to our rules gradually and we continued with regular training to introduce new and improved teaching methodologies. Soon after, the government called me into the town hall again and acknowledged the great job we had done with the government schools we had adopted. Enrollment in some of the schools had gone up by over 100 percent. They offered me the chance to take over all the schools in Lahore. I had to refuse the offer because we lacked the money to support all the schools. However, I have gradually taken on more schools as the money has become available. Other than our own custom-built campuses, we have now adopted over 210 schools and have 146,000 children enrolled in them across Pakistan. Four government schools from Karachi became part of CARE earlier this year, and we are currently adopting more government schools from Faisalabad. The results from our

schools have been phenomenal and very encouraging. We have adopted ten schools that were closed down and nonfunctional. Today there are 700-800 students in each one of these schools. Our students consistently secure top places in the board examinations, with matriculation pass rates of 87 percent in science and 80 percent in arts, on average. One hundred of our schools run on double shifts to be able to accommodate twice the number of children. We realize that we still have a long way to go, but our work has made us realize that it really is doable.

CARE's public-private partnership can help us achieve our target of enrolling one million students within the next five years and can help solve the problems of the education system in Pakistan, being an easily replicable model proven to provide quality education to the masses at minimum cost.

We consider CARE teachers to be our biggest asset and the reason behind the tremendous success of CARE schools. Fifty percent of children who enroll in primary school in Pakistan drop out before class 5, mainly because schools lack qualified teachers who can keep children interested in their classes. At CARE Teacher Training Centre (TTC), established in 2001 at Shadman, Lahore, CARE trains its own teachers as well as government teachers in innovative and creative teaching methodologies, curriculum development, new class management techniques, and the introduction of supplementary lessons on health, hygiene, and the environment. In this country, rote learning has dominated the education system. CARE has changed that by training our teachers to encourage the students to think, speak, and question. The process of changing the mindsets of teachers takes time and consistent training. However, once the teachers see the response from the students, they themselves want to learn more. By training teachers, CARE has substantially reduced absenteeism and dropout rates. At present, CARE employs 2,200 teachers, with 1,750 of them placed in CARE's adopted government schools.

We want to provide every child with an honest and complete opportunity for gainful employment and a better living. Once our schools grew, we realized that many of our students couldn't continue because of lack of money. Therefore, we started the CARE Scholarship Program, providing financial support to academically brilliant students through their higher education in the leading universities of Pakistan, including University of Engineering and Technology, King Edward Medical University, Allama Iqbal Medical College, Government College University, and Kinnaird College. Over 800 students have benefited from the scholarship scheme so far. Our first student from a village school graduated from King Edward Medical College ten years ago, a school that is ranked the number two medical school in the country. He was soon followed by our first girls from the village schools.

As a further commitment to equality of opportunity and to be equal candidates in the marketplace, in 2004 CARE initiated a special English language development program called ACCESS. This two-year program prepares students to become fluent speakers of English, which significantly enhances their confidence and outlook and gives them much better mastery of the language. Moreover, it helps remove all linguistic barriers for students who could benefit from opportunities in

## **CARE Achievements**

225 Schools  
160,000 Students  
60,000 Graduates  
2,200 Teachers  
30 ACCESS to English Language Centers  
800 Scholarship Students  
Enterprise Development Centre  
Teacher Training Centre

higher education and jobs. Today ACCESS is a beacon of hope for many children and their parents. ACCESS students have acquired jobs in several multinational companies at very high salaries, thanks to their ability to communicate effectively. Currently, 30 ACCESS centers are operating successfully in CARE schools. It is a program that truly changes lives.

CARE has made a move toward self-sustainability through its CARE Crafts program. This is a small initiative, however, and we hope that it will grow in the future, providing more jobs to women from rural areas and supporting more schools. Once we started helping in the flood, affected regions in 1988, the area was faced with three major problems. First, there were no schools, second, women needed jobs, and third, dispensaries were required. We started a small industrial home in the school building that operated after school hours. We trained the women in stitching and embroidery. These women then made handicrafts with immaculate finesse for CARE Crafts, and we reinvested the revenue generated from the sale of each item into CARE. Uniquely, the CARE Crafts concept utilizes leftover materials from Bareeze that would otherwise go to waste, finding yet more value for its investment in materials. Over the years we have trained many women, despite the fact that industrial homes are no longer functioning.

Given the huge scope of CARE's operations, everyone asks me where I get the money to keep growing the foundation. Quite simply, people have realized the importance of quality education for all. Our project needed, and still needs, to grow bigger, and financial resources are the only obstacle to further growth. We would love to take on 100 more schools right now. We have the ability to do that, but it costs us roughly 450 rupees (US\$5) to educate one child each month. That equals over 9,000,000 rupees (\$100,000) a month for our entire operation. We can change the entire country with education, but we need more money to do that. Despite our efforts, literacy rates in Pakistan have declined, not because schools have collapsed but because the population has grown faster than anybody's ability to provide education. Only education can cure that population bomb. Even if we do nothing else but get every child into school, we could change everything.

After all these years, I am humbled to see the passion and drive of Pakistani people who want to succeed despite all the hardships and disasters Pakistan has

faced over the years. Their passion and resilience provides me with the motivation to continue my work, a work that I will continue until every last child is in school. Business and entrepreneurship are critically important for the growth of Pakistan. My experience in business has helped me provide avenues of growth to people. However, for the people of Pakistan to become entrepreneurs and start businesses, they need a solid education, and that is what we aim to do with CARE. We would like to empower people to become entrepreneurs, as entrepreneurs are the local agents of change who will bring sustainable change in Pakistan.

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## ANNEX. CARE GRADUATE STUDENTS' STORIES

### **Muhammad Ali**

Ali completed his matriculation from CARE-Adopted Government Islamia Boys High School, Misri Shah, Lahore, in 2009. He went on to do his FSc, and is now pursuing his BS in mass communication from the Virtual University. It was in his final year of matric that Ali joined CARE's ACCESS-to-English program at Sheranwala Centre. ACCESS is a two-year program that focuses on English language development in a holistic setting: children learn English, computer skills, sciences, history, geography; participate in debates, drama, and much more. After graduating from this program, Ali had the confidence and skills to pursue higher studies and a career. After completing his studies, Ali joined CARE's ACCESS program as a teaching assistant, where he worked for a year. He also earned a little income through home tutoring. Things looked up when Ali landed a job as a telesales representative at Ovex Technologies, where he has now been working for the last ten months.



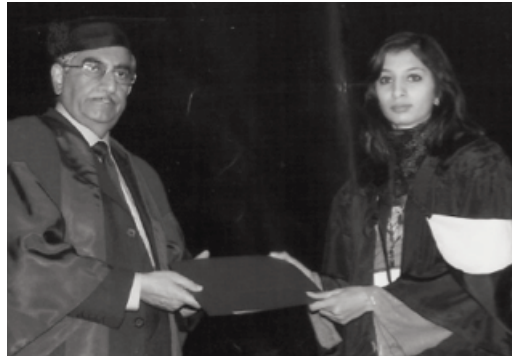
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Ali is the eldest of five siblings. Three of them have joined CARE's ACCESS program and all are studying. Their father died two years ago. Ali admits that fending for his family has been a financial strain on him. It was his experience in ACCESS that opened doors for him. He says he is a different person now. Apart from linguistics, he has acquired manners and the confidence to move about in society and survive in this challenging environment. His job pays very well. He is satisfied that he is now in a position to take care of his family.



### **Lubna Amjad**

Lubna graduated from Government College University (GCU) with the class of 2010 in BSc (Hons) mathematics and currently is applying for admission to a PhD program in mathematics. She secured 1st position in the GCU mathematics department and received a gold medal in the graduation ceremony. Lubna shared her delight in the following words: “It was the best feeling I have ever had in my entire life, all due to CARE Foundation. I can say from my personal experience that CARE makes an extremely good professional from a struggler in life.”



After Lubna completed her intermediate, it was not possible for her to continue her education due to a lack of resources. However, she secured a scholarship for BSc (Hons) through the CARE Scholarship Program. Stepping in to support Lubna at that crucial time, CARE allowed her to realize her dreams of higher education and achieve her potential. Lubna has become a role model for the youth of Pakistan and urges them to work hard and achieve their destiny, saying, “We are the future of our country, so be passionate, faithful, hardworking, honest and sincere in whatever you do, as these are the key ingredients of success.”

### **Dr. Shumaila Khalil**

Dr. Shumaila was able to achieve her lifelong dream of becoming a doctor through the support of CARE Foundation. She beams with joy as she relates, “The happiest moment of my life was when I officially graduated and was able to put the prefix of Dr. before my name. It would not have been possible for me to successfully complete my MBBS from Allama Iqbal Medical College without the support of CARE Scholarship Scheme.”



At present Dr. Shumaila is doing House Job at Jinnah Hospital, which is due to end this year. She acknowledges the efforts of CARE Foundation to uplift the society in the following words: “One of the best things about CARE is that it honors the self respect of the students that they are giving scholarship to by never imposing this fact on them. It is just like a family support system.”