



Group Development Pakistan

Case Study

Mr. Sifat Khan, Watchman

Mr. Sifat Khan, is a 50 plus years old local who a GDP staff, attached to the Non-Formal Education (NFE) center in E-11, as a watchman. When hired, he was completely illiterate and could not write his name. His signature was however necessary for some official formalities such as opening his bank account and sign cheques, etc. In order to address and solve such issues, the NFE teachers started teaching him name writing. At first, the name writing practice was done through stones and then through markers on a white board. In just a week time, Mr. Sifat Khan was able to write his name fully and correctly. This name writing learning practice made it easy for the watchman to process his official formality whether for bank or personal matters. The watchman was extremely happy to be able to write his name, he stated: "I wished I would have learnt this in my early life, many things would have been easier for me". He had tears in his eyes when he wrote his name on the board. The teacher who taught Sifat how to write his name underlined: "The NFE center does not only contribute to educating vulnerable children about human rights, self-protection, child justice, life skills, numeracy and literacy skills, it also generates a spill-over effect: apart from employment, it socially and economically empowered this man who will, as a consequence, more than anyone, advocate for education for all in his community".

Mr Sifat Khan's views on learning to write his name:

"I was unemployed since a long time and was in much stress regarding my degraded economic situation. But thanks to God and GDP, I got a job in the NFE center. GDP staff informed me that I had to be able to write my name as it would be necessary in some official formalities. While I was totally illiterate and could not even write my name, this was proving a challenge for me. But I really thank the NFE teachers who taught me how to write my name. In the beginning, they oriented me on words and later I practiced name writing by using a stone on mud. Slowly, I shifted my name writing practice from stone writing to white board and learned how to write my name with markers. Within a week I learned how to write my name completely. Now I write my name as a signature in official documents. This tiny learning gave me an extra sense of happiness and empowerment. Now I realize the true value of education in one's life. And I admitted my children in the centre for free education".