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**Puppets for Peace**  
**Pakistan**

**Project Description**

The project aims to carry out 3 weeks of storytelling classes aided by books and puppets with 1000 children of outskirt and slum areas of Islamabad, concluding with a grand puppet show with the theme of love, peace, compassion and co-existence.

Volunteers will reach out to 1000 children between the ages of **8-15 years** in the **6** schools in the slums of Islamabad (Maira Aku, Maira Abadi, Daraigh Mori) where these schools are located. Volunteers will conduct weekly sessions where they will sit with these kids in groups and read out these stories with them.

I will collaborate with SAYA Welfare Society, which is running a school in the slums of Islamabad and also provides support to a number of charity schools in the area. They will be my primary venue partner, collaborator and support partner to engage with more schools and communities in the area. Their school will also be the centre point to disperse the volunteer.

I will also collaborate with Gogi Studios, which are Pakistan's premier organization working on promoting social messages through the use of cartoons, comics and animations. Gogi Studios have been working with professionals, psychologists and using songs, puppets, cartoons and their internationally famous cartoon character Gogi they are planning to run counselling sessions for children directly affected from war against terrorism and spread anti hate and anti violence messages to the rest of the communities. They have published comics for kids with the above topics which we plan to use for our story telling sessions.

The partnership of these two organizations and my own network within Pakistan Education System will allow us to curate an effective intervention, which help build tolerance and love within these children, who are otherwise seldom exposed to such messages.

This project intends to reduce violence in society due to the art of storytelling. In our sittings with children we intend to discuss following topics:

- Ant-terrorism
- Women Rights
- Anti-sectarian/minority violence, amongst others.

Volunteers will discuss these topics in a fun interactive manner in order to ensure maximum engagement with the children. Since these children belong to marginalized communities the medium for the language to give out the message will be:

- Urdu
- Pushto
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**Target audience:**

The beneficiaries will include:

- Afghan refugee children
- Children displaced due to war against terror.
- Children effected due to terrorist activities
- Street children, rag pickers

Children between 8-15 belonging to economically marginalized, or families displaced due to war against terror and Afghan refugee families currently residing in outskirts and slums of Islamabad (Maira Aku, Maira Abadi, Daraigh Mori).

**Proposed Activities**

- 3 weekly story telling Sessions
- Discussion over the stories and critical analysis
- Puppet Show (Theme: peace )
- Take-home books to recall the lessons

### **Story Telling Sessions**

Volunteers will reach out to 1000 children between the ages of **8-15 years** in the **6** schools in the slums of Islamabad (Maira Aku, Maira Abadi, Daraigh Mori) where these schools are located. Volunteers will conduct weekly sessions where they will sit with these kids in groups and read out these stories with them.

### **Illustrated Comic Book to be used:**

- Women's right (Huqooq-e-Niswan in Urdu)
- Beware of strangers (How not to get recruited by terrorists/ill-intentioned organizations)
- On sectarian violence

### **Discussion over the stories and critical analysis**

After reading the stories the children and volunteers will engage in an interactive discussion about the lessons derived from these stories. The children will be asked questions on how to react to the situations written in the stories and a discussion on how to reduce the violence related to the topics picked and a role they can play to reduce violence. They will present their findings on charts or any other art form.

### **Puppet Show**

In the fourth week as a concluding session a puppet show will be arranged on any one of the above topics. The puppet show is meant to impart the message of peace through a fun manner.

### **Take-home package** to recall the lessons learned during the process

A 'happy package' for the kids will be created which encompass the following:

- A comics books which discussed in either of the story telling sessions.
- A writing pad which the children can use to put their thoughts about their leanings
- Stationary (a pencil, rubber and sharpener) and colouring pencils.

### **Short-term goals**

- Raise awareness on how not to get recruited by terrorists/ ill-intentioned organizations. (A specific comic book we will provide will be about how to stay aware about dangerous strangers)
- Raise awareness on women rights amongst children
- Raise awareness on sectarian violence and minority rights

### **Long-Term goals**

- Trickle-down effect into the communities as children takes these messages home
- Will reduce terrorists/ ill-intentioned organizations from recruiting children to take them to terrorist organizations.
- Make these children more tolerant citizens of the society where they accept people belonging to other religions and minorities and live in harmony