



Sow it Forward: Islamabad Model college for girls NIH colony Islamabad

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Pakistan Girl Guides Association, Islamabad Capital Territory branch is a Voluntary Non-Government Organization and aims at the development of girls and young women. The Association designs and executes the program for girls between the ages of 6 to 20. Many service projects in the field of education, health, training skills and advocacy campaigns for an improved style of life are offered to these girls.

Kitchen gardening lesson program was started in government schools of Islamabad last year by PGGI President Samina Khan (Islamabad chapter) to provide training to school girls. Out door environmental related activities are almost non existence in Pakistan especially among school girls. The purpose of this program is to teach and encourage young girls to get involve in gardening activities and joys of growing food in the hope of planting a seed for positive eating habits that will last a lifetime and impart the knowledge to make better food choices for themselves and their future families. During one year about 8 schools were given free lessons and seeds contributed by a donor .The seeds were handed over to girls so they start vegetable garden in their home. The program was very successful and first of its kind in Pakistan. We wanted to take this program to next level by initiating a kitchen garden corner in schools so to set good examples and engage children's curiosity, as well as their energy and also provide positive and memorable food growing experiences, enabling skills-based lifelong habits.

The grant from KGI came as blessing and with this grant we were able to set up a first kitchen garden corner in a Islamabad Model college for girls NIH colony Chak Shazad Islamabad. We received grant during late April when sowing season has ended and hot dry weather was just around the corner. So we decided to grow those vegetables which would be able tolerate and sustain summer temperature touching almost 45C on some days .Our vegetable plantation would be done in two phases .The first phase would be limited to few bed and second phase would be on much larger scale as growing seasons gain momentum with onset of monsoons. In the first phase we sowed seedlings of tomatoes, bell pepper and seeds of okra and squash. In second phase we intend to add more beds of the vegetable mentioned earlier and add luffa cucumber to kitchen garden.

The summer vacation in educational institution started from 2 June and with college close the gardening activity of tilling and hoeing is not been managed the way it should. The tomatoes and okra have grown well. Tomatoes will be staked next week we have used cow dung compost and seed of renowned seed company.

The college will reopen in last second week of August and girls will be again take charge of the kitchen garden corner they had so enthusiastically planted. We hope to harvest and collect seeds in October November and share seeds and knowledge with another government school close by at Shazad town. So Sow it forward will get going in another school to spread the awareness of grows good, healthy foods and self sufficiency.

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