# Scale X Design Accelerator Cohort 3

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**Initiative and/or Program Name**
INSPIRE II

**Technical Sector**

- Water
- Food Security
- Humanitarian
- Health
- Gender
- Agriculture
- Economic Development
- Capacity Building/Governance
- ✓ Education
- Dignified Work
- ✓ Social Entreprise
- ✓ Youth and Adolescence

**Check this box if your application should NOT be entered in the Accelerator as a finalist.**
No response

**Check this box if your application is a social enterprise or consulting practice that does NOT fit within the Cohort 3 theme: Women's Economic Empowerment.** *Hidden*
No response

**Are you submitting your application in English?**

- ✓ Yes
- No

**Problem Statement**

improving the retention of 1,500 girls' in middle schools using a blended approach of AI-based technology techniques and face-to-face pedagogical interventions. The overall content is also integrated with play-based best practices, life skills, and career counseling – in order to empower girls to stay in school while also providing them with exposure to soft skills that will equip them in accessing skills training programs or higher education opportunities. Pakistan has the second highest number of out-of-school children globally, two-thirds of whom are girls. Almost 50% of women over age 10 have never attended school, and only one in two can read and write; even fewer in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). Attrition rates for girls are also high, with 52% of girls dropping out by Grade 6 rising to of them, 96%, by Grade 12. In Sindh, girls are 37% more likely than boys to drop out of school. Social stigma can keep girls from actively seeking out education where it means using unsafe transportation, or studying alongside boys and men. For those young girls with the desire to pursue their education, supply side barriers including budgetary constraints such as skewed allocation across education subsectors, the lack of proper school infrastructure, and a shortage of qualified school teachers, in particular female teachers, further stymie efforts. The problem does not end here, the bulk of these students, especially girls who dropped out during or after completion of primary school, have limited pathways for economic inclusion in society leading to a difficult future. These dropouts cannot get admission into any technical and vocational course as the minimum requirement for technical and vocational courses is Grade 8th certification. Retaining girls in school or affording them opportunities to complete their education to levels that would then qualify them for higher education or vocational skills training, requires a blend of support services that ensures safe learning spaces, qualitative skills inputs, and alternative pathways for learning, as well as safeguards and incentives that decrease the opportunity cost of dropping-out to begin with.

**a) Explain how your initiative solves the problem. What evidence exists to prove your initiative solves the problem?**

CARE developed a pilot project INSPIRE II (ROTA funded Jan2015-Dec2017) in which access to secondary education for adolescent girls in Swat was successfully improved. The main focus was providing access to middle-school levels of education through an accelerated learning program (ALP) in existing government primary schools. Through an 18-month intervention (reduced from the typical 3 years of Grade 6-8 instruction) 1,000 students, who had dropped out following completion of primary school were reached; 880 girls graduated from the ALP pilot. Moreover, the project also provided vocational skills and entrepreneurship development to 300 young men and women, opening up access to economic opportunities within the communities. As a result, almost 80% of these students are now employed or self-employed.

The project's success led to CARE received funding from USAID for scaling ALP in two provinces of Pakistan. The scale-up model is similar to the pilot. ALP graduates who qualify will be enrolled in technical and vocational trainings offered by public or private sector providers who will also ensure job placement. CARE has already identified private sector partners interested in providing technical and vocational training and placement to ALP beneficiaries.

CARE has piloted the use of technology in two ALP classrooms through ROTA funding. The research revealed positive impacts on participant learning gains. Most of the participants, from disadvantaged communities of Swat, have no access to technology and therefore, using a device with course content improved not only retention of information and learning outcomes, but also enabled familiarity with IT and enhanced life skills and overall awareness.

Strategy (How):

Our proposed intervention for scale X design is to extend and integrate technology into ALP classrooms. In at least 30 ALP schools (with a participant group of 1,500 girls) in KP will be reached. CARE will partner with national start-ups already applying AI and technology-based content solutions to modularize and adapt the ALP curriculum for a combination of self-study tutorials (using video, simulations, and animation that also track student progress and achievement at each curriculum milestone, and offer reinforcement and extension activities to extend and link learning across content areas while also integrating life skills and IT skills). Devices will be provided to each student following an intake test with the appropriate level of curricula included (to ensure focus and progress, contents will be updated periodically as students meet achievement milestones). Teachers/tutors will be trained on how to facilitate the use of this device to enable greater differentiated learning opportunities for students. Students will be instructed on how and when to complete the various assigned tasks on their devices, and will be able to work at their own pace while accessing the teacher/tutor episodically for additional support – reducing the need for daily face-to-face sessions and allowing teachers to not only support a larger number of students, but also access focus on those students requiring greater supports overall. Monthly 'test' results will be used to track student progress and will be compared to results against other non-technology/control ALP classrooms during the final exam process.

**b) How does the initiative apply the CARE approach? (Increased Resilience, Promoting Inclusive Governance and Gender Equality and Women's Voice – The initiative does not have to apply all four to qualify)**

No response

**b) b) How does the initiative apply the Women's Economic Impact Strategy?**

The underlying idea of the girls' leadership program is to empower young women in Pakistan and support them in earning a livelihood through dignified work. One of the most opted trades in Pakistan for girls
Involves the garment industry (through formal or informal work).
In the current project, CARE will be working with both government and private sector to explore opportunities for young women in the formal and informal workplace, and we will integrate the Asia Impact Growth Strategy (IGS - Made by Women) within the program.

CARE Pakistan also seeks to reduce barriers that currently disadvantage girls are facing in education as well as economic opportunities. The IGS strategy is significant to Pakistan's context as the country has a huge garment industry which employs a large number of skilled/un-skilled women (most of them are younger women). As a result, graduates from the ALP program will likely find work in the garment industry. By building the skills of ALP students around their rights (through life skills and career counseling supports) and reinforcing it with technology-based applications, these women have the potential to become champions of change and to create a favorable work environment not just for themselves, but other women as well.

**c) Why is your initiative better than what's been done before or by others?**

The geographical scale up of the ALP model is already underway. Through the Scale X Design opportunity, CARE Pakistan is proposing the next level of scale in response to demand from large numbers of out of school children. Embedding technology thoughtfully within the ALP curriculum will bring about a revolutionary change: it will speed up the learning process for young women enrolled in ALP, by allowing for customized approaches to the content derived from their current skill levels and areas of strength. A technology adaptation will augment the content students receive during face-to-face instructional time, enabling them to grasp concepts better, repeat lessons for improved retention, and link concepts across different topics for overall enhanced understanding and retention. By navigating with technology the young women will acquire 21st century skills to which they would otherwise not be exposed. This opportunity leverages existing work from private sector partners who have already deployed learning applications within secondary schools with evidence to demonstrate effectiveness. It also aligns well with the Pakistani government's increasing interest in blended learning models and various public sector technology expansion initiatives already underway. These girls will achieve higher results not only academically, but will have the critical thinking, self-learning, continuous development attitudes that will support them as they enter the workforce. Furthermore, because the application integrates CARE's rights-based approaches and proven curricula, it provides the government with high-quality content and a practical, scalable, cost-effective approach that can efficiently reach larger numbers than is feasible in the current ALP context.

**a) Describe how this initiative could further impact 1million+ people by 2020? How can this be taken to scale, either at the national or international level?**

Some 30.1 percent of lower-secondary-school-age children are out of school, i.e., not attending primary or secondary levels of education. This equates to 2.7 million children (1.1 million boys and 1.6 million girls) . The use technology for secondary education is not so common in development sector. Once this scale up will be in place, the contents will be available to both girls and boys who have dropped out of school. Currently in Pakistan, there are insufficient middle, secondary, and high schools – and the Pakistani government is already engaged in policy deliberations around how to respond to the burgeoning demand – especially given the 'Right to Education' Act which mandates the provision of free and compulsory education to all children between age of 5 and 16. . While girls are most affected, the problem impacts both genders.

When more girls are provided with quality education, and know their rights, they will collectively be able to affect positive change. These empowered young women will be better equipped to ask for their rights to education, health and economic and political opportunity. It is likely that the ALP graduates will be well respected in society, given their economic independence; just one extra year of secondary education can increase a woman's income as much as 25% a year. In turn, this will positively change Pakistan's social and economic milieu in coming years.

**b) Who will pay for taking this initiative to scale? (i.e. what is the funding model? Will government adopt the innovation? Will the initiative be scaled through market-based approaches? Will it be supported through traditional philanthropy or replicated by other NGOs?)**

As most of the donors are interested in working on innovative solution towards secondary education, it is likely that CARE will receive further funding form multilateral donors based in Pakistan. However, as the project was initially funded by a non-traditional donor, it is also likely that nontraditional donors will be willing to support this program.

It is important to note that the provincial governments themselves are already willing to take this initiative to scale. Provincial governments have already initiated a variety of pilots on eLearning and are already using technology within existing (public-sector funded) projects. Once the scale up of ALP through technology will show good results, we anticipate not only donors but the Government of Pakistan being on-board to take ownership. Finally, as this effort is integrated into a larger, holistic four-year project, starting now affords sufficient time to test, learn, improve, adapt, enhance and disseminate the results through a comprehensive advocacy and budget planning approach directly with the Government as well as donors.

**c) Based on your experience so far, what is the major obstacle or challenge you feel CARE faces in taking this initiative to scale?**

The biggest challenge in Pakistan facing all the projects is the government authorization process. Pakistan's political situation remains challenging in the near-term, given the outcome of pending elections. However, macro-level issues aside, provincial governments have already demonstrated willingness to adapt the ALP model. The challenge is to make this a regular part of the larger education system – and that can be achieved if the project shows solid results in a cost-effective manner. Again, the use of technology in the ALP ensures scale while reducing overall cost, and offers ways of monitoring students and teacher/tutor performance that are less intensive on overall human resources within an already over-burdened government system. The up-front, initial costs of adapting the curriculum for use with technology are also quickly defrayed when measured over the large numbers of students that can be reached, not just in KP province but in other parts of Pakistan as well. Previous studies of technology uptake (from the student side) demonstrate that significant inputs for either student training or overall security are not required, and the pilot will offer sufficient time to test out different models alongside a cost-benefit analysis for presentation to the government and donors.

**a) What is evidence or the analysis that proves there is demand or interest for this initiative? (i.e. is there interest from the government? Are stakeholders such as partners or communities interested in scaling? Have donors or investors shown interest?)**

CARE developed the INSPIRE II project based on community demand for improving access to education for adolescent girls, who had dropped out after primary education. Their needs were taken into account and accelerated learning program (ALP) was developed. The project showed huge success by graduating 85% of the enrolled girls from its program. It opened up avenues for ALP students to continue onto either high education or enroll in technical and vocational skills courses. The project also helped the teachers by providing them pedagogical skills using government trainers, and opened up pathways for the (non-formal) female teachers themselves to be inducted into formal, government service later on. During the project evaluation, the communities showed increased interest and demand for the continuation of ALP schools in their villages.

Since the ALP model has already been accepted in KP by the provincial education department (including the Directorate of Curriculum and Teacher Education (DCTE)), our focus will be on working with the same public-sector actors to sustain and scale the ALP model in ways that are suitable within government policies and budgets. This is another reason why the technology-based adaptation makes sense – it aligns well with ongoing pilots supported by the government for the provision of distance education, and it offers the government a cost-effective approach to reach the millions of children that have dropped out of (or are failing within) the system.