



Pakistan Microfinance Investment Company (PMIC) and Opportunity EduFinance announce new partnership to mobilize capital into affordable education in Pakistan

Islamabad – November 15, 2022: Through a new partnership, Pakistan Microfinance Investment Company (PMIC) and Opportunity International EduFinance will collaborate with three microfinance providers who want to extend capital to low-cost non-state school owners and parents, and support them to improve education quality and learning outcomes for children.

Both, PMIC and Opportunity EduFinance see education as a critical component to employment creation, revenue generation and poverty alleviation. Before COVID-19, Pakistan was reporting the second highest number of out-of-school children globally – with 22.8 million not attending school or learning. The problem of limited access to education was even greater for girls, which was further exacerbated by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, research indicates that for every additional year of schooling, a student can expect an additional 10 percent increase in their future wages. Financing the growth of the affordable non-state education sector can help end the cycle of generational poverty. Through this partnership, Opportunity EduFinance will provide AGAHE, RCDP and Taleem Finance with technical assistance to develop, launch and grow EduFinance loan portfolios, and will offer their school borrowers a holistic three-year school improvement program. This Education Quality program includes:

1. Professional development training for school leaders, particularly in business and financial management best practices, so they can run schools more efficiently and sustainably.
2. Professional development training for teachers in pedagogy, functional teaching practice and literacy, so learning outcomes can be improved for children.

With access to credit, school owners can invest in new and better school infrastructure such as adding more classroom seats, improving WASH facilities, purchasing school transportation, adding IT equipment – all of which provide an accessible, supportive learning environment for children. Combining access to finance with the Education Quality program will improve both access to and quality of education in low-cost non-state schools. Parents with access to school fee loans can ensure all children – both boys and girls – are enrolled in school and are not at-risk of dropping out even when the household income fluctuates.

Yasir Asfaq, CEO of PMIC, explained why this partnership aligns with PMIC’s overall mission. “PMIC is pleased to initiate this collaboration with Opportunity EduFinance to advance the shared goals of expanding access to quality education to under-served communities across Pakistan. We hope this endeavor will ensure greater enrollment, retention, improve learning outcomes for children and positively contribute towards SDG4.”

Andrew McCusker, Head of Opportunity EduFinance, further highlights the potential impact of this partnership on children’s access to education. “We have a massive opportunity to impact children’s education access across Pakistan. Low-cost non-state schools can play a greater role filling the gap in the supply of education if they are given the right access to capital to make investments. Our partnership is bringing together our unique expertise for the benefit of education. PMIC’s wide network of partners is critical to efficiently identify financial institutions willing to go deeper in the education sector. Our technical expertise in education finance can ensure these

partners offer the right loan products that meet school needs, combined with our EduQuality Program helping schools improve learning outcomes for students. Working together, I believe we can mobilize significant investments, especially at this critical time of post-COVID recovery.”

SIGNING CEREMONY – 15th November 2022

Yasir Ashfaq, CEO, PMIC iterated the institution’s commitment to provision of financial services to low-cost private schools. PMIC is putting up its resources to improve the managerial capacity of school owners and pedagogical skills of teachers, thereby improving the quality of education in the country. This initiative is a step forward in PMIC’s journey towards its triple bottom line objectives and we are extremely excited to partner with Opportunity International EduFinance.

Mathieu Fourn, Technical Assistance Director, Opportunity EduFinance expressed his gratitude for the support offered by PMIC and shared the plans for implementing such an extensive program. Opportunity EduFinance has exclusively partnered with PMIC to launch this one-of-a-kind initiative currently being run successfully in 7 other countries and we are looking forward to the program execution in Pakistan.

Nana Francois, CEO, Opportunity International UK was delighted to be a part of the ceremony and reinforced the ties created between the two institutions because of the partnership. She explained how PMIC and OI previously collaborated on a similar initiative, and are keen to partner once again with a more comprehensive program. We are certain that PMIC’s outreach will enable us to achieve the desired program objectives. The event was also attended by the **CEO of Agahe, RCDP and Taleem Finance Company Limited**, who are the implementing partners of PMIC and Opportunity EduFinance for this program.

ABOUT PAKISTAN MICROFINANCE INVESTMENT COMPANY Pakistan Microfinance Investment Company (PMIC), a national-level apex organization for microfinance providers in the country, has been providing financial and non-financial support to strengthen and scale-up provision of sustainable and responsible finance to marginalized segments of society, particularly micro-entrepreneurs operating in the low-income segment of the economic pyramid. PMIC is focused on building a robust ecosystem for the growth of sustainable and scalable microfinance solutions in Pakistan.

ABOUT OPPORTUNITY INTERNATIONAL EDUFINANCE

Opportunity International EduFinance is a global non-profit organization which partners with financial institutions around the world to help them develop, launch and grow sustainable education lending portfolios, primarily focusing on two flagship products: School Improvement Loans and School Fee Loans. The EduQuality Program at Opportunity EduFinance offers school borrowers capacity building and training to run sustainable, quality schools. EduFinance has 1330 financial institution partners in 30 countries, who have collectively disbursed 570k education loans benefiting an estimated 10.7 million children globally since the start of the program. (Discover more at www.edufinance.org or join the conversation on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [LinkedIn](#)).

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