



A Village Transformed By IT

How Pakistan's first smart Village used telemedicine and digital classrooms to change 6,000 lives and what it means for the rest of the country.

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Introduction

Did you know that Pakistan has a program that is making villages smarter by using technology? Yes, you read it right. This is really happening in Pakistan. This article tells the story of a village called “**Gokina**” which became a smart village in 2023.

Gokina is a village on a mountain near Islamabad. It was like many other villages of Pakistan, until it became Pakistan's first smart village. It's main area of work was the e-health clinic and the online school system that shows a lively embrace of digital services and opportunities for villagers.

"This clinic has changed our lives. We no longer feel isolated or without hope when someone is ill."

The Smart Village Program

The Smart village program was launched in Pakistan by the **Minister of IT** in 2021, with the support from the International **Telecommunication Union (ITU)** and **Huawei**. It's key focus was the telemedicine, online school system and digital skills for women in the region.

Gokina was the first one to be chosen for digital transformation.

Healthcare: When the Clinic Was Called a “Miracle”

Before the transformation of Gokina people had to travel for hours for medical treatments which was very costly and difficult. Now, they have their own health clinic that provides them the best possible treatment. Although there are many stories of patients that were saved and treated by the e-health clinic, the one that made me forced to think that how technology can change lives, it is the story of a two-year-old “Zainab”. She was brought to the clinic in a serious case of measles and trouble breathing. Her family was worried for her health and medical expenses. Later she was recovered by connecting with the online doctor and her grandmother called the clinic a “miracle.” She said, “This clinic has changed our lives, We no longer feel isolated or without hope when someone is ill.” The other thing that gave me relief is that in the clinic an appointment costs the equivalent of **33 cents (USD 0.33)**, as there's many people that cannot afford.

But sometimes I thought, if smart village program was not launched, Gokina people were still have to pay high prices and have to travel for hours for their treatments?

Education: Dreams Coming True

Before Online school system, students in Gokina were not getting proper education specifically science education, due to lack of resources and teachers in the field. But now they are getting proper education through digitally connected classrooms where students still learn together physically but can connect with expert teachers remotely.

“Neha Nasir,” an eight year old student with a dream of becoming a doctor. She said, “I thought my dream was lost.” But now; I feel like, I am on the path to becoming a doctor.



Figure 1: Students in a digitally connected classroom at Gokina Smart Village. / International Telecommunication Union (ITU), 2023

Key Findings & Impact

Gokina's e-clinic has provided more than 5,000 online consultations more than 100 local girls are attending science courses for the first time, and more than 250 women are learning digital skills and entrepreneurship.

Beyond Gokina: A path to successful Pakistan

Gokina success led to expansion. In late, 2024 Sambrial became the second smart village in Pakistan. Swabi became the third and there can more if we keep trying to overcome the digital differences in Pakistan.

Later in 2026, Pakistan's first digital basic health unit was launched in Gokina, that shows Gokina success in reality.



What's Next?

Gokina's success is simple. Gokina's e-clinic and online school system did not replace doctors or teachers, it connected doctors to patients or students to teachers.

In conclusion, there are still many things that are not available in Gokina and many other villages in Pakistan. Although challenges remains and effective results comes with time.

About the Author

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