



RIGHT TO PLAY

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Narrative Stories on Climate Change

From Sindh Province, Pakistan

Story #1: Ali's Journey Through the Flood in 2022

In the village of Aboro nestled amidst the serene landscape of Thatta, there lived a cheerful young boy named Ali. Ali, a diligent fourth-grade student from one of Right To Play's government partner schools, lived with his father and their life was filled with the simple joys of village existence—of fresh early morning, communal gatherings, school and games. According to his father, Ali used to wake up every morning, much earlier than his school time, just to roam around the green fields and get ready for school early – showing how motivated he is towards his education.

However, the tranquility of their village was shattered when disaster struck in the form of a relentless flood in 2022. Overnight, the peaceful rhythm of life was disrupted as torrential rains started pouring down on the 25th of August 2022, causing the nearby river to swell and overflow its banks. The once idyllic village of Aboro was swiftly engulfed by rising waters, and Ali's home, like those of his neighbors, was swept away by the relentless force of nature.

In the face of this catastrophe, all families in the village, including Ali's, were compelled to seek refuge on the embankment. Stripped of their homes and possessions, they found themselves huddled together, their hopes dampened by the weight of uncertainty and loss. With no food or clean water at hand, their only solace came from the meager shelters provided by a few authorities, though even these flimsy tents offered little protection against the persistent downpour.

Life on the embankment was harsh and unforgiving. Ali and his family, along with their fellow villagers, endured unimaginable hardships as they grappled with the harsh realities of displacement. As the days stretched into weeks, Ali and his family found themselves trapped in a seemingly endless cycle of despair and deprivation. The relentless rain and flooding brought with it a host of challenges. Food became scarce as the floodwaters inundated the fields, destroying crops and livestock. Ali and his family relied on whatever meager supplies they could have, as they awaited relief from aid agencies. The absence of basic amenities such as shelter and sanitation exposed them to the elements, leaving them vulnerable to various diseases and discomfort. The lack of clean water and sanitation facilities posed a grave health risk, while the threat of waterborne illnesses and insect-borne diseases loomed large. Ali's father, who had once earned a livelihood as a laborer by the riverside, now found himself without work or income, his livelihood submerged beneath the murky waters. However, perhaps the most harrowing challenge for Ali was the sense of uncertainty and fear that gripped him each day. The constant threat of further flooding, the loss of his home and possessions, and the disruption to his schooling weighed heavily on his mind, leaving him anxious and overwhelmed. Ali, once accustomed to the comforting routine of school and play, now found himself confined to the confines of the makeshift camp, his dreams of education and recreation drowned out by the roar of the floodwaters.

Amidst the chaos and uncertainty, Ali clung to the memories of life before the flood—a life filled with laughter, warmth, and peace. He recalled the joyous gatherings in the village square, where families would come together to share meals and stories. He remembered the carefree afternoons spent playing by the river with his friends, making toys with mud, the sun casting a warm glow on their innocent faces as they reveled in the simple pleasures of childhood.

Yet, despite the overwhelming challenges they faced, Ali remained steadfast in his resolve to overcome adversity. With each passing day, he drew strength from his father and the resilience of his community, rallying together to support one another in their darkest hour. For Ali, finding comfort in his father's hopeful words about the future, and hearing his community members reassure each other that "this too shall pass," meant everything. And though the scars of the flood would forever linger, Ali remained hopeful, dreaming of a brighter future where the echoes of laughter would once again fill the air, and the village of Aboro would be the same again.

Story #2: Resilience Amidst Adversity

"Thatta was a beautiful place, until it came under the threat of disasters caused by climate change impacts such as floods, heavy rains, and storms" Falak, a 16-year-old girl said while narrating her experience from last year's flood.

In 2022, Thatta was hit by a severe flood caused by heavy monsoon rains and overflowing rivers. The floodwaters wreaked havoc, displacing almost 33 million people and causing extensive damage to homes, infrastructure, and agricultural land. It was a time of crisis for the whole country and Falak firsthand witnessed the mass migration of communities and the destruction in Thatta, left in the flood's wake.

As a member of a volunteer group locally, Falak visited the affected communities, listening to their stories of loss and despair. Families had lost everything, and children were traumatized by the sight of their homes being swallowed by the flood waters. The once vibrant village now lay submerged, a haunting reminder of the power of nature's fury.

However, life continues even in such despair times and same happened for the people of Thatta. Fortunately, government and humanitarian organizations were quick to respond, providing much-needed relief in the form of food, water, and temporary shelters. Relief camps were established to provide shelter whereas Temporary learning centers were set up for children, offering a sense of normalcy amidst the chaos. However, the road to recovery would be long and arduous, and many communities wondered how they would rebuild their lives.

Just when it seemed like things couldn't get any worse, Thatta was hit by another disaster—a powerful storm known as "Biporjoy." Although the frequency of such storms was low, the fear among the communities was palpable, knowing the devastation it could bring. Lives were lost, livelihoods were destroyed, and the sense of fear and uncertainty remained.

Falak often pondered the reasons behind these disasters. Once, her grandfather had taught her that humans were no longer conscious about preserving nature. Little did she know the extent of destruction this lack of carelessness would bring. After the floods, she researched and learned about how climate change is affecting the whole world. Then she found out that deforestation, and urbanization were contributing factors. Many communities lived in low-lying areas near rivers, making them vulnerable to flooding. A lack of awareness about climate change and mitigation further compounded the problem.

The floods and storms took a heavy toll on the children of Thatta. Unable to attend school and with no place to play, they faced challenging conditions that tested their resilience. Falak, being familiar with Right To Play's activities, provided psychosocial support to these children through play, offering them a glimmer of hope amidst the despair.

The challenges faced by the communities and the constant threat of floods prompted them to reassess their approach. They initiated projects like constructing raised platforms and planting mangroves to lessen the impact of future floods. Despite the chaos and devastation caused by floods, these efforts strengthened the villagers' resilience, motivating them to confront future challenges with proactive solutions.

And so, life in Thatta continued, with the ever-present threat of floods looming in the background.