

Society for Sustainable Development



Annual Report 2010

Society for Sustainable Development

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

The years 2010 will always be remembered as the most important year in the life of Society for Sustainable Development as it was the first complete working year of the life of this organization. This year marked our continued commitment towards making the development initiatives more sustainable and determination to go even further. We realize that many more years of sustained efforts will be needed to overcome the challenges posed by horde of the issues for the vulnerable and marginalized communities of the country.

Established in the year 2009, Society for Sustainable Development (SSD) approached this year with confidence to achieve its targets. During the year 2009, the organization was in its initial stages and had only a few staff members. Today at the end of 2010 SSD has full-fledged equipped and staffed offices in Islamabad and two provinces of Pakistan. It is now considered one of the representatives of civil society organizations working on the protection issues, especially child protection. Throughout this year, the profile of SSD constantly improved and for this all the board members and members of staff deserve appreciation as all of them have put in a lot of efforts and hard work in all the initiatives of SSD and its partner organizations across Pakistan.

We have taken many strides forward towards maintaining highest standards of good governance and we are committed to move forward in this direction. We have also completed many small and large assignments for vulnerable and marginalized groups.

All this was the start of our journey. Our mission is to support sustainable development initiatives and to advocate for the rights of vulnerable and marginalized groups of the country. This is a gigantic task and requires a long, hard and committed struggle. Therefore, we at SSD are committed to keep on working hard with same zeal and zest in the next years as well.

In the end, I would like to acknowledge the chain of stakeholders associated with Society for Sustainable Development. First and foremost, we would like to thank our joint partners including Interact Worldwide, ERF, Provincial AIDS Control Programs (PACPs), and UNICEF. I would

also like to make a special mention of the civil society organizations, government stakeholders, implementing partner organizations and our general readers.

We would especially like to give the SSD team credit for their commitment to our programs.

The past year was one we can look back on with pride!

Gul Alai Ismael

Chairperson

FOREWORD

I am glad to present the first Annual Report of Society for Sustainable Development SSD for the years 2009 and 2010 and share then efforts of SSD and its partners to serve the vulnerable and marginalized communities of Pakistan in a more sustainable way.

The report in your hand covers a time period of almost one and half year. The first year of the life of any organizations is the most daunting one. It is full of challenges and also offers great opportunities. The first one and half year of the life of SSD was no different. It was full of challenges and yet provided us with opportunities to showcase our commitment to the cause of sustainable development in the country.

I would also like to restate that we at SSD are committed to bringing about a lasting improvement in the quality of lives vulnerable and marginalized section of society and ensuring that they get their due rights in the society.

The report in hand presents an overview of the activities undertaken during the calendar years 2009 and 2010 in which, among our foremost achievements were the steps taken towards institutionalization of the organization and building up strong networking with our enduring

partners. SSD has a long way to go, but we are building foundations for sustainable development.

We are confident that in 2011 with the continued support of our much valued members, partners and financial supporters we will continue to develop our programs and outreach by implementing other similar projects.

In the end, I would like to commend SSD team and acknowledge their untiring commitment for making this effort possible. I am also grateful to our donors Interact Worldwide, ERF, OSI, UNFPA and PLAN for their generous support to SSD.

Aftab Ahmed Awan

National Manager

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Society for Sustainable Development (SSD) was established in 2007 by a group of young activists and professionals working in different development sector organizations. There was a general feeling among the members of the group that development initiatives in country were neither rights based nor sustainable. Thus the development projects did not reflect the actual inspirations and requirements of the target communities and often failed to achieve the desired objectives. The group members were also concerned with the deteriorating human rights situation in the country. The lack of understanding and capacity among civil society organizations regarding requirements of rights based approach and sustainable development were also the motivating factors behind the formation of the group.

The realization of all these issues has led to the establishment of the Society for Sustainable Development. SSD believes that community involvement, participation and ownership is the cornerstone of sustainable development. Sustainable Development is the optimal satisfaction of peoples' needs and to find out what 'real needs' are, is the task of research and participatory processes. Once the real needs are identified, only the communities themselves can find out best possible solutions to meet those needs. Civil Society Organizations and NGOs should only play their role as the facilitators of the solution finding process instead of imposing their own solutions and approaches on the communities

Society for Sustainable Development (SSD) was formally registered in 2009. SSD is now a national NGO with Head office in Islamabad and small scale regional offices in Peshawar and Dera Ismael Khan in Khyber Pakhtoonkwhah province, Dera Ghazi Khan and Chakwal in Punjab Province and Quetta in Baluchistan province. It was decided that the Management team will be led by Mr. Aftab Ahmed Awan who is a development professional with more than 10 years experience in development sector. His area of expertise includes capacity building of civil society organizations in the area of RBA, Project Management, Advocacy and M&E. SSD is now fully staffed and technically equipped to carry out a range of interventions. SSD has highly qualified, trained, experienced and skilled staff to carry out its initiatives. The regional offices set up in collaboration with local organizations serve as the hub of local networks of CBOs working at the grass roots level with vulnerable and marginalized communities.

The regional focus of SSD has been on Khyber Pakhtoonkwhah Province and South of Punjab Province because of the conservative social norms, patriarchal and tribal social structures and increasing religious extremism in those areas. SSD is committed to work for the uplift and development of disadvantaged, marginalized, vulnerable and disempowered communities as they have always been neglected by both the public and private sector. Advocacy for protection, respect and fulfilment of human rights and advocacy and capacity building for use of Rights Based Approach in all developmental initiatives are the strategic priority areas of SSD.

ACTIVITIES THROUGH 2010

SSD carried out a number of initiatives in 2009 and 2010 with support from national and international organizations. SSD was involved in number of initiatives which included policy reviews, project evaluations, celebrations on international days and organization of consultative workshops. These activities not only helped in establishing the repute of SSD as an organization with strong capacity but also helped the staff on SSD in the learning process and built their won capacities as well. SSD was fortunate that from the very beginning it got the support of some very organizations like OSI and Interact Worldwide which involved SSD in their ongoing work. The details of all the activities are given in subsequent pages.

REVIEW OF DRUG POLICIES AND LAWS IN PAKISTAN

Pakistan is the second largest country in the South Asian region with an estimated population of 172.8 million having geographic location next to Afghanistan, the world's largest producer of illicit opium. Like other countries in the South Asian region, Pakistan has almost the same demographic and health profile, characterized by high rates of infant and maternal mortality, low levels of literacy and poor access to health care. Additionally, already crunched health budgets are being stretched to deal with a growing problem of drug dependency and injecting drug use and more recently the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

These laws mostly cover the legal aspects for the control of narcotics rather than caring for health and rights aspect of the drug addicts. The rights of the drug users are delimited that drive them towards a marginalized group of the society. The increasing number of drug dependants and especially the number of injecting drug users are witnessed that the efforts for the illicit drug control in country have been unsuccessful. No attention has been paid to the education and information component while making the drug policies. The drug control programs in Pakistan until now have been found to be more inclined towards the punitive side. Not only the ratio of HIV infection amongst the IDUs has reached an all time high of 21%, but HIV transmission in Pakistani prisons has also become a major concern for the country. There is least focus on the Rights Based Approaches.

Society for Sustainable Development SSD initiated a project which aimed at supporting and advocating for a policy to focus on “War against HIV & AIDS” not on “War on Drug Users”. This project was supported by Open Society Institute. The project goal was to provide support in development of a Policy for Drug Users which is based on Rights Based Approaches. This policy would address their fundamental rights which will ultimately help in mitigating the impact of HIV. The project was divided into two phases. The first phase was based on the activities included Rapid Situational Analysis, Dissemination of the Findings of the study, Review Meetings, National Forum and Review and documentation of Recommendations.

The proposal for the project was submitted in 2008 for the duration of one year from January 2009 to December 2009 to OSI; however only the 1st phase of the project was approved and granted to SSD by the end of January 2009. The 1st phase of the project has been implemented according to the scheduled activities despite of uncertain conditions of the country. The project was initiated with the opening ceremony in the last week of January 2009 in which stakeholders from the public and private sectors were invited. The introduction and details of the project were shared with the stakeholders. The idea of the project was accepted and appreciated by all the stakeholders. Immediate to the opening ceremony, the consultant reviewed the existing documents related to the drug laws and policies being implemented in Pakistan. The literature review was completed in the mid of February 2009. After the literature review, the consultant conducted a rapid situational analysis (RSA).

The Rapid Situation Analysis was initiated by the identification of national, provincial and other relevant stakeholders for the purposes of consultation as well as the drafting of a semi-structured questionnaire for administration to the identified role-players. The main aim of RSA was to consult with national stakeholders on issues to drug laws in Pakistan, in order to identify gaps in the narcotics laws. While this initial phase of the study was constrained to a certain extent due to the large number of questionnaires that were not returned in time, the breakdown of responses indicated a broad spread of information from different levels of government and civil society across a number of areas in Pakistan. The RSA was completed in the month of April 2009.

Then the findings of the study were shared with major stakeholders in May 2009. The review meetings were also organized in May and June 2009 and finally the recommendations for the alternative National Drug Policy has been developed with the consensus of all stakeholders after the last meeting held in the third week of June 2009. And then the recommendations were

shared with all the stakeholders in the national forum in July 2009. All The recommendations for more balanced drug policy has been reported and disseminated to the stakeholders, active partners and civil society organization working for the cause.

CAPACITY BUILDING OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN CHAKWAL

The phenomenal growth of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) at both national and local levels is due to the changing attitude of donor agencies about development assistance and the increased demand for NGO services in the developing countries. Considered part of the civil arena in society which also includes trade unions, people's associations and membership organizations, cooperatives and religious-based charities, NGOs provide a third approach to development between market-led and state-led strategies. NGOs have the grassroots presence and community linkages needed for social and community mobilization and developing and raising awareness which is of utmost importance for solving many of our chronic social and developmental problems. That is why more and more governments are turning towards NGOs to become partners in their development initiatives.

Though there are 122 registered NGOs in district Chakwal but only a few international, national and local NGOs are active in district Chakwal and providing valuable services to communities in different sectors, including education, health and environment. Most of the local NGOs are either dormant and or don't have the capacity and resources to play their role affectively.

One of the major responsibilities of Social Welfare Department (SWD) is to monitor, supervise and support the NGOs working in the district. It was felt that over a period of time the coordination between SWD Chakwal and NGOs had weakened. Moreover the full potential of NGO sector is not being realized because of many factors. Therefore they are not contributing significantly in the process of development.

Society for Sustainable Development has embarked on a program of capacity development of local NGOs in district Chakwal in collaboration with SWD Chakwal. SSD is providing technical assistance not in assessing the technical assistance needs of the NGOs through consultative process but is also developing a comprehensive capacity development plan in light of those consultations. The program will be implemented by SSD through its training and development section. It was a one year project and was implemented with support from various international partners.

CANDLE LIGHT MEMORIAL

20th may 2010: The Candle Light memorial was organized by Society for Sustainable Development SSD, in Islamabad to honor the memory of those who had lost their lives to AIDS and to express solidarity with those whose who are living with HIV. International AIDS Candle light memorial is the oldest and most widespread movement in international HIV and AIDS response and is commemorated in 115 countries of the world in third and fourth week of May. The event was attended by a large number of civil society organizations, NGOs, international organizations, National AIDS Control Program, UN organizations and representatives of vulnerable and marginalized communities

The Program Officer SSD Mr. Awar Sahazad, while shedding light on the history of Candle Light memorial, informed that the movement which was started in 1983 by just four people, is now observed by millions across the globe 27 years. National Manager of SSD Aftab Ahmed Awan discussed the linkages between spread of HIV and human rights violations. He said that Spread of HIV and AIDS is disproportionately high among groups that already suffer from a lack of human rights protection and face social and economic discrimination, which clearly shows that human rights violations lead to spread of epidemic.

Prominent expert of HIV and AIDS in Pakistan, Mr. Abid Atiq shared his field experience with the audience and said that whenever the communities were stigmatized and marginalized due to their behaviors, it led to isolation of those communities and caused the spread of epidemic. He emphasized that HIV and AIDS should not be treated as a health issue alone, it was a social issue and needed to be dealt as such. Dr. Naseer Nizamani Assistant Country Representative UNFPA and Mr. Naeem Malik from NACP also expressed their views about the linkages between human rights and HIV and the role which NGOS can play.

Civil Society Organizations can play a significant role in ensuring that the rights of the vulnerable and marginalized communities are respected and protected by state and society. These views were expressed by Dr. Samia Hashim Senior Program Officer UNAIDS while addressing. She further said that until and unless we learn to respect the basic rights of all groups of society regardless of their status and behavior, an effective response to the epidemic was not possible. She added that every civil society organization was like a candle spreading light in its surroundings.

At the end the participants lit the candles in the memory of those who had lost their lives due to AIDS and observed silence of one minute.

MID TERM REVIEW OF KEY VULNERABLE POPULATIONS PROJECT KARACHI

NAYA QADAM Project – The Best Practice Models of Integrated Prevention and Care and Support for Key Vulnerable Communities in Sindh, Pakistan is a four year European Commission funded project. Interact Worldwide provides technical support, Pakistan Voluntary Health and Nutrition Association (PAVHNA) works as coordinating and implementing partner and Pakistan Society also works as implementing partner.

The overall objective of the project is to reduce the incidence of HIV & AIDS and to mitigate the social and personal impact of HIV and AIDS on key vulnerable communities in Pakistan. Sustainable reduction in vulnerability and mitigation of impact of HIV and AIDS in key vulnerable communities is the specific objective of the project. SSD was selected to carry out the midterm review of the project.

The overall goal of the mid-term review was to assess the progress, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the approaches and resources used towards the achievement of estimated results and to provide recommendations for improving the approaches, pace and effectiveness of the project interventions in the remaining two years of the project.

SSD team used a consultative approach by ensuring that key stakeholders were consulted. It involved face to face interviews, focus group discussions, field observations and a review of project documents and administration of questionnaire. PAVHNA and PS Central and Field Offices, the beneficiaries and representatives of relevant government departments played a central role in the MTR by acting as key informants and providing inputs-comments throughout the review. The focus was on

In order to assess the improvement in the enabling environment, meetings were held with the stakeholders including local law enforcement agencies, SACP, gate keepers and community leaders, to carry out stakeholders' analysis. Stakeholder's views and opinion were taken through the developed tools to assess strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the projects and participant's suggestions and recommendations for further improvements in services and institutional arrangements such as sustainability were also gathered.

DEVELOPMENT OF ADVOCACY STRATEGY FOR RH PROJECT

In the changing paradigm of development, advocacy has become an integral part of almost all the developmental projects. But in the projects set in the conservative and traditional settings and restricted by deep-seated gender biased and discriminatory norms and values, it gains greater importance and significance.

RH project which was being executed by IWW and implemented by CSC in DG Khan was one such project which has had to face enormous social and cultural barriers in the extremely conservative and economically backward district of DG Khan. Traditional cultural norms inhibit discussion and dissemination of good quality reproductive health information and encourage myths and misconceptions, including in relation to Islam. The projects aimed at supporting marginalised and underserved people, particularly disadvantaged and vulnerable women in Pakistan to access health care and exercise their rights to good reproductive health which is not only a basic need but also essential to improving quality of life.

Though the project had made excellent progress in a short space of time, communications with the community and the government have laid solid foundations for the continued success of the project yet the main issues that continued to provide a challenge to sustainable development and change are conservative, rigid cultural norms and values, and the male dominated society in the district.

The project had now entered in the last phase of its implementation. As envisaged in the original plan of action of the project, a strong advocacy strategy was required to address the issues of reproductive health on long term and sustainable basis. Keeping in view this emerging felt need, IWW and CSC commissioned the services of SSD to identify the advocacy issues and develop an advocacy strategy to address the issues.

SSD adopted a comprehensive consultative process for identification of the issues, needs, analysis of capacities and development of the strategy. The team of SSD was constrained by the fact that project was in the last phase of implementation and only four months of the project life remained. Moreover the resources available for the implementation of the strategy were very limited. Therefore SSD team focused on developing a strategy which was to be implemented mostly at local level and by local partners like community groups and CBOs formed through the project. The strategy also focused on developing the capacities of the local partners as IWW and CSC have to phase out eventually.

WORLD AIDS DAY WITH SUPPORT FROM UNFPA

WAD events are usually celebrated in big cities and small cities where people are more vulnerable and lack basic information about means of protecting themselves from HIV are often neglected. Society for Sustainable Development requested UNFPA Chkawal Office to provide support for organizing this event in Chakwal to make the event more effective and meaningful. District Chakwal has strong presence of many the vulnerable groups like coal mines, migrant workers, cement factories and school and colleges in district Chakwal. Considering these factors UNFPA decided to provide support for organizing the activity for all these groups and stakeholders to comprehend the basic facts about the cause, and to build the capacity of other civil society organization of the district so that more organize, better and effective efforts can be made to counter the diseases and to protect the rights of these vulnerable groups.

The event was attended by a huge number of participants hailing from different walks of life. The participants included Students, representatives of civil society organizations, government representatives, health department officials, journalists and city notables. EDO Health District Chakwal Dr. Nasir Mehmmod Khan was the chief guest of the event.

The event proved very successful and was heavily attended. Providing their feedback, the participants expressed their opinion that such events are very important for creating awareness for such delicate issues in the public. They also appreciated the role of UNFPA which it was playing to support civil society organizations and for their strengthening. They hoped that such events will be organized in future as well.

ONE DAY CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP IN CHAKWAL WITH PLAN PAKISTAN

Recent years have seen a great increase in the number if immigrant workers coming to Choa Saiden Shah District Chakwal in search of employment in coal mines and in cement factories. Most of these immigrant workers come from Mardran, Swat and Karak districts in Khyber Pakhtoonkwah province. In 1980s and 1990s a large number of Afghan refugees also settled in Choa Saiden Shah. All the refugees and immigrant workers live in scattered unplanned settlements which lack all the basic facilities of life. The families and children of these immigrant workers and refugees live in extremely unhealthy and unhygienic conditions and lack access to basic facilities of life such as education, health and protection. Specially the children

are extremely vulnerable and face severe protection issues. They also face violence, harassment and sexual abuse.

There is an immediate need to address the protection issues of these most vulnerable children through coordinated and well planned efforts with involvement of all the stakeholders specially the representatives of the communities who can identify the real need and help in mapping out effective strategies to address these issues.

No studies have been carried out until now either to map out these settlements to determine the exact number of most vulnerable Children or to assess the protection needs of the most vulnerable children in Tehsil Choa Saiden Shah.

Society for Sustainable Development (SSD) with support from Plan Pakistan Program organized a one day consultative workshop with all the stakeholders including social welfare department, mine welfare officer, representatives of the community, education department and civil society organizations working in Choa Saiden Shah to determine the protection needs and requirements of these most vulnerable children and to develop a strategy to address the needs.

The consultative workshop helped in identifying the immediate protection needs of the most vulnerable children in Choa Saiden Shah and in getting recommendations for developing a comprehensive strategy to address these issues with the involvement of the stakeholders and in bringing them onboard for any future initiative.

WAY FORWARD

SSD has achieved a lot in the first year of its working. It has institutionalized its systems, developed a string network of partners and supporters and also established itself as a strong civil society organization with sound technical, financial and managerial capacity. But it has to keep on moving ahead with same vigour and commitment if it wants to continue serving its target populations.

Choosing and developing an effective advocacy strategy is vital to the success of any human rights campaign. Ultimately, human rights work seeks to improve people's lives. Therefore, a human rights approach that includes and encompasses people's perspectives is integral to any human rights campaign.

SSD wants to provide services that enhance an organization's individual and collective efficiency and effectiveness and increase availability of knowledge and information for development and empowerment. In this regard SSD is developing an advocacy strategy that is probably critical for the attainment of the objectives of the organization in an effective way.

SSD also aims to play a more effective role at policy making forums advocating for policies which are more rights based and humane. SSD also plans to enhance its focus on protection issues specially child protection and gender.

SSD will keep on following the policy for developing the capacity of its staff members through different training opportunities so that they can play their role more effectively in the coming years.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
