

HRD COMMUNIQUE

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NRSP

Institute of Rural Management

AHK

Resource Center



RSPN

Rural Support Programmes Network

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Editor's Note

Dear Readers!

The only way out of poverty is having access to work that can provide sustenance for an individual with dignity and honour. This can be assured for those in need, through the provision of employable skills. In this regard vocational and technical training programmes play crucial role. Imparting skills through these programmes increases earnings, brings down the instability of living for those without other avenues and boosts community involvement; all of which are indispensable for poverty alleviation.

In a poor country like Pakistan, imparting skills to the young people means paving their way to attain professional acumen and access to the informal sector. Successful policy-makers understand the importance of the needs of the stakeholders which include students, disabled, women and etc. That is why; they are paying more attention to the skill development within the framework of training and poverty reduction policies.

NRSP-IRM's main focus is poverty alleviation amongst the rural poor by imparting and honing the skills necessary to earn a livelihood. The program is based on a wide range of training, for rural youth who do not have access to regular government sponsored skill programmes, which are located mostly in the urban centers.

This issue of HRD Communiqué contains articles, reports, case studies, quotes, news and interviews related to the theme "Skill Development for Poverty Alleviation".

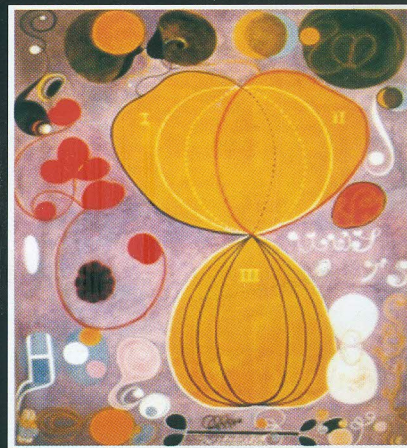
Special thanks to Mr. Waqar Haider Awan and Ms. Sascha Akhtar for their contributions to HRD Communiqué.

I hope you find it interesting and helpful. Your comments, suggestions, views and observations would be greatly valued for further improvements.

Skill Development for Poverty Alleviation

"Personal Development" by Hilma af Klint (1862-1944)

The key to real development is the active work on one's own personality. The possibilities for that work are inherent in the person's degree of self-consciousness and self-knowledge.



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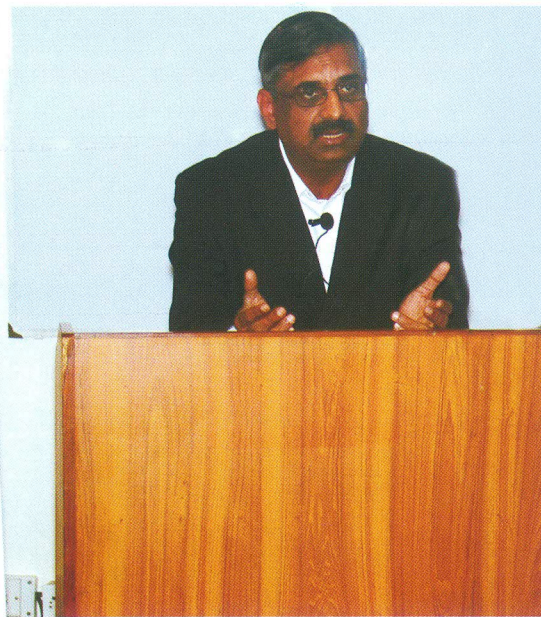
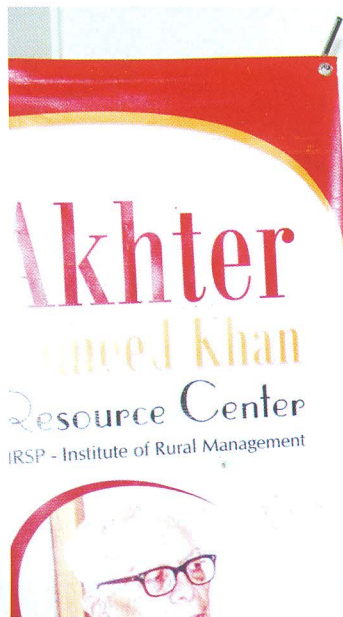
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Editor: Saeeda Zardad
Design: Asad Ijaz Awan

Akhter Hameed Khan Resource Center

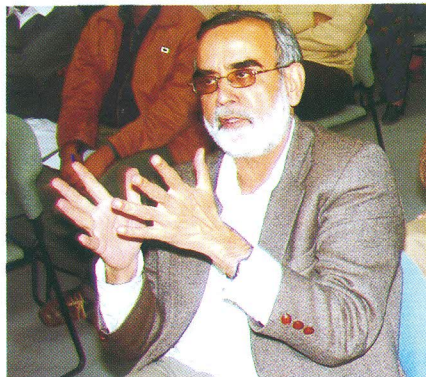
Lecture Series: Media Perception about Civil Society Organizations



The second lecture in the context of Akhter Hameed Khan Monthly Lecture Series titled "Media Perception about Civil Society Organizations" (CSO) was held on November 30, 2007 at IRM, Islamabad. Mr. Mohsin Raza Khan, Director News-ARY One World, was invited as the guest speaker at the occasion. Mr. Khan opened the floor by soliciting audience opinion about 'Civil Society Organizations'. The overwhelming response was that the



civil society organizations are not portrayed positively in the media and there is a great need of revamping their image in the electronic and print media. Mohsin Raza said that media has changed the world into a global village today; Pakistani media has been very



positively affected by change. He threw light upon the process of growth and strengthening of electronic & print media and their mounting competition with one another. He stated that no doubt electronic media enjoys utmost technological advancement and has left print media, way behind, which was the only source of information in the past.

But, he continued "print media is still doing its best for opinion-building and setting trends for the people of this country". He cherished the struggle of media for the attainment of its present stature, repute and the freedom it enjoys. He also talked about the watchdog role of civil society

organizations and commended their work for the eradication of poverty and betterment of the rural communities and marginalized but his point of concern was the negative projection of NGO's in the media and society. Later question & answer session was held with the audience which gave the attendees an opportunity to interact with the chief guest more personally. From the session, it emerged that for media to promote the role of CSOs there has to be fair reporting and interpretation of the ongoing activities. Since there is no communication between media and CSOs, it seems that they are somewhat reluctant to go side by side with media. He said that it would be good enough if the two could work together in close collaboration for a greater cause that is to serve humanity.

He emphasized that everyone should have the courage to stand against what is wrong and should raise their voice against any repression and unfair deals. He urged all the civil society organizations to come forward and make partnership with the media. The lecture was attended by Agha Ali Javad, GM NRSP, Mr. Fayyaz Baqir,



members of the Sindh Rural Support Organization (SRSO), staff of NRSP-IRM and RSPN.

By: Adnan Mubarak

Akhter Hameed Khan Resource Center

Public Forum: Migration and It's Impact on Rural Economy

The NRSP- Institute of Rural Management hosted the Akhter Hameed Khan Public Forum on the topic of "Migration and It's Impact on Rural Economy". This Akhter Hameed Khan Resource Center (AHKRC) initiative, in association with the Rural Support Programmes Network, is on-going activity. The panel comprised Haris Gazdar; economist and peace worker, Dr. Karin Astrid; SDPI Research fellow, Arif Hasan; Urban Planner Qrangi Pilot Project, and Dr. Pervez Tahir; Mehboob-ul-Haq Chair Economics, GCU, Lahore. Fayyaz Baqir; Senior advisor civil society UNDP, explained the purpose of these forums; to give development workers and students fresh food for thought.

H. Gazdar opened the discussion shunning the "benign" pictures painted by Standard Economic and Empiricist models. "There are fictions in the labour market that we must investigate," he warned. He favoured a more holistic approach: "Migration as perspective," which may answer some questions raised by traditional models, such as "where are the women in this picture?"

Dr. K. Astrid's thesis: Making The Gender Dimension Visible in Dir and Swat, contained details of gender concerns raised by migration. What



emerges is a picture of women left behind to manage a myriad responsibilities, with limited support. In Dr. Astrid's own words, "Money is not enough". A gendered human rights approach is to use the migration "rupture" for female empowerment.

A. Hasan collected data from a series of interviews and anecdotes culled from the residents of Mithi, Uch and Chinoit. The information generated highlights how migration affects each community differently. His methodology creates a holistic approach towards realistically understanding migration. Arif Hasan's work reflected Haris Gazdar's ideas creating a synergy of thought in the panel.



Dr. Pervez Tahir, in the spirit of brevity summed up with few words, "the story of development is the story of migration". He reiterated issues of braindrain and the futility of attempting to stop migration. A question/answer session followed which allowed the attendees to stretch their own intellectual muscles. Shoaib Sultan Khan inquired of Karen Astrid whether if asked, the women in Dir and Swat would want their husbands to return. It emerged that the hardships far outweigh the monetary benefits in many cases, and the women would actually desire their husbands to return. However, Dr. Astrid made it clear that this was her informed guess rather than fact.

By: Sascha Akhter

Supporting the Agenda

Rohi Handloom Project

The Vocational Training Programme (VTP) of NRSP-IRM offers rural men & women the opportunity to develop and strengthen their skills. The idea is to provide communities with the productive skills to begin or expand a business concern and provide them a tool to fight against poverty.

IRM has been imparting training in over 90 different trades and vocational skills. The Vocational training events are conducted with the funding support of PPAF, ILO and other government and non-government institutes and agencies.

In June 2006, NRSP Bahawalpur region in collaboration with SMEDA started a pilot project on Handloom development in Rohi, Bahawalpur. The target of the project was to train people within the period of one year while the objective was not only to provide skills to the villagers but also to revive this skill as Handloom had almost vanished from these areas mainly because this sector had become dependent on yarn produced by mills and increasing competition with cloth producing mills.



NRSP is committed to reduce unemployment and strengthen village based skills to secure productivity. This effort is based on the confidence that handloom textiles are not a sun set industry and it has a sufficient scope of spreading out that would ultimately provide employment opportunities to thousands of people living in those areas.

One of the salient features of the Handloom project is Gender Equality. Both the men and women are being

given training without any discrimination as this activity is not only a source of income for the men but also for the women living in rural areas. In addition to that it is easily accessible and very useful for its application of domestic and traditional skills. Handloom industry can play a key role in the employment and income for women at home in villages and cities, as well as enable them to enter into a network contributing to increase the productivity of the country. The hallmark of the project is that trainees are given Rs. 100 daily along with the skill training.



NRSP provides training to the poor, the tools used and the linkages for the utilization of that particular skill. As far as the Handloom is concerned, NRSP has provided 73 Khaddies on credit to the men & women in various communities of Bahawalpur. The total cost of one khaddi is around 20,000. People after paying back the cost of Khaddi in easy installments start operating independently.

Supporting the Agenda

Skill Development for Self or Wage Employment

In June 2007, NRSP D.G. Khan region in collaboration with International Labour Organization (ILO) started a project on "Skill Development for Self or Wage Employment" (Women Employment Concern Pakistan) in the District. D.G. Khan. It was the support of different training institutes that made this project successful. The institutes involved in this project were Small and Medium Enterprise Development Association, Sanat Zar, Abad Center, Pakistan Bait-ul-Mall, Vocational Training Institute and Kanwal Beauty Parlor. There is a whole procedure involved for the selection of these training institutes i.e. availability of trades, experienced and professional trainers, availability of training facilities and professional competency.

The project was specially designed for the rural women of the district. The immediate objective of the project was to provide training to the 500 women of the area. They were to be provided with the training in nine different trades such as Adda work, Tailoring, Hand embroidery, Beautician, Machine embroidery, Tie and dye, Pico, Peesh



and Misc while the duration of the project was ten months (June 2007 – March 2008). The target has been successfully achieved within the said duration as 75% women are involved in self or wage employment.

Riffat Mai is one of the rural women who learnt the skill of Adda work from this project. She is the resident of Talu Gharh, D.G Khan. She is 35 and mother of eight children. Her husband is suffering from some serious disease and unable to do any work. So she is

the sole breadwinner of her family. She says that before training it was very difficult for her to make both ends meet. Although the money she earns after learning the skill is not enough for her family but she is now at least able to provide food to her children. She says that NRSP not only provided her the skill but also the Adda that she works on to earn her living. She proudly says that this training brought prosperity to her family.

She prepares three suites in a week and her son does marketing to expand her work. She charges Rs 600 per suit and now she is earning more than Rs 7,000 per month.

At the present, she is able to send her children in a local government school and can easily buy books for them and medicines for her husband as he is ailing. She has also started a committee in order to save her money. She says that after receiving support from NRSP, and through their assistance she feels confident. Thus, developing these skills means empowering poor and preparing them to become entrepreneurs.



By: Saeeda Zardac

Up Coming Training and Events



June, 2008

Women's Leadership Programme

Women's Leadership Programme is arranging Phase III Cohort - II of WLP which will focus on Project Cycle Management and Monitoring & Evaluation.
June 30 – July 11, 2008.



July, 2008

Workshop on Developing Core Competencies - VI

Professional Development Programme is organizing a series of six days workshop on "Developing Core Competencies" at IRM Islamabad in 2008. The workshop is meant for RSPs mid and senior level managers. The purpose of the workshop is to develop writing and speaking skills among the human resources.
July 7 – 11, 2008.

Women's Leadership Programme

Women's Leadership Programme is arranging follow up for Cohort - I focusing on Monitoring and Evaluation.
July 9 – 11, 2008.



Training of Trainers (ToT)

A ToT for all the trainers involved in the process of designing and delivering of training, is being conducted at IRM.
July 15 – 24, 2008.



August, 2008

Workshop on 1st Aid Road Safety for Drivers

A workshop on 1st Aid Road Safety and Attitude change for drivers is being organized at IRM.
Aug 2 – 3, 2008.

Workshop on Developing Core Competencies - VII

Aug 4 -8, 2008.

Recruitment Training

A training on Effective Recruitment and Performance Appraisal Process for all RSP managers involved in the process of recruitment and performance appraisal is being organized at IRM
Aug19 -21,2008



Sep, 2008

Workshop on Developing Core Competencies - VIII

Sep 8 – 12, 2008.

Academic Collaboration Between Institute of Rural Management and Iqra University



Dr. Jamil Ahmad, Dean - IU and
Roomi S. Hayat, Executive Director - NRSP-IRM Signing DoA

A Deed of Agreement (DoA) for academic collaboration was signed between Iqra University (IU) and NRSP-Institute of Rural Management (IRM) on Tuesday April 8, 2008. The DoA was signed by Dr. Jamil Ahmad, Dean-IU and Mr. Roomi Saeed Hayat, Executive Director-IRM.

The main objective of signing of the DoA was to develop various academic awards such as post-graduate diplomas and short courses in collaboration of the two organizations and accreditation of the Women's Leadership Programme (WLP) of IRM.

Mr. Hayat opined that opportunities for women to achieve managerial and leadership positions are limited as compared to men. Therefore, a woman focused year long programme named Women's Leadership Programme (WLP) has been launched by NRSP-IRM in collaboration with Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN). The WLP is an advanced programme aimed at empowering women professionals in the rural development sector. He said that with this collaboration

between two academic institutions, participants of Cohort I of WLP who have already graduated and cohort II will be able to transfer credit hours into a Master's Degree Programme at Iqra University.

Elaborating the role of NRSP-IRM, he said that the emphasis in any training or programme at IRM is always on maintaining a balance between theory and hands-on experience in the field.

WLP is the best example of such a programme.

He further said that Participatory development is the foundation of the edifice of NRSP which the future academic programmes of IRM will deliver, in order to facilitate coordination and participation in "bottom up" initiatives, and also strengthen the delivery of "top-down" policies.

As far as the theory is concerned, courses and programmes will include core development theory and policy, community mobilization, rural political economy, participatory management and rural management.

Mr. Jamil Ahmad in his concluding remarks said that we hope that this agreement will open new horizons for women working in the ever-increasing development sector which will ultimately lead to empowerment of both men and women. Mr. Ijaz Khaliq and Mr. Adnan Mubarak also represented NRSP in the ceremony.

Invest in yourself and Gear up for a Brilliant Career

NRSP

INSTITUTE OF RURAL MANAGEMENT

Golden opportunity for students and professionals working in development sector to enhance their knowledge from this research based professional degree of International Islamic University Islamabad in collaboration with NRSP - Institute of Rural Management.

M.Sc Leading to M Phil in Rural Development (MRD) (2 years)

Admission Requirements

16 years of education; BS/BSc(Hons) in Development Studies, Economics, Agricultural Economics, Commerce, Business Administration, MA/ MSc or equivalent qualification with at least 45% marks.

Last date for submission of applications: July 15, 2008

Test & Interview: August 10, 2008

For further details visit : www.irm.edu.pk/mrd.asp

By: Adnan Mubarak

Human Resource Development Sectoral Workshop



In order to review the progress of last year and prepare implementation plan for capacity building activities for current year, the HRD Sectoral Review and Planning meeting was held on March 27-28, 2008 at NRSP-IRM. All the regions of IRM including DG Khan, Mardan, Bahawalpur, Mianwali, Rawalpindi, AJK Muzafarabad and, Hyderabad participated in the workshop.

The agenda of the meeting was to review the target vs. achievement of different regions, especially PPAF funded capacity building component, presentation on best case study of the



region, presentation and review of training Implementation plan for year 2008-09 and regional issues and concerns.

The representatives from all the regions delivered their presentations and shared their best practices which included many success stories from every region.

Mr. Agha Ali Javad, GM-NRSP, Malik Fateh Khan, RGM Rawalpindi-NRSP and Mr. Roomi Saeed Hayat, Director-NRSP-IRM also attended the workshop



and discussed the issues and concerns of the regions and appreciated the best practices of the regions as well as gave their suggestions for further improvements.

Agha Ali Javad updated the participants with the future programmes and also informed them about the MOUs on two mega projects namely Mid Term Development Framework and Crop Maximization Project. Agha Ali Javad informed the participants that a total of Rs.4.2 billion have been allocated for the MTDF of which 1 billion is specified for the community training. Fund has also been allocated to the Community Investment Fund (CIF).

He stressed the need to achieve 100% coverage in each and every district where RSPs are present. He further added that we need to adopt new methodologies to introduce Community Resource Persons (CRP).

As far as Crop Maximization Project is concerned, NRSP will work in seven districts. He said that now we have sufficient resources at our disposal and don't have any excuses for not expanding our work. He asked the participants to develop proper manuals & guidelines for micro-credit and ensure 50% women participation in credit.

Mr. Javad suggested that IRM needs to introduce MIS training in every region & HR team should visit every region to identify their issues & concerns and make a report on them. He also gave approval for installing MIS in all the regions. He suggested IRM to arrange more training activities through local communities and ensure equal women participation. IRM should also ensure the effective utilization of those activities.

To assess the level of development Director IRM, asked the HRD professional of all the regions to discuss their activities with MIS section of IRM and also stressed the need of strengthening the coordination between regions and IRM. Mr. Roomi Saeed Hayat, answering to a question raised by Agha Ali Javad said that IRM is imparting orientation training to the staff and also training the trainers.



After the Handloom presentation by Mr. Shehzad from Bahawalpur, Agha Ali Javad appreciated it but asked the participants to be conscious of the serious threat of child labor under the semblance of home based industry.

GM-NRSP was present on both the days and announced that since the workshop was a wonderful learning experience for everyone involved, so it should be held on quarterly basis instead of conducting it once a year.

By: Saeeda Zardad

New Arrivals in Akhter Hameed Khan Resource Center

Coming Back Home

By Sheema Majeed

Human Development in South Asia

By Oxford

The Historical Quarters of Karachi

By Yasmeen Cheema

Changing Perceptions, Altered Reality

By Shahid Javed Burki

Reconciliation Islam, Democracy and the West

By Benazir Bhutto

The Khyber Pass

By Paddy Docherty



IRM NEWS

Roomi S. Hayat Director-IRM has been Promoted to Executive Director and the staff is waiting for a grand dinner from him.

Zobia Nazir Intern Finance and Accounts has been Promoted to Junior Programme officer.

IRM Annual Report has been Published and it is available in AHKRC Library.

Staff of IRM is leaving for ITC-Turin, Italy on 22 June for the purpose of attending capacity building training.



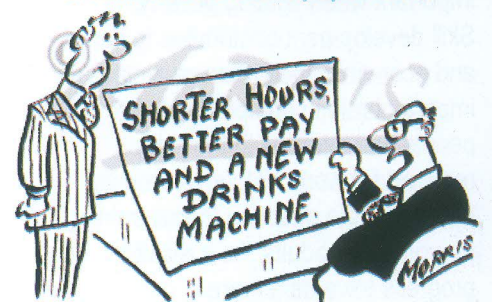
"No hurry on this George, take all weekend if necessary."



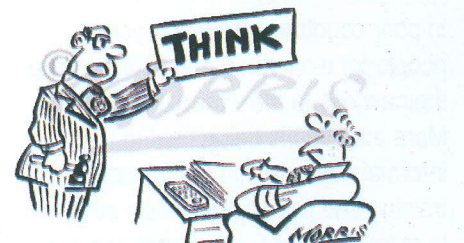
"According to our aptitude tests you are best suited to retirement."



"In the interview they told me the job would involve some paperwork."



"When I asked you to write a mission statement, I never expected this!"



"I won't put it up if you think it will interfere with your work."

Source: www.businesscartoons.co.uk



Developing Skills for Poverty Alleviation

Waqar Haider Awan is member of BOD of Human Resource Development Network (HRDN) and is working for Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN) as Curriculum Development & Training Specialist. Mr. Awan is in the field of Human Resource Development since a decade. He has designed numerous training programmes, developed training manuals and conducted different training programmes especially for youth and workforce development.

Poverty is a multi-dimensional concept. It means more than simply low income. It also includes lack of voice in determining what goes on in one's community, vulnerable livelihoods and food insecurity.

Improving access to the labour market in the informal economy increases income and strengthens social networks. Such access can constitute a powerful tool for poverty alleviation.

Imparting vocational skills, help to ensure food security and rural development, both of which are important when fighting poverty. Skill development contributes to social and economic integration as it plays an important role in equipping young people and adults with the skills required for work. Yet, governments often pay little attention to skill training for youth and adults. As a result, progress towards a more comprehensive approach has been slow.

In poor countries, preparing young people for work often means improving their access to the informal sector. More attention is being paid to the informal sector within the framework of training and poverty-reduction policies. In many transition economies too, the informal sector is growing. This movement can be seen as a form of

poverty, although it represents an important dimension of the economy by providing employment and generating income for the poor and needy.

Skill development, together with other social protection measures, can certainly constitute a powerful tool for poverty reduction. An increasing number of countries are designing innovative strategies in this direction. In a rapidly changing environment, strengthening the skills of rural

"Skills development, together with other social protection measures, can certainly constitute a powerful tool for poverty reduction"

communities can reduce their vulnerability and help them to cope with new economic and social conditions.

Skills development can be considered as a public good. But there are many ways of promoting skills for rural people, one of which is to design cost-effective strategies that can be implemented on a scale compatible with the size of the target population. In this area more research is needed to provide for evidence-based policies. When policy-makers are willing to

invest in skills development to reduce poverty, an immediate problem for many low-income countries is the capacity of the delivery system, both in size and relevance. Apart from the public training system, often relatively small, other providers are atomized and unable to meet the needs. Implementing a skills development policy to reduce poverty also implies building a system able to meet this specific demand. Adequate incentives and support mechanisms are needed to stimulate and improve the training capacity of the non government providers. In this regard the government and donor agencies should strengthen the capacity of those institutes and scale up their programmes.

Certainly, pronouncements abound on the fundamental importance of skills and capacity building in the development process, especially in the fight against poverty. However, a particularly striking feature of most poverty reduction strategies in developing countries is that the role of vocational training in its wide variety of forms is largely absent. This neglect is puzzling not only because of the extent of absolute poverty in most countries, but also because it is widely accepted that training is an essential instrument of public policy, especially for the most vulnerable groups in society. For many, it is precisely because the vast

Skills development can be considered as a public good

potential of training has not been realized yet and the role of vocational training has become so marginalized in most poverty reduction strategies. We

Developing Skills for Poverty Alleviation

are confronted, therefore, by what looks like a major contradiction: Just as governments and donors have begun to give due recognition to the need for concerted efforts to build the human assets/capabilities of poor, training is being accorded less and not more importance.

Identifying the contribution that training can make to reducing levels of poverty among the many of economically vulnerable groups is a major challenge for researchers and policymakers.

Skills development can increase incomes, reduce instability of livelihoods, enhance community participation, and give voice to the poor and needy.

Thus, the role of training in poverty reduction must be situated in a wider analysis of the causes of economic vulnerability. With regard to employment issues, there are three sets of explanatory factors that must be disentangled:

- Lack of human capital
- Presence of labour market discrimination and
- Other distortions and poor macroeconomic and labour market conditions.

Another strategy is to encourage public institutions to target the poor and use new training methodologies. Matching provision to the needs of the poor, particularly in remote rural areas, means working closely with the beneficiaries and in partnership with local communities.

Reorienting formal vocational education institutions towards poverty reduction often involves a substantial change in the system through local networks. Local conditions are crucial, and several experiences highlight the important role that vocational institutes play in local communities not only by providing education and training for work but also in promoting social cohesion and the capacity to work together.

Poverty is more than an individual situation. Allowing members of poor households to integrate a community is a key to preventing social exclusion. Poverty reduction is seen as an important aspect of community development.

Skills development can increase incomes, reduce instability of livelihoods, enhance community

Building specific skills must respond to the market needs, so that the trained professionals may efficiently and effectively contribute in the economic growth

participation, and give voice to the poor and needy.

Whatever concept of training is actually adhered to, it is clear that 'training to overcome economic vulnerability' embraces a much wider set of skills than just conventional technical and managerial competencies. These include basic literacy and numeracy, social and political 'awareness' (gender training being a prime example) and life

skills. Interventions that facilitate 'personal development' by raising self-esteem, confidence and motivation are the main objective of many interventions. Similarly, it is generally accepted that enterprise development and income generating projects require more complex combinations of skills with much heavier emphasis on social and management skills rather than narrowly defined technical competencies.

In the end few important lessons can be drawn for the skill building in Pakistan:

- Building skills is important for economic growth. But the relationship is not linear. So we have to decide the extent of vocational education and training that has to be developed, depending upon the level of development and demand for skills. Plans for vocational education and training should be preceded by detailed manpower analyses and forecasts.
- As vocational education is necessarily expensive, the government should make adequate allocation of resources for vocational education. Poor investments cannot yield attractive returns.
- Building specific skills must respond to the market needs, so that the trained professionals may efficiently and effectively contribute in the economic growth.
- Lastly, issues relating to vocational education and training are not just curriculum questions, nor are they just economic. They are intricately linked with social, cultural, historical, economic, technical, and political parameters.

Strength in Numbers:

Social Mobilization of Women in Baluchistan



Gwadar has made an appearance in the common imagination over the past six years as a fantastical utopia. In Karachi, signboards announcing the arrival of Gwadar as a Pakistani Dubai have been fuelling this perception. Out of all the provinces in our country Balochistan is commonly perceived as the one most in need. Gwadar then appears as a surprise and also perhaps a boon for the Balochis to boost their economy. However, the reality of Gwadar is a far cry from the imagined ideal.

Over a period of ten days, I visited various localities in and around Gwadar and Turbat field regions. Against the advice of just about everybody I discussed my plan with, due to the onset of a vicious summer, I decided to go as I had heard that women had been taking a major role in the improvement of their lives.

Gwadar has historically been and still essentially is, a fishing village. The men

go out on their boats while women are left to their own devices, to take care of the households, their children et al. This is the reason that efforts to mobilize the people of Gwadar has best been done through the women. The first woman I met, was Mumtaz of *Kumariwar*. She has been an active member of her community for many years. In the first instance, she managed to create a Community Organization with the female members of various households in order to discuss their problems and devise solutions. "I tried to impart the value of savings to the other women," she told me. It is through understanding the value of savings that Mumtaz and the other CO members, all women, have been able to make improvements, together, as a team. One of the main things that all the women agreed on, including Hosna, the manager of the community organization was that their children must be educated. "It doesn't matter to us if we live well, but at least through our efforts now, our children will have a better future".

Mumtaz and the other women's homes are of concrete, but are bare. Mumtaz, has a small kitchen, a central room in which her husband, two sons, daughter and her sleep and live. In this room there are however, books. Her daughter tells me in very good English, "I love books!" The concerted efforts of her mother have given this girl hope and confidence. She is learning English at an English Learning Centre, as her mother believes that this is a necessary tool in to have for a better future. Through growing up around a woman such as her mother and seeing her efforts to mobilize and empower others she too is empowered; the effects of social mobilization on future generations. She wants to become a doctor, in order to help her own people.

There is also one other room in their home, a small computer room. Through realizing the benefits of saving and pooling resources, Mumtaz has managed to provide this for her children. Other women also aspire to having a computer in their home, and some already do. Food and nutrition is taken care of relatively easily, as the Dads brings home the fish.

Mumtaz's own daughter could speak English very well. Her mother made sure of that.

There is strength in numbers and with this belief Mumtaz has managed to organize a number of heads of COs from outerlying villages into a Village Development Organization (VDO). They have monthly meetings to discuss how they can make things happen on a village level. I attended one of these meetings and was quite intimidated by the strength and power displayed by the woman who were there representing their communities. Asha

Strength in Numbers:

Social Mobilization of Women in Baluchistan

an elderly bespeckled but vibrant lady with a mobile phone in one hand and a tasbeeh in the other was quite vociferous. "We Baluchis have made many sacrifices. In the same way that we have organized ourselves and have meetings every month, we will have our voices heard whether it is in London, Russia, America or France. We will go to all the villages, talk to the women and men, get the leaders of the communities together, and in this way as many fingers make up a hand, we will be successful in improving our lives!"

I had no doubt that with Asha as a leader anything less than what she said would happen. One of the major hurdles to overcome when trying to convey ideas of any kind to people even if it is about the improvement of their own lives, is apathy. How do you get people to listen, understand and believe in their own power? It is women like Asha and Mumtaz that can actually mobilize other women. I told Mumtaz as much, that if Asha was to tell me to do something there was no way I would not do it!

When development work was first started in Mumtaz's area, she was not aware of the importance of education, the value of cleanliness, the power of savings, things that perhaps educated and "developed" urbanites take for granted, but it did not take her long to understand how these things could help her and her people. Mumtaz is empowered to such a degree that she has taken on a role as town councillor. The other women are behind her all the way. "We have faith in Mumtaz," Hosna the CO's manager told me. Mumtaz shared that she took on the role because other men had done so and done nothing, whereas she actually

believes she can make things happen, "Also, women can only talk about certain female problems to other women," she intimated.

One of the major obstacles to overcome is the lack of proper sewage disposal. "Our sewage just flows out into our streets. We have made huge efforts to have new pipes put in, but everytime this has been done, they malfunction," Mumtaz tells me. "And naturally with raw sewage comes disease. We want this to stop". Towards this end, she believes that if all the heads of various VDO's come together they can form a Local Support Organization (LSO), which in effect is a larger platform via which the women can communicate with not just Government but also outside donors. Through collective savings they can create better sewage and water facilities. Mumtaz and her compatriots, also want to set up an English Language and Computer Centre in order to provide the children of all the villages with the skills they have a firm conviction in them needing to succeed in the future. She and her fellow community and VDO members want to rent a space for training the community in these skills. Unfortunately, the state of Gwadar is affected by external influences such as Government and outside developers. Rents are higher than Islamabad city, which is rather hard to believe, but true nonetheless. I asked the District Programme Officer about this, and he confirmed that they were trying to help Mumtaz set up the Skill Centre but rents were a huge obstacle that even NRSP offices were struggling with.

Mumtaz also manages her husband's affairs. Through microfinancing with the help of NRSP, she told me that she

managed to purchase a new net for her husband. Nets are extremely expensive, in the lacs, but for a fisherman two things are indispensable, his boat and his net both of which are huge investments, which nonetheless if procured reap huge benefits to earnings. "We want to get to the point where we don't need NRSP, or anyone else. By creating an LSO we hope to have our own Non-Governmental Organization," said Mumtaz. "There has been a great deal of tunnelling going on which is killing the fish. We have taken out rallies, and sat in the sun for hours in protest," she tells me. Those who earn their living from the sea have a fluctuating income in any case, the actual loss of fish could be detrimental to a vast number of families. These are the types of complex problems that the women of Gwadar face. Many households have also been forcibly re-located to make way for the new development plans. These households, such as Mola Band were removed from being close to the sea, that they depend on, further inland. Mumtaz is afraid that they too might be re-located which would make mobility a problem.

However, she and other women such as Hosna and Asha are not taking any of this lying down. They are not subject to a passive fatalism. They have belief in their own abilities. As one young community member Rozina said to me, "If one woman tries to pick up a large rock she will have difficulties, however, if all of us try to pick up that rock, it will become much easier. In this way, we do believe that we can do things to help ourselves, we women can help ourselves". What is hard to believe is that Rozina is only 19. It might be worth taking a few pages from her book of life.

Words and Image by: Sascha Akhter

Case Studies: Skill Development

VTP has focused particularly on informal sector opportunities for employment and income generation, linking skills and business training to identify viable, employment and small business opportunities.

A total of 10,067 participants (2,542 males and 7,525 females) have been trained in vocational and technical skills at the VTECs in the year 2006-07. These case studies are contributed by the regional offices of NRSP. We highly appreciate Shehzad Anwar-Bahawalpur region, Hasina Baloch-D.G Khan and Shah Faisal-Mardan for their contributions.

Determination Leads to Success

Zulfiqar Ali belongs to a very poor family living in Maneri Bala, District Swabi. He has three brothers and two sisters along with his parents to



Zulfiqar Ali
Maneri Bala, District Swabi

support financially. His father is very old therefore unable to earn money for his family. After his matriculation, Zulfiqar could not continue his further

education due to economic constraints. He started work as a farmer on his small piece of land along with his other brothers because he wanted to share financial burden of the family.

One day he was sitting on a small bridge with few of his friends, when he saw a four-wheeler with the word NRSP written on it. They got very curious and wondered what exactly NRSP is and what it is doing in that particular community.

Then a passer-by told him about NRSP and asked them to join the tanzim of "Khair-un-nass".

Subsequently, Zulfiqar became eager to join it as he wanted to learn tailoring skills. He was working as an apprentice for almost a year but still could not learn the basics of tailoring.

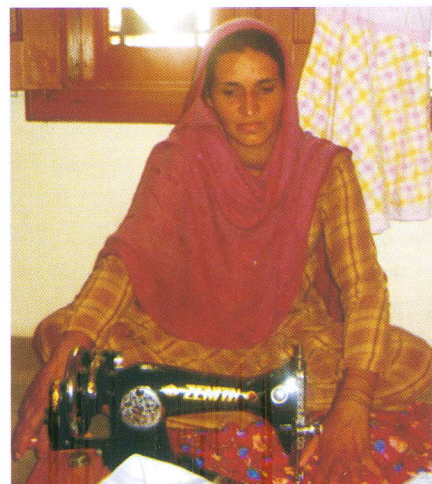
After the completion of his training, he came back with increased confidence and tailoring skills polished. He has opened a small tailoring shop, and has hired another person as an apprentice who helps him in his work. He is able to run this shop independently and makes about 200-250 per suit.

NRSP provided him with the skills via training in order to make him independent socially and economically. He is now supporting his family and has also gained respect in his community. At the age of 20, Zulfiqar is now empowered and has achieved his ambitions due to our training program.

Efforts Do Bring a Change

Parveen Bibi is a member of the Community Organization (CO) Wasthi Majohi Union Council Chattr Domail, Tehsil Hattian Bala, District Muzaffarabad. Her husband, Khadim Hussain was running a shop of grocery

before the October 8, 2005 earthquake. His monthly income was around Rs.10,000. But the earthquake not only destroyed his business but also left him



Parveen Bibi,
Tehsil Hattian Bala, District Muzaffarabad

completely paralyzed.

In areas where men are supposed to be the sole bread-winners and women are mostly restricted to household chores, such accidents bring economic vulnerability to the families.

Before the earthquake, they had three buffalos whose milk they used to sell for additional economy but the tremor also killed their two buffalos.

For many months nobody in the family knew what to do. Even the daily utensils were under the debris. The only thing which provided them some relief was their single buffalo whose milk and butter was used for nutritional purposes. Some relief agencies also provided tents, shelter and some items for daily use. As Khadim Hussain was not able to work anymore, his wife Parveen, 33, had to work to feed her three children and paralyzed husband.

She wanted to engage herself in some activity through which she could contribute to the family's income. In June 2006, National Rural Support

Case Studies: Skill Development

Programme (NRSP) started "Post Disaster Livelihood Reconstruction in Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK).

When the community organization (CO) formation started in August 2007, Parveen Bibi was among the pioneer members. The CO was formed on October 18, 2006 and was named Wasthi Majohi Female CO. The total membership of this CO is 20. After introduction of the program to the CO members, they were requested to identify vulnerable persons in the community. Parveen Bibi was identified as helpless and she also showed great interest in sewing clothes. She was interviewed by a Human Resource Development Specialist who found her suitable for the training workshop. She attended a one month training workshop on Tailoring from March 25 to April 25, 2007. She had never done this kind of work before. A sewing machine was also provided by NRSP and she started work immediately after the completion of training.

For demonstration, she sewed some suits for her family members which were liked by most of the local women. This attracted many of them to come to her home and place orders for sewing their clothes.

The importance of capacity building coupled with basic assistance can hardly be overemphasized for income generation. This is especially helpful for those who are needy and cannot afford to get any training or assistance.

Now Parveen Bibi sews at least two suits daily and charges Rs.120 per suit. In the first two months, her earning was Rs.5000 per month. Before the earthquake, their income was more than Rs.10,000 per month, which is double of what she makes now, however, Parveen Bibi is satisfied

because she can extend her business and earn more. She has already contacted a shop-keeper in Garhi Dopatta to display her work. She also has set up a tailoring center in one room of her house where she teaches and this helps her make more income, as other women have started coming to her.

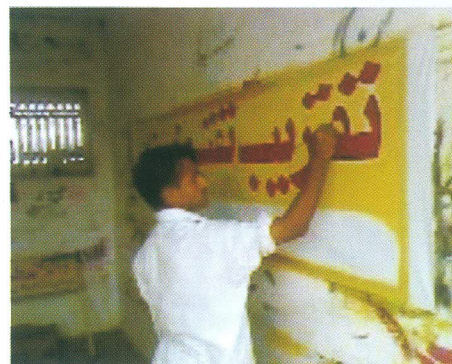
Artistic Hands

Shah Faisal and Nadeem are cousins belonging to a very poor family living in Katlang District, Mardan. Shah Faisal's father is a security guard and earns a very low income while Nadeem's father has passed away. After their matriculation, they started a small shop of handmade paintings in Katlang Bazaar. The shop generated an income of Rs. 1000-1500 per month which was not enough to sustain them.

Shah Faisal and Nadeem learnt about Vocational Skills Training being provided to the youth at NRSP project out-reach office in Katlang. They were trained for two months in a local arts painting center in Mardan. The training brought a significant change in their abilities, polishing their



skills of like glass painting. Now they are economically strong and from a social perspective, have become popular in their community. They are now making enough money every month; Rs.5000-6000 i.e. 4 times their prior income. They are now a fully functioning independent part of society.



Shah Faisal and Nadeem have gained confidence and are able to impart this skill to others. They have personally trained 12 ILO-TREE Project beneficiaries in two batches. A future prospect that they envision is the introduction of painting in their

"This training program has polished our skills and changed our lives"
– Shah Faisal

community. Fabric painting is comparatively costly; therefore they are saving up in order to initiate this business. They also want to expand, and have decided to open a shop in the same district in the near future.



Shah Faisal & Nadeem
Katlang District, Mardan.

Akhter Hameed Khan

Resource Center



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