

End Project Report

# Strengthening Democratic Governance in Pakistan- SDGP Program

April 2006 – June 2010

Implementing Partner  
**South Asia Partnership -Pakistan (SAP-PK)**

With the Financial Assistance of  
**Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)**  
And  
**Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)**



# 1 BACKGROUND

## 1-1 Project Background and Rationale

In so far as democracy and governance are concerned, Pakistan presents the worst of all cases in South Asian region. Our country is now about sixty four years with half of its time for the military rulers and the rest for civilian's controlled form of democracy.

The tension between dictators and democratic governments has not been a battle for peoples' rights as one might derive an impression from civilians' role. It has largely been for securing more and more control on power and resources, elimination of politically or ideologically "other" and defying human development reports and views of the Amnesty International, Transparency International, Human Rights Watch, United Nations, World Financial Institutions, Commonwealth, European Union, etc., regarding key areas of citizens' concerns, especially governance, human security, religious intolerance, black laws against women and minorities, poverty, primary education, basic health, community water and sanitation etc. We can appreciate the civil governments to an extent that they did not at least lose Pakistan geographically during their time and continued to engage global fraternity on important matters. But they obviously did not produce the desired results in terms of providing people their fundamental rights as guaranteed in the Constitution of Pakistan and international commitments and MDG targets that state of Pakistan made on behalf its citizens. That's why, cumulatively, we have the worst form of human insecurity, violence against women, inefficient poverty and poor health, poor water and sanitation, gender disparities, mother and child mortality and infrastructure conditions are some of the very prominent challenges that push citizens further below the line of acceptable standards of living. This is obviously called bad governance the discredit of which goes to all indiscriminately.

Governance stands as the central thread of peoples' lives. Every road leads to even though we are political or apolitical. Realizing the same factor, SAP-PK planned to indent the contemporary form of governance. It planned to make use of the political, social and economic space available with the President General Musharraf's devolution plan in 2006. SAP-PK designed Strengthening Democratic Governance in Pakistan (SDGP) project for the same purpose and mainstreaming peasants and rural workers specially women and non-Muslims in the political and democratic processes.

Despite being criticized for administrative implications the Musharraf's devolution plan rendered, it generally welcomed the participation of religious minorities, peasants and workers and nearly 80,000 local representatives, including 33 % women, as political interface. It also promised peoples' control on resources and local decisions and policies. Similarly, it created a little space for general people to form their groups and participate in matters affecting them and, through forming Citizens' Community Boards (CCB), implemented need-based local development projects. Undeniably, that scenario had the potential to draw people of Pakistan into

a new frame of governance. They were dealing with general councilors and those representing religious minorities, women, peasants/workers, Nazims and Naib Nazims; all of whom spread across the union, tehsil, district councils; various committees and sub-committees. They were forming CCBs and trying to implement development schemes. But there were various challenges for everyone too. For instance, the system of local government itself was quite fluid so far. The Local Government Ordinance which appeared in 2001 remained under a constant review. At one point of time, Chief Minister acquired the power of sending a Nazim back home on the charge of “poor performance”. Now giving direct power the Chief Minister to replace head of the local government flouted the very idea of the “devolution of power”. Similarly, another challenge with this system was inconsonance of elected and non-elected officials and locally elected representatives lacked



knowledge and skills of in making people their strength by involving them at every level of planning and decision making. Communications and connections among elected representatives, government officials and communities was also a missing link that blocked the planning and development flow at the local level. Citizens monitoring of government functionaries and elected councils was also a rare concept. This was the scenario when South Asia Partnership-Pakistan designed and implemented Strengthening Democratic Governance in Pakistan (SDGP) with the financial assistance of CIDA and SDC. SAP-PK as a civil society organization accepted its share of responsibility of making governance in Pakistan responsive and participatory. The vision that SAP-PK had with years of working directly with communities, especially the majority of the population, peasants and workers, was that:

- i) Peasants, workers, women and religious minorities needed to:
  - Organize themselves into groups, at the village, union, tehsil and district levels, in and around their issues of governance
  - Gain in-depth knowledge about governance and its benevolent characteristics, and functions of different tiers of the government, especially local government
  - Have knowledge about all forms of resources available in communities and constituencies of the elected representatives
  - Gain access to available resources, through forming CCBs, and use those resources productively and efficiently in the best interest of the poorer
  - Effectively engage local elected representatives in and around issues of local development planning

- Be part of the local development initiatives of the local government, by evolving community-based monitoring systems
  - Liaise with local government-line-agencies, including the ones related to water management, education, health, livestock, etc. and make them responsive to their needs
  - Gain understanding about the existing successful development models of other communities (through exposures) and create linkages with other civil society groups to effectively pursue the agenda of pro-poor governance
  - Monitor and assess the progress of government functionaries, elected representatives and contractors and present public views on policies, plans and schemes.
  - Engage in multi-stakeholder dialogues to present pro-poor policies and plans and build effective pressure for people's friendly legislations;
  - Develop their own political leadership in order to set the tone of change in favor of the socially, politically and economically oppressed
- ii) Elected representatives and government line departments, of the target communities, have to:
- Involve community groups in planning, implementation and monitoring of the development activities
  - Demonstrate gender sensitivity in planning, resource allocation and resource utilization (both in the context of women and religious minorities)
  - Perform duties efficiently and effectively and be open to accountability and public scrutiny
  - Respond to peoples, especially poor peasants and workers' needs and entitlements and formulate and improve policies in their favor;
  - Promote participation of communities in their development planning, monitoring and other community development processes.



These thrusts formed the basis of SDGP.

## 1-2 Intended Impact and Outcome Results:

SDGP was a broad-based program of SAP-PK and its partners for organizing and mainstreaming the peasants, women, religious minorities and workers with the political and social processes as voters, contestants and watchdogs.

The project SDGP aimed to enable the mentioned stakeholders to effectively negotiate with social, political and economic opportunities available in and around the Constitution and Local government plan. It was about organizing them as skilled, informed, democratic and culturally, ethnically and religiously sensitive groups with an ultimate target that they influence local, provincial and national political system and service delivery system in favor of their rights and entitlements. In programmatic terms, the overall purpose of the project was to contribute to an enabling environment for democratic governance and citizens' participation, especially the vulnerable, in political decision-making and other processes.

To achieve the above stated, the implementing partners undertook capacity development, advocacy, research, networking and infrastructure development programs with community based groups of peasants, workers, women and religious minorities, elected representatives and government line agencies. The project was implemented in 40 districts of Pakistan (**Annex 1: Names of Districts**).

From year 2006 onwards SAP-PK implemented two phases of SDGP Program. First Phase was implemented from April 2006 to March 2009. The second phase, which

was to be cut short because of the unavailability of funding due to the withdrawal of support from the new government which took over in 2008 and inability of the system to perform without the government's support, was implemented from April 2009 to March 2010, with financial reserves carried forward from the previous phase and some additional support from CIDA and SDC.



## **SDGP Program Phase I: April 2006-March 2009**

In the first phase, SAP-PK planned to achieve seven key Results. These were as following:

**Result-1:** Peasants and rural workers, especially women and minorities, are organized and enabled to negotiate their rights and utilize their potential

**Result-2:** Functioning of elected representatives and local government institutions improved and are more responsive to PWGs' interests

**Result-3:** Systems and mechanisms for effective and efficient social service delivery of selected GLAs demonstrated.

**Result-4:** Enhanced and more equitable participation of peasants and rural workers in local government decision-making and accountability (re: policies, plans & implementation) supported.

**Result-5:** Experiences and issues of local government system are drawn, disseminated and (collectively) advocated for policy improvement.

**Result-6:** Existing local level civil society support and cooperation mechanisms strengthened.

**Result-7:** SAP-PK's transformation to an independent focal point institution for civic education initiated.

### **SDGP- Phase II (April 2009-December 2011)**

In the second phase, following the LFA exercise in which representatives of CIDA and SDC also participated, results of Phase 1 was trimmed down, to four from seven. These were as following:

**Result-1:** Vulnerable collectively liaise, engage and negotiate for their rights and issues with actors in and outside the government.

**Result-2:** CSOs are actively advocating and supporting peasants and workers initiatives at respective level.

**Result-3:** Decision-making and services are pro-poor.

**Result-4:** SAP-PK is viable and one of the leading organization for advocating vulnerable groups' agendas.

### **1-3 Strategy Including Gender and Capacity Building**

Gender was a cross cutting theme in SDGP Program. In order to ensure gender equality, SAP-PK adopted a three pronged strategy:

One, it developed a SDGP implementation policy framework and developed a gender desk responsible for guidance in implementation, policy review and reporting, at the top level. This desk was working autonomously and supported Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) team in its work. At the policy level,



gender equality was aimed to integrate at the levels of

program activity design, implementation, reporting, administration, travel, stay and everything.

At the second level, SAP-PK organized briefings, orientations and trainings on gender for all levels of staff both at the national as well as provincial offices. These trainings were not only for conceptual clarity but also for understanding how to interpret gender equality at the grass roots and policy forums in the light of SDGP itself.

At the third level, the strategy adopted by SAP-PK was to organize rigorous follow-ups and assessment of quarterly plans developed as the result of consultations among implementing partners, provincial offices and the national office. Regular review and planning meetings with program staff, volunteers, partners and key stakeholders were organized.

SAP-Pakistan general body and national council provided policy guidance, progress oversight and program directions in regular meetings. Annual strategic review and planning process also helped in keeping the program directions clear and in focus.

Capacity building and human development are the main focuses of SDGP Program. For SAP-Pak HID is an approach that enables communities and marginalized sections to effectively participate in development process, promote self-motivated initiatives and enables communities in taking informed choices and raising voice for their rights and entitlements. SDGP has effectively capacitated several hundred peasants and workers group (PWGs) and their networks to be effective organs of change and development.

## **1-4 Anticipated Risks**

During the course of the project, SDGP faced some low, medium and high level risks.

Low level risks were mostly those concerning support from GLAs, elected representatives and politicians and availability of trained staff and volunteers. We addressed the risk of lukewarm support with the involvement of the local people and created pressure through protests, meetings, discussions and dialogues, and worked out a short term and long term staff capacity building plan for addressing the risk of unavailability of trained people. Strategy of continuous engagement, follow-up and interaction with government representatives at union council, tehsil and district level was adopted. This engagement and social communication methods helped in bridging gaps and improving mutual understanding within communities, government and elected representatives.

Medium level risks were concerned with law and order situation. For example, in province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, situation became volatile when Taliban took over and military operation was launched in May 2009 in the former and killing of Nawab Akbar Bugti took place in the latter province. In this situation, SAP-PK scaled



down its work at the communities level, in order to avoid loss of human life on the one hand and to stay relevant on the other hand. At some points of time, SAP-PK even redirected its resources to small poverty alleviation models and social mobilization in order to keep the momentum intact and to assure people of our support in times of crisis. In some areas where military actions were going on SAP-PK changed its strategies and worked through its local networks and avoiding conflict areas. However with effective engagement with civil society and political forces in these areas some risks were also minimized.

High level risk was discontinuity of the local government system itself. This risk was beyond control of SAP-PK. We continued to resist through peoples mobilization though. We believed LGS was the best chance to strengthen democracy at the grass roots and to improve women's social and political status in society.

## 2 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

SDGP was implemented with the help of national office, four provincial offices and 42 district partners and more than 520 village level peasants and workers groups (PWGs). These partners and program teams were part of all planning and implementation steps and were fully involved in all these actions.

**Regular Review and Planning Process:** A systematic and regular interactive planning processes was framed from national to village level. At national office level forth nightly planning and review meetings within SDGP team were held. On bi-monthly basis provincial program staff was also invited to participate in comprehensive review and planning sessions. Same exercise was also followed at provincial and district levels. Provincial program teams and district partners were meeting regularly to plan and monitor progress. District Partner Organizations (DPOs) were involved on bi-monthly basis for their opinion on program management and results. Six monthly and annual meetings of result tracking and program strategy planning were also organized.

**Dedicated Program Teams:** Within national and provincial offices dedicated SDGP program teams were formed, trained and tasked. These teams organized staff members with specific skills including training, documentation, technical assistance, planning and monitoring, advocacy, communications etc were involved.

**Program Management System:** There was additional component of the project, Sustainability and Program Management, under which SAP-PK conducted different activities during the reported period.

As far as delivery of the program was concerned, there was a Program Manager in the main office operating with the support of program coordinators. S/he was responsible for liaising with Provincial Coordinator and the concerned Program Officer and, where necessary, with District Implementation Partner and other stakeholders related to line departments, ministries, etc.

Provincial Offices developed quarterly work-plans with District Implementation Partner and roll the same up with in the national level meeting at the national office where both Provincial Offices and National Office also developed their work-plan.

M & E was part of the same exercise in order to be able to develop their work-plan based on the global work-plan.

During the project implementation, National Office handled issues such as overall program planning and review, policy guidance, partners coordination, financial allocations, staff development plans, monitoring and evaluation and publishing of research and information material (to ensure strict compliance policy of SAP-PK and sensitivity involved when there is a foreign donor supporting the project). However, provincial teams of SAP-PK had the liberty to use and translate material as and when required. They could also involve local resource persons in view of language related issues.

District Partners Organizations (DPO) worked directly with the PWGs and facilitated the provincial and national teams to meet them on regular basis. DIPs were also responsible for reporting to the province. The provincial offices collected all reports, analyzed and send them to the national office with their own comments, suggestions and observations. M & E worked independently and reviewed the documents sent in view of their own benchmarks. In the first three years, this job was done manually. In the second phase, however, SAP-PK got comprehensive applications developed for online



reporting and result tracking. In the same phase, financial system was also put online in which editorial rights remained with the finance department (it means even if figures of a voucher were fed mistakenly, the provincial finance coordinator had to contact the finance controller for correction).

<b>PROGRAM MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>UNITS</b>
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
Executive Director (40%)	1
(Manager Finance) 50%	1
(Program Manager) 50%	1
(Admin & Finance Officer )	4
(Finance Officer)	1
(Office Assistant)	5
(Driver)	7
Human Resource Development Coordinators	1
MIS Officers	2
Data Officers	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	
<b>Capacity Building</b>	
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
Training Coordinator	5
Training Officers	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	
<b>Technical Support</b>	
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
Program Coordinators	5
Monitoring Officers	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	
<b>Research &amp; Documentation</b>	
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
Research Coordinators	3
Research & Documentation Officers	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	
<b>Advocacy &amp; Networking Units</b>	
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
Advocacy & Networking Coordinators	5
Advocacy Officers	2

## 3 RESULTS

### Project Activities

All activities organized under SDGP Program in the field for peasants and workers rights fell under four categories, i.e., i) Research and Policy Activism, ii) Capacity Building and human development, iii) Advocacy and policy change and iv) Technical Support. One additional result was concerned with SAP-PK's own institutional development under "program sustainability and management".

This section of the report contains some main activities that SAP-PK conducted during the reported period, at different levels. It is not possible to enlist all of them in this document. It is just to give a generic view of the progress. It is also important to note that the activities are not listed in sequential order (according to the timeline). These activities are as following:

#### **Capacity Development and Human Development:**

1. SAP-PK identified existing and also established new peasants and rural workers groups (PWG) around their issues in 40 districts. There were 520 groups formed in both phases.
2. 20 workshops per month were organized at the national, provincial and districts levels. These workshops were on development planning, program management, resource generation, social communication, advocacy, record-keeping, lobbying, leadership, networking and sectoral skills, etc.
3. SAP-PK provided rights education to peasants and worker groups, their organizations and networks, through orientation sessions, trainings, dialogues, carried out during the reported period and built their capacities in designing and conducting education of peasants and rural workers' groups, networks and representatives on human rights, gender, LG plan, rules rights and procedures on democratic governance. We also organized many training for farmers' committees, groups, networks, CCB members and provincial level coalitions.
4. Program teams developed linkages between VC, NC, CCBs, PWGs and Councils for development schemes and organized sessions at least once in a quarter with other donors, SOs and development professionals, etc., in all forty districts.
5. Another main activity we conducted quite regularly was exposure visits of PWGs from village to district, district to district and district to province to provide them orientation on different training, research institutions and facilities and model farms
6. We also helped form Citizens Community Boards (CCBs) of PWGs and provided technical support for proposal writing and to seek funds for schemes. We provided such assistance to about 40 organizations during the reported period.

7. We produced information material on gender responsive budgeting for the use of PWGs and local councils.
8. From time to time, SAP-PK assessed existing knowledge base of UCs and ERs' and capacity building needs and carried out training programs for them accordingly. These programs were on gender responsive budgeting, participatory planning, transparency and participatory monitoring, role of CCBs in developing pro-poor budgeting and schemes planning and building their linkages with other support organizations. At least one training workshop was organized with every UC/selected group of locally elected representatives.
9. SAP-PK developed training materials for all such events. Some of the materials were even translated in local language for the future reference of the communities.
10. SAP-PK conducted TOT workshops of SAP-PK staff and its focal partners about LGS and its functions, challenges and issues; and, the process of formation of village based councils and committees.
11. We also assisted councils in formation of UC level monitoring & other committees, and, sectoral community councils (e.g. SMC, etc.); advocate for inclusion of PWGs' members.
12. During the reported period, at least once, we orientated ERs, councils' and committees' representatives about LGS, their role and responsibilities under LGS. We also promoted ERs & committees' interactions with village based LG structures and PWGs.
13. We setup "political schools" in every UC through holding study circle meetings of ERs from different UCs, Tehsils and Districts; learning/exposure visits; and district to VC (vertical) dialogues. By the end of the project, there were 300 locally elected representatives who used to participate in these programs.
14. We also organized trainings for GLA and SCC staffs on improved planning, monitoring, record keeping, and reporting and support in improving organizational systems. This activity was not a big success though. In the light of the lack of response from the GLAs, SAP-PK dropped the component of working directly with service providers in the second phase of SDGP.
15. SAP-PK developed monitoring guidelines and training modules on monitoring, evaluation, record keeping, report writing, etc. and used them for the relevant purposes. These manuals/materials were also provided to the district partners and provincial offices.
16. During the reported period, the district implementation partners trained and assisted PWGs and CCBs in on-the-job monitoring of schemes & reporting, and follow-up of UCs' and GLAs' decisions/orders.
17. SAP-PK exclusively conducted gender orientation, training and advocacy of/with all partners and networks and developed a manual system (and then online system in the second phase) for monitoring and follow-up of the partners' activities.
18. SAP-PK conducted training programs for all district implementing partners and provincial offices on MIS and reporting formats and reporting.
19. One of the regular exercises was staff capacity assessment on the basis of which we prepared staff development plan and undertook training events.

SAP-PK also sent some of its staff to other trainings organized by national and international organization, both within and outside Pakistan.

20. In addition to all trainings, gender orientation and training of SAP-PK staff, volunteers and members were some of the fundamental thrusts in order to ensure gender equality.

### **Technical Support:**

1. During the reported period, SAP-PK facilitated functioning of 40 Kissan Baethaks (peasant centers) and workers institutions. There were 4 Kissan Baethaks, which were facility like community center, that SAP-PK established and given the charge of to the community groups. The PWGs used these facilities as meeting point for discussion on different agenda.
2. Under Technical Support, SAP-PK developed forty resource centers to collect and disseminate information to PWGs, elected officials, local NGOs and other interested groups. Initially the idea was to develop e-networking. But this idea did not work out because of the poor computer literacy skills and electricity breakdowns, even unavailability, at some places.
3. SAP-PK provided technical and/or financial support to PWGs around rural based livelihood (small schemes). There were more than 40 groups.
4. With the capacity development and advocacy inputs, PWGs were encouraged to participate UC sessions as observers.
5. SAP-PK created District Focal Groups (think-tank with rep. from various target groups, bar, media, political activists, influential, clergy, etc.) in every district which in turn supported the work of PWGs voluntarily. DFGs played a very pivotal role in highlighting rural communities' issues at the relevant forums. They also carried out discussion and briefing on important policy matters for PWGs representatives' clarity.

### **Advocacy and Policy Change:**

1. During the reported period, SAP-PK with the support of provincial offices and district partners, organized and facilitated many exposure visits of peasants and rural workers groups and networks. These exposures were meant to understand how advocacy campaigns were being organized by different districts.
2. SAP-PK organized events and/or campaigns and promoted peasants' and workers' rights and entitlements. We organized press conference, media campaigns, walks, rallies, etc.
3. In addition to such campaigns, SAP-PK also held dialogues between peasants and workers groups, local government institutions and line departments on issues of peoples' interest. These forums enabled PWGs to develop their own development agenda and push their demands to the government for compliance. Many schools and health facilities were resurrected/refurbished after such interventions. In Sindh, CCBs resources were released. In Punjab, water dispute was resolved in South Punjab. Similarly, the issue of pricing of wheat in 2009 was resolved.

4. One of the regular activities conducted during the reported period was quarterly seminars on policy issues at district level. DFGs played a very vital role in these seminars and mobilized media on the same. The campaign for wheat pricing (Punjab), Sindh Tenancy Act (Sindh), involvement of youth in peace activities (KPK) were some of the policy issues taken up by the DFGs.
5. We also provided guidelines and technical (data) support through Distt. Resource Centers for scheme development, proposal writing and linkages to resource providers/funding sources.
6. During the reported period, SAP-PK facilitated development of long-term district development plan through participatory planning. There were ten district plans developed with the assistance of experts from SAP-PK and other organizations.
7. From communities to the popular media, such as radio, SAP-PK organized talk-shows on GLAs' performance and service delivery issues in order to improve quality of services and enhance peoples' access to them.
8. One of the most important for promoting transparency and accountability of public institutions, we conducted "Awami tribunals" (peoples tribunals) in selected five districts on regular basis. In these tribunals, representatives of health, education, livestock and water departments participated and answered peoples' queries.
9. We organized "shadow awami parliament" at UC level in which PWGs and communities prepared their development agenda for took up with the representative local councils. This component was not a big success though, because of illiteracy, but it motivated people to think about their own development priorities.

### **Research and Policy Activism:**

1. At the outset, SDGP carried out service delivery situation analysis and need assessment of District GLAs and sectoral community councils (SCCs) (baseline).
2. We are prepared District Profiles and developed database for the use of district implementation partners, civil society groups and government line departments to enable them to plan effectively.
3. One of the activities that SAP-PK carried out was preparation and sharing of GLA service delivery status and service needs annual report (fact sheets) for districts included in the program. There were three reports developed and shared during the reported period.
4. We also compiled and disseminated information about agriculture, livelihood, peace, human security, regional cooperation and gender.
5. SAP-PK introduced LB performance evaluation score-cards and encouraged partners to periodically fill in them in order to analyze progress
6. During the reported period, SAP-PK prepared and disseminated annual consolidated reports of UCs, FDGs and PWGs activities as well as case studies on best and worst practices.

7. We also documented analyses and proceedings of policy dialogues, published and disseminated them in accordance with the local objective needs.
8. There were a number of thematic studies published during the reported period.
9. One of the most important and regular feature of work under SDGP was a monthly newsletter Channan which covered local village level issues, governance related news and peoples' views and experiences. We had about 10,000 readers of this publication and it went to even prisons.
10. For the purpose of advocacy, we developed some documentaries, as on communal harmony, experiences of peasants and workers groups, issues of cotton picker women, etc. during the reported period and used the same at different forums.

### **Sustainability and Institutional Development:**

1. SAP-PK established advisory groups at national and provincial levels (NAG & PAGs) and organized quarterly meetings of PAGs. Instead of holding bi-annual meeting for NAG, we held it once a year instead.
2. In order to make District Resource Center, futuristically useful, we mainstreamed them within the offices of the District Implementation Partners offices
3. From time to time, SAP-PK carried out organizational assessment, i.e., capacities, systems and strategies, and develop short term and long term plans and business plans
4. We also improved Financial Management system by making it more transparent by making that available online
5. Reporting was also made available online towards the end of second phase
6. At the same time, organizational restructuring was undertaken where responsibilities were shuffled and program was trimmed on certain ends.
7. In the mentioned period of reporting, SAP-PK also successfully lobbied and networked with various provincial level departments and ministries to share our work and seek their support in the field. At one time, even federal ministry invited representatives of provincial PWG members for resolving the issue of pricing of wheat. This is why SAP-PK is very visible on CNBC, Geo and other channels as well as in meetings of the government for giving its inputs on issues of governance, peasants and workers' rights and violence against women.
8. During the reported period, SAP-PK tried to explore other funding sources but the attempt was not fully made. This is why we were unable to develop any business plan for endowment. However, in view of the results that we achieved under SDGP, we were able to secure a reasonable amount of resources from Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund to support those peasants communities where poverty was on the rise because of the backfire of agricultural policies.
9. We prepared quarterly and annual work plan provincial as well as district implementation partners and reviewed progress in quarterly meetings.

10. Towards the end of 2009, SAP-PK also organized mid-term review by involving a consultant. Later, CIDA conducted a mid-term review which served as basis of the second Phase (which could not complete its time because of the unavailability of resources).
11. New and improved financial, program management, monitoring and reporting systems are delivering efficient services within SAP-PK
12. On-going training and skills development of Staff on RBM, Gender justice, planning is contributing in improved functioning of SAP-PK and SDGP
13. Gender Policy is now integrated in SAP-PK's Business/Operational Systems, programs and field operations.
14. 8 new program proposals are developed and submitted to funders. Five new funders have been added to SAP-PK portfolio.
15. SAP-PK is now an active partner in advocacy initiatives, especially on Land Rights, Tenancy Act, Free and Fair Elections
16. SAP-PK's long-term strategic plan has been prepared and implemented. Organizational review and assessment exercise is planned and will be completed by year 2010.

## Results Achieved: Output and Outcome Level

Accumulatively, some of the major outputs of the project SDGP were:

- 40 district partners have conceptual clarity and have skills on issues/topic including democracy, local governance, human rights, livelihood rights, social mobilization, CCBs formation, financial management, monitoring, reporting.
- 400 Peasants and Workers Groups (PWGs) in all districts, at the village level, were formed. There were about 20,000 people in the given number of PWGs. Some PWGs were women specific while others were mixed (**Annex 2: List of UPWGs**).
- A trainers' pool of 100 grass roots activists, in all the four provinces, was developed who conducted grass roots trainings and undertake follow ups on the results of the community based trainings. The trainers' pool was developed through TOTs (**Annex 3: TOT Design and Report, Annex 4: List of Trainers**).
- PWGs, the women and men, including religious and ethnic minority groups, received trainings on areas of human rights, women's rights, CCBs management, local governance, participatory planning, reporting, etc. (**Annex 5: Gender related progress and achievements of SDGP**).
- PWGs, local governments (Union Councils), political representatives, line departments developed their linkages. This interaction improved transparency, accountability and joint planning. Health, Community

Development, Education, Livestock and Dairy Development, etc. were some of the departments involved along with the locally elected representatives.

- Political education of communities and political workers through forums such as “Political Schools” and “Shadow Awami Parliament” held almost every quarter in every community. This means there were more than 500 events organized in all 40 districts during the reported time.
- Networking of PWGs at the district and provincial levels was undertaken. These networks effectively pursued the demands on policy formulation for the rights of the people in rural areas. They met at least once in a year at the provincial level and got attention of media as well as the line departments.
- Rallies, Policy Dialogues and development of Alternative Policies, such as “farmers policy”, March for “Amendment in Sindh Tenancy Act” were conducted resulting in legislative review of the Sindh Tenancy Act and discussion within the circles of parliamentarians for farmers development programs.
- Technical support to 520 PWGs for implementation of 75 livelihood programs and thus 15 cooperative groups, 12 alternative markets and 10 seed-banks were formed in all the four provinces where peasants and workers benefit. The income of women and poorest of the poor farmer groups was improved by the implementation of development schemes.
- Researched, analyzed and published a number of materials, including research papers, mainstream books, manuals, status reports, videos on issues of governance, agriculture policy, democracy, participation of people in politics, irrigation water, issues related to cotton pickers women, sugar cane, etc. and used them for advocacy, training and networking purposes (**Annex 6: List of Publications**).
- Development of tools and systems with SAP-PK for improved delivery of the program and expansion in outreach.

### **Capacity Building Results:**

Primary beneficiaries of our capacity development activities were PWGs, district implementation partners, elected representatives, NGO workers and networks, and local voluntary groups, including DFGs. Some beneficiaries were also the program staff.

We believe that as the result of our work, we have been able organize and capacitate communities and this is a record in itself that such larger number of local associations have been formed locally who received skills and knowledge in multiple areas. This has directly set the tone of local activism and improved interaction among PWGs, communities, government line agencies and locally elected people.

This is certainly not a complete Pakistan and not a reform agenda but it has obviously brought about qualitative and quantitative changes. Qualitative changes are in peoples' perception towards governance, gender equality, economic development and organizational management and their ability to negotiate for their rights with the locally elected representatives and government line agencies. Quantitative changes are related to improvement in their economic status and access to resources available within the local governments and other sources, such as NRSP, PRSP, PPAF, etc.

Like PWGs, district implementation partners also made full use of the learning of capacity development exercises. They improved their program planning and management skills on the one hand and for the first time mainstreamed the agenda of peasants and workers rights, democracy and human respect and dignity in their own organizational development plans. This is first experience of SAP-PK that we targeted the mission and objectives of the partner organizations and instead of keeping the agenda of social change in rural communities itself, spread it further with lot more possibilities ahead.

Another area of capacity development was interaction among local NGOs, networks and their capacity development. SAP-PK has been successful to create district provincial level set ups where NGOs, and even government line departments, are informed about the development initiatives of SAP-PK. We have conducted capacity development sessions, trainings, exposures and meetings with the mentioned stakeholders and as the result of that they are more aware of the issues of peasants and workers and take up the agenda at the local and provincial forums. DFGs are those groups which SAP-PK carved out of the local potential available in different field, in education, health, agriculture, law, business, and other fields, and linked PWGs with them so that peasants and workers issues don't remain isolated.



## 4 GENDER STRATEGY AND ITS RESULTS

Gender for SAP-PK is a value and not just a strategy. We developed a gender desk responsible to suggest, review, plan and implement its plan to mainstream gender equality. The strategy was designed to enable communities to accept women's leadership. The strategy was meant to give more opportunities to women.

The gender desk mainly liaised with the provincial and national teams and conducted workshops from time to time. It rolled out a policy framework of the project and

guidelines in the light of the objectives and targets of each quarter. It also reviewed the progress by monitoring visits and reviewed field related material. Some of the immediate and medium term results that were acquired by adopting this strategy were:

- Of the total people trained by SAP-PK during the reported period, 50 % were women and women groups
- Because of the strict policy and support, nearly 10,000 females became member of PWGs. This is about 45 % strength of PWGs.
- Women's economic activities improved for they received technical support from SAP-PK with recommendations from gender desk. We have case-studies, especially in Faisalabad, where women are running cooperative and have done wonders.
- Respect for women improved within their own households. This is evident from various different case-studies that SAP-PK developed from time to time.
- Women were able to access markets and GLAs and they participated in public rallies. Prior to that, many of them only visited other places on family ceremonies or casualties. So for many of them, working with PWGs was a life changing experience



In KPK and Balochistan we faced some problems in making mixed groups of males and female. To handle that, SAP-PK created women specific groups and assisted them.

## 5 MAJOR MEETINGS AND EVENTS

During the reported period, SAP-PK organized some important meetings and events. These include:

### Four Six Monthly Meetings of Provincial Advisory Groups

PAG was a provincial body of intellectuals and human rights activists formed to provide guidance to SAP-PK in planning and delivery of the project. Four meetings were held during the reported time.

## **Four Meetings of SAP-PK's Board and Project Steering Committee**

SAP-PK is governed by a board and it is our history to present our work before them, discuss all developments and problems and seek their guidance. Since SDGP was the major project that we implemented during the reported time, most part of the discussions in our board meetings was obviously the same.

Similarly, Project Steering Committee was a body formed by SAP-PK, CIDA and SDC to discuss developments and issues of common concern. These meetings were very helpful for SAP-PK and we sincerely tried to implement recommendations of the committee.

## **National "Farmers Policy" Dialogue**

One of the most important events was a national level dialogue in which about 1000 peasants and workers, both male and female, trade unions representatives, NGO workers, lawyers and those belonging to other fields, participated. In this conference, we were able to draft contours of the farmers' policy. This policy was later circulated at every level, including the agriculture ministry.



## **Meeting with CIDA DSP, SPO and LCAP**

In order to launch a protest against the roll-back of local government system, a meeting was called at SAP-PK's office. In that meeting, design of the campaign was laid out. SAP-PK acted as member of the campaign. PWGs, District Implementation Partners and Provincial Offices, and local groups were all part of the rallies and protests that were launched subsequently.

## **Meeting with Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Livestock**

SAP-PK was invited by Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Livestock to discuss issues of the peasants and workers. As follow-up to that meeting, PWGS representatives were invited by the ministry for seeking their views on many important matters such as pricing of crops.

## **Long March for Amendment in Sindh Tenancy Act**

This historic long march was held for ten days, from Hyderabad to Karachi, in which hundreds of people, both male and female, participated. The March demanded for amendment in the Sindh Tenancy Act, to make it friendlier to landless farmers. As the consequence of that, Sindh Assembly took up the issue and promised to make the necessary amendments.



## **Meetings with Election Commission of Pakistan**

In pursuance of the agenda of strengthening democracy in Pakistan, SAP-PK was member of a consortium based project to observe general elections 2008. Though it was under a separate project arrangement, but SAP-PK believes that our work with peasants and workers made us closer to the cause of peoples' representation. We held series of meetings with election commission of Pakistan and provided 2200 male and female volunteers, to them to give them training on election observation. These volunteers did a splendid job. Most of these volunteers were members of DFGs, PWGs and staff of district partners.

## 6 Project Assets

Brief summary of how this was handled.

The main assets in the project were vehicles for field work, computers and office furniture, motor cycles and in some cases agricultural tools. Most of these assets were used for program purposes and advancing program objectives. In 42 district resources centre computers and furniture were used for peasants meetings and information collection dissemination at local level. Most of these furniture and assets were handled by partners and peasants groups.

Field vehicles were given to provincial teams to manage field visits, monitor local activities, conduct training and community sessions. Ownership of assets are recently determined in consultation with CIDA.

Utilization of these assets were determined according to local ownership and collective responsibility principles.

Kissan Baethaks were also constructed in three districts and are handed over to local peasants groups that manage and maintain these facilities. (**Annex 7: Project Assets**).

## 7 ANALYSIS

### Outputs and Outcomes

During the reported period, SAP-PK believes that we have been able to go with our message to a fairly larger population. The quality of our work might not be up to the mark on certain ends. But this is certainly not about the entire program.

As SDGP is now closed, we take a detached view of this and find that we were very good in developing a productive and meaningful relationship with communities, district implementation partners and locally elected representatives. We were not very good in producing the desired impact at the level of government line departments/services though.

At the outcome level, we find that most of the elected representatives we worked with are changed now. We don't claim to have indented the "house" itself. But we can certainly claim to have changed thinking patterns of some of the officials of the same houses. This has been evident from the level of discussions in house, their participation in our public meetings. They have improved capacity of delivering and raising voice for the people. They fully support the agenda of women's participation in the electoral process and promise to rally for the cause in local bodies' elections.

PWGs have also benefited from SDGP a great deal. A qualitative change in their lives is evident from their behavior towards women and girl children. Many PWGs members enrolled their girl children in schools as the result of awareness. Many males gave permission to female family members first time to participate in any activity out of their homes. Many of them have improved family income being part of the cooperatives which some of them formed.

We also improved the capacity of our district implementing partners. They have now improved visibility among donors' community and their own areas. They have better accounting systems and skilled staff as consequence of our partnership. Their skilled staff is able to conduct trainings for CBOs of their communities now. Most of our partners have their organizational development plans now in which agenda of democracy, livelihood rights and women's empowerment is visibly up front.



Some of the areas however needed some extra work as in the case of SAP-PK's own systems. We for example needed to expand in terms of financial base by bringing in more donors. We should have had relatively bigger team for monitoring purposes right from the beginning and deal monitoring as an independent organizational wing than the project requirement. Similarly, there was a need of some tightening on the ends of project management and rooting more skills of documentation in the field. The problem we encountered was that skilled people in documentation were available on higher salaries or just unavailable.

## Contextual Changes

During the reported period, discontinuation of the local government system itself and funding problems with CIDA in second phase of the project were two important contextual changes which changed the fate of the project.

## Monitoring and Evaluation Reports

In-house monitoring remained as a regular feature in SAP-PK. Towards the end of the 2009 we had also developed an online system for that. Besides that, we also got a midterm internal and external evaluation conducted. Both reports are already with CIDA.

It is however important to note that the second phase of the project was based on the recommendations of the same reports. For example, we decided to root the District Resource Centers with partner after the reports. We dropped component of working directly with GLAs in view of the same. We also thickened our presence in 4000 villages and enhanced our work-base in the light of external and internal reviews. Similarly, we revised our RBM, shuffled the responsibilities and organogram and put financial and reporting systems online. Likewise, at the beginning of the project, we got a baseline study done.



## Lessons Learned

- Mobilizing poor and marginalized helps in improving systems and policies. Conscious and informed role of rural poor will help improve performance and efficiency of local governance.

- Capacity and information gaps if filled can improve the efficiency and delivery of elected representatives and their engagements with government and communities.
- There were good examples of coordination from different stakeholders, including GLAs. However, that coordination was not a rule everywhere. There were still many areas where GLAs were quite lukewarm in their support, especially in terms of providing information on various topics and accepting the invitation letters for various activities of the program. Many GLA representatives evaluated their time and efforts in monetary terms.
- Project offices needed to share more responsibility of following up on the district-level activities in view of the benchmarks. That is why we put the system online so that monitoring could be done on scientific basis.
- There was need to devise a systematic information flow system in order to compile data, generate analysis and find out current trends. This initiative could have helped a lot also in pursuing results tracing system more conveniently.
- More advocacy initiatives at district and PWGs level, especially in Balochistan and KPK, were required to motivate women to take part in the political process. We could not do much in terms of creating “mixed” groups there because of the cultural sensitivities.
- During the reported period, response of the peasants and workers towards ‘getting together’ was been very much encouraging primarily due to the political situation in the country. That trend was seen in Punjab and Sindh in particular. In KPK and Balochistan, however, the law and order situation remained worst, which in turn affected mobilization and social organization.
- More efforts were required to bring political parties on the issue of poverty amongst in rural poor and seek their commitments. The political situation however did not allow the political parties to focus issues such as poverty, women’s rights, livelihood etc., because of NRO, deals and no deals, rigging of elections, etc. They are more focused on issues pertaining to judiciary and future of General Musharraf. The representatives at the local level, on the contrary, supported the SDGP or PWGs more precisely. The lesson is that we have to do more in communities as part of investment for future.
- Visual illustrated training curriculum needed to be developed and exercised especially for PWGs. In next programs with communities, we would like to use more informal and illustrative methods of capacity building.
- SAP-PK required more intensive efforts in bringing women to key positions in CCBs, PWGs, PAGs and monitoring committees. We would make this requirement as part of MOUs in future.

- SAP-PK strongly realized to develop skills of RBM among its staff members irrespective of their positions. We felt we lacked RBM skills and it was the area where donors can help us.