

**Local Resource Mobilization:
A Panacea for Community Based
Organziations in District Chakwal**

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Local Resource Mobilization: A Panacea for Community Based Organizations in District Chakwal

Gulbaz Ali Khan

Abstract

The mushroom growth of Community Based Organizations (CBOs thereafter) in the era of microfinance has groomed these organizations into a matured and informed community and on other hand, it also develops the culture of dependence on the continuous funding from the donors. Although these CBOs have built in culture of individual and communal savings, it has not yet brought financial sustainability at community level. This policy brief presents the existing situation on the local resources for CBOs and comes up with recommendations for tapping these resources.

Background

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs thereafter) in Pakistan may be divided into following broad categories; i) nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), ii) community-based organizations, iii) policy think tanks, iv) trade unions and professional organizations, v) cultural groups, and vi) informal citizen organizations. In 2001, Civicus, an international alliance of civil society groups, described Pakistan's civil society as a "collection of incoherent voices, conflicting worldviews and opposing interests" characterized by "unresolved struggle between the practices and values of pre-capitalist society and new modes of social life, between authoritarian legacies, and democratic aspirations."

Ten years down the road, one can say with confidence that role of CSOs in Pakistan has gained coherence and clarity in activities and acceptance in general (Civicus 2001). Major service delivery organizations (mostly CBOs) played a commendable role during the most difficult times of earthquake 2005, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) crisis 2009 and flash floods 2010. Major advocacy and right based organizations proved their worth during judicial crisis of 2008 and 2009. They take credit of restoration of deposed chief justice of Pakistan. Similarly quite a few think tanks and policy research organization have achieved acceptance among policy making circles and major donors. Today an independent media, active judiciary and vibrant civil society in Pakistan are all set to define good governance agenda in Pakistan.

Specifically, the grassroots development in the country may be attributed to the community led organizations transforming the lives of poor at local level. The culture of the community based organizations has nourished in the era of micro finance based community development. The era begins with the success stories in different regions in the country and especially the replication of model of micro finance in many parts of the country have equivocally contributed towards the

development and growth of community based organizations. Social mobilization has become one of the main components that help to mobilize the community members for local development. Once the community is developed into an organization, the financing starts either for increasing individual well being of its members or community development. This practice comes up with the spoon feeding of the community through different community led programmes by the national and international development agencies. On the one hand, it has groomed them into matured and informed communities and on other, it develops the culture of dependence on the continuous funding from the donors. Although, it has built in culture of individual and communal savings, it has not yet brought any sustainability at community level.

It is generally experienced that community development in the country has led to foreign funding dependent community organizations. This mushroom growth has been accelerated in last many years due to the donors' focus on such practices. It is also generally observed that some of these community organizations died out with the programme or project completion in the specific areas, leaving no signs of organizational sustainability for long term benefits to the individuals and community at the large. This situation leaves with uncertain situation for those organizations who want to survive and serve their communities. In order to ascertain the existing situation in district Chakwal, Plan Pakistan and Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) jointly conducted a comprehensive study on exploring potential of domestic resources which may be tapped by these CBOs. This policy brief provides baseline information on the available resources and guidance for future priorities. It is based on the qualitative tools including stakeholders' workshop, key informant interviews and case study.

Methodology

The methodology is based on secondary information and primary data collection from field. The existing literature on resource mobilization is also consulted to find out the existing possible ways to refine the research study. The primary data collection is also conducted to supplement the findings from the literature review. It includes meeting with key stakeholders, key informant interviews and collection of case studies

Currently, there are more than ten partners working closely with Plan Pakistan for implementing and executing programmes in district Chakwal. The team leaders of the implementing partners were selected who have proper acquaintance with different dimensions of resources in the district. The key informants provided insights into existing domestic resources, bottlenecks to tap them and help needed to mobilize domestic resource in future. The key informants were selected and their interviews were conducted in such a way that opinions offered are representative of the widest range of views, covering almost each and every aspect of domestic resource mobilization.

A stakeholder's workshop was designed and agreed between SDPI and Plan Pakistan. All the partners of Plan Pakistan in district Chakwal were requested to share their thoughts on the existing resources which may be tapped by the CBOs. Participants of this workshop came up with concrete ideas about the potential resources for the research. The case studies are selected on the basis of the recommendations of the key stakeholders. After detailed discussion,

consensus was developed among the key stakeholders to select case studies from the identified sectors like corporate sector, business community, foundations & trusts, individual philanthropists, PIRS¹, mining industry, government, foreign exchange sent by expat and government employees, more specifically army personnel.

SDPI team collected case. The focus of the case studies has remained on Tehsil Chakwal which is the most urbanized and resourceful among all tehsiles in the district. It also included the case studies from Choa Saidan Shah tehsile. The case studies covered wide range of resources in the district including corporate sector, business community, PIRS, trusts, philanthropists, foundations, government and mining industry.

Findings

District Chakwal is potential place for raising funds for development programmes as it is rich in terms of resources. Although, its economic base is agriculture, the existence of business especially corporate sector opens doors for resource mobilization. The study highlights the potential sources including corporate sector, business community, mining industry, trusts, foundations, individual philanthropists, PIRS and local government. All these sources have diverse potential which may be realized by the CBOs by adopting appropriate communication and advocacy strategies, creating networks and building alliances with these sources.

The corporate sector in Pakistan is bound by the international and national obligation through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and it is aspirant to become socially responsible citizen of the country (Afsar 2009). CSR encompasses welfare of the organization employees, local community and society at large. In Chakwal, corporate sector is spread over few groups having their presence in national and international business arena. Within the corporate sector, cement industry is dominant with presence of business tycoons of the country. It is learnt that cement industry of the district makes nearly 18 percent of the total cement industry in the country (Munir 2009). Its huge production capacity indicates towards huge profit generation out of which there is likelihood that welfare spending may also increase for the local community. Current players in the corporate sector are cognizant of the fact that the local community must be prioritized and focused and similar activities are taken by management of the cement industry. The corporate sector is involved in helping local residents by ensuring the availability and accessibility of basic facilities. It clearly ramifies the intentions of the corporate sector which needs to be sensitized by the communities for tapping resources.

Business community in the district is heavily concentrated in cottage and small scale industries. The range of the small scale industry varies from hatcheries to marble factories and, furniture units to *khussa*² making. Unfortunately, Chakwal as district is not hub of the trade except for the main city where wholesale dealers and retail shopkeepers do exist (Plan Pakistan 2009). However, the CNG sector and traditional "*Pehlwan Rehwari*"³ is engaged in social

1 It is a local word used for saint

2 It is local and traditional shoe

3 It is local sweet made of sugar

development activities in the district. CBOs can join hands with the business community networks such as CNG Association for building long term relationship for better communication and awareness resulting in raising funds.

Trusts and foundations represent group philanthropist having the same mission as individual philanthropists. In Chakwal, trust and foundations are playing their role in providing social services to the local people. The funding sources of the trust and foundations mainly comprise of the *Zakat*⁴, *Saddaqa*⁵ and donations from individuals. Most significant impacts are left by the reverence of the PIRs in the district representing greater religious diversity and tolerance. These PIRs are also among the sources of funding for the local trust and foundations. There exists a potential in the shape of group and individual philanthropists which may be tapped by the CBOs.

Mining industry is one of such key potential sources in the district (Punjab Mineral Development Corporation 2010). SDPI team tried to contact the lease owners of the mines, but lukewarm response as extended which ultimately led to detailed interview with the Mine Workers Federation. After analyzing the facts given by the respondents, it may be summarized that most of the owners are influential and politically connected with the leading parties in the country and have very limited presence in the district, especially in Chao Saidan Shah. The profit margin of the mining industry is very high, but the welfare and social spending is very limited. Research suggests that there exist limited potential for resource mobilization for the CBOs at this point in time. However, the overall strategy may include mining industry which may be tapped after sensitization of the owners and involvement of government.

Local government is always aspirant to connect with the local communities and Chakwal government response is very encouraging in this regard. District representative was present in the consultative meeting and briefed the participants about the development projects in the districts. Local government is committed to involve local communities through CBOs in the development process and last year, more than Rs: 100 Million has been allocated for different projects for CBOs on sharing basis. However, the situation is fragile in the province due to transfer of the powers of Local Government System to the provinces under the 18th amendment. Recently, the provincial government has also rejected the federal model of local government and is in process of developing its own local government system in Punjab.

Recommendations

Financial Resources: The research highlights the potential sources for the domestic resource mobilization in Chakwal district. All the highlighted resources have the ample potential to be reached out for the fund raising efforts. There is need to draft an action plan with proper timelines and measurable outcomes. Entering into dialogue with top ranked business companies, corporations, trusts, foundations, government and PIRs may be included in the action plan. The Plan Pakistan Partners should also come up with best practices and good proposals which may be

4 It is considered to be a religious duty and is expected to be paid by all practicing Muslims who have the financial means

5 It is a voluntary charity

presented to the interested domestic donors for consideration. Action plan may also include a series of events like conferences and workshops as well as dissemination strategy for literature on development activities, such as “child centered development” in the district.

Capitalizing on Non-Financial Resources: Volunteerism is one of the major non-financial sources which may be utilized for tapping financial resources in the district. Explore people who have the rights skills and spare time for organizations may be contacted for their short timed services (NGO Resource Toolkit 2004). Student of finance courses may serve the organization as “Finance Advisor/Manager” on volunteer basis. Similarly, lawyers, auditors, salesman, public relations officers, media people, and many professionals can provide advice and guidance to the organizations, if they are motivated to work with organization. The partners of Plan Pakistan may start “Volunteer Campaign” in the district with objective to take volunteers to help them throughout the year cycle. It will help CBOs to accumulate appropriate human resources for the resource mobilization campaign.

Networking & Collaboration: Networking is a key to success which requires immediate attention of all the stakeholders. There is a need to develop network of Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in the district which would ensure participation of all the national and local level organizations⁶. It would also serve as platform for raising collective voices and sharing knowledge. In order to build on the proposed network, a detailed research has to be drafted for mapping of CBOs & NGOs, along with a capacity assessment exercise. Capacity assessment in the areas of financial management, internal controls, regulatory compliance, administration and human resource management, and technical capacity will become the part of the overall assessment process. This assessment and diagnostic exercise will highlight the future needs of the CBOs in multiple dimensions ranging from managerial to financial skills. It will help the CBOs themselves and Plan Pakistan to focus on these areas for future local level interventions in the district.

Lobbying and Advocacy: It was also stressed during meetings, collecting case studies and consultative workshop that advocacy campaign must be started in the district to create pressure group to influence key policy makers at local and provincial level. In consultative meeting with partners of Plan Pakistan, it was suggested to develop a dedicated advocacy campaign for reaching and influencing the policy makers. SDPI can provide technical support to the interested organizations in developing the advocacy campaign and will train the staff with financial help from Plan Pakistan. CBOs may take lead on the issues of environmental damages caused by the cement industry in the district and start advocating for better environment and social lives for the residents and linking it with their agendas.

Information Exchange: The efficiency of information exchange is vital to the effectiveness of the CBOs programme in the district. These BCOs generate a lot of information and has the right experience to share with other organizations in the district. Available information should be utilized efficiently and disseminated in such a way that it enhances the coordination among organizations with better knowledge base for influence in the district. The proposed network

6 Stakeholders workshop

must adopt communication strategy to train organizations to store, use, and disseminate information among the members. During the visits and discussion sessions with different stakeholders, it is highlighted that research findings must be disseminated at immediate basis to create awareness among the stakeholders. Whatever the research is conducted, it must be shared with wider community for knowledge sharing. It will also build knowledge base of the stakeholders in the existing resources in the district which may be tapped by the community organizations by adopting different fund raising strategies.

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