



Social Action Bureau for Assistance in Welfare and Organizational Networking (SABAWON)

Development *through* Empowerment



DUTCH EMBASSY



SABAWON in Pakistan: Creation of a Civil Society Organisation

How did SABAWON grow from a small, flexible catalyst to an organisation of 182 employees within a few years. Part of the explanation lies in visible successes that enabled SABAWON to mobilise resources, expand its programme area, and add new interventions in response to problems and opportunities. In the year 2003, organisation radically expanded because of greater interaction with the partner communities and enhanced donor trust in SABAWON resulting into the mobilisation of more funds for social development. By the mid-2003, six Regional Offices were introduced mainly in order to attain deeper interaction with over 500 organised community groups for the implementation of high quality programme interventions. Alongside geographical expansion, which extends to most of the selected Districts of NWFP and Punjab, investments were made in human capital of the organisation, which raised staff confidence to new heights and skills acquired in the process were applied in practice, particularly for analysing local situations and developing new programme interventions.

SABAWON was founded with a voluntary action in September 1994 raising the issue of child labour in Peshawar city. Slowly and gradually, the self-helped initiative transformed itself into a professional organisation, working for the social development of Pakistan. In 1996, SABAWON got registered with the government under Societies Act of 1860.

A Framework for Social Change

Social development interventions of SABAWON draw inspiration from the Organisational Vision, which is **'To work for the creation of a society based on the principles of social justice and gender equality'**. SABAWON's Mission Statement, its *raison d'être*, denotes a part for the organisation to play in achieving the vision. The statement outlines clearly SABAWON's role **'To contribute towards development of the local communities, with a focus on providing enabling environment to the marginalised and deprived groups to access and utilise social sector services'**. Organised beneath the organisational mission, are the Key Programme Objectives providing the operational guidance. These include:

- To establish and foster a network of community-based organisations for better planning, management and utilisation of resources;
- To bring marginalised communities especially women and children into the mainstream of development through improving their social and economic condition and status;
- To build capacities of communities and local institutions for optimal resource management at the decentralised levels; and
- To undertake development initiatives for promoting gender equality and protection of the rights of children.

To achieve above-stated objectives for the communities living in the target areas, SABAWON has identified six thematic areas for working at the grassroots level i.e. social mobilisation and organisation; non-formal and formal primary education; child protection, welfare and development; water and environmental sanitation; health, nutrition and hygiene; and capacity building of the communities, CBOs and the local government institutions. Poverty, environment, gender and advocacy remain cross-cutting subjects of SABAWON's programmatic work at all levels.

Project Portfolio and Activities

SABAWON currently manages a diverse project portfolio. The main on-going projects include:

- Tawana Pakistan Project being executed in partnership with the Ministry of Women's Development in Frontier Regions of Bannu, Kohat and D.I.Khan and Kohistan District;
- Education for All initiative of National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) for two Districts of NWFP and Punjab;
- Water and Environmental Sanitation, Primary Environmental Care and Community Education on AIDS/HIV being executed in Hangu District of NWFP with the financial assistance of UNICEF;
- Improving Urban Sanitation Infrastructure in partnership with the Town Municipal Administration of Peshawar District (UNICEF); and
- Child-to-Child Resource Centre to promote interactive learning methodologies in child education through UNICEF.

Projects implemented by SABAWON are based on the principle of self-responsibility and social empowerment and activities largely revolve around sensitising communities and spreading awareness on health and hygiene; social mobilization and organization; training of school teachers in child-to-child approach; formation of parent-teacher associations; installation of water and sanitation infrastructure; and facilitation of community linkages with the government development departments and non-governmental initiatives. SABAWON believes in involving communities at all stages of the project cycle and local level participation is further enriched through effective involvement of the devolved structures which exist at the District, Tehsil and the Union Council levels.

Core Values of the Programme

The value system of SABAWON, which largely determines working culture of the organisation, stems out directly from the SABAWON's world-view and problem analysis of the situation in its programme area. Following core principles run across the programme, a set of shared values that tie together diverse functions of SABAWON.

- Focussing on children as the main target group for bringing about social change in the society;
- Emphasising and demonstrating social development as an essential part of the integrated development approach;
- Believing in overall positive change, while targeting all the sectors to respond to people's needs;
- Following a patient approach towards social development believing in quality delivery and organic approach to achieve results;
- Creating synergies and fostering complementarities through organisational networking and promotion of existing structures;
- Developing a cadre of trained social activists and development professionals as an investment in the social development of Pakistan; and
- Targeting more on behaviours and attitudes rather than activities and material achievements.

Envisaging Strategic Directions

SABAWON's work is rooted in social development and empowerment of the local communities living in rural and urban areas. Its most important achievement has been development of a social capital which is aware, sensitised and capacitated enough to carry forward the mandate of SABAWON. To date, main programme achievements of SABAWON include training over 1,000 primary school teachers in child-to-child approach and participatory appraisal methodologies; imparting skills to 1,100 community partners covering subjects like water and sanitation and primary environmental care; and formation and strengthening of 300 parent-teacher associations and 18 water and environmental sanitation committees. Besides, with active support coming from UNICEF, 150 hand-pumps have been installed at community places in the programme area and 70 latrines have been constructed to provide basic sanitation facilities to the school children. To foster public-private partnerships, 4 District Coordination Committees have been formed and 18 Task Forces organised at the Union Council level to ensure efficient delivery of municipal facilities to the rural and urban settlements of NWFP and Punjab.

SABAWON's past experiences would continue to be built on. Recognising the new challenge, SABAWON has outlined its strategic priorities. The organisation would continue to act as a loose platform for the partners to interface, learn and contribute towards social development of Pakistan. Policy and research component would be further strengthened to provide a base for the informed decision-making and knowledge management.

Broadly the focus will be on geographic and thematic consolidation, meeting commitments under the existing projects and seeking financial security for sustaining the programme. New opportunities will be taken in the areas of support to the government for the institutionalization of devolution process; policy advice to the provincial government on issues related to child education; and 'supplement and complement' government for ensuing effective social service delivery covering areas like health, hygiene, education and environmental sanitation.

To remain on the cutting edge, a process and step-wise approach would be followed which includes strengthening the existing organisational structure and 'consolidate' before 'scaling-up'. The organisation will continue to invest in learning and keeping prepared for future in order to maintain its ability and reputation as a competent, quality conscious and reliable organisation.

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