



جموں و کشمیر، انجمنی: آل فائنا کرکٹ ٹورنمنٹ میں انجمنی کے ایوان سٹار کے ساتھ سچ سے پہلے صدر مہندا انجمنی کرکٹ ایسوسی ایشن شاہ محمود مہندا کا عبداللہ کرکٹ کلب کے ساتھ گروپ فوٹو



REPORT: Learning from Social Enterprise Competition for Peace in Schools, Youth Engagement Services

[April 2015]

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CONTENTS

Executive Summary 2

Purpose and Objectives 3

Methodology and Limitations..... 4

Project Background 5

Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations 6

Annex I: Evaluation Team 12

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Young adults (15-29 years old) constitute roughly 30 percent of Pakistan's population. This demographic reality is going to be further expanded in coming three decades – a period during which Pakistan will continue to have a larger youth group. According to a British Council report, youth is both a victim and perpetrator of violence. In the survey, 42 percent of youth admitted committing acts of violence because they wanted money or were unemployed. This provides enough justification for launching projects that engage youth in productive activities and by doing so protect them from becoming a party of conflict of any kind. According to the founder of YES Network, Ali Raza Khan, “a disengaged youth is the biggest threat and stumbling block in the process of prosperity of the country”.

Through this assignment, a team of consultants of South Asia Centre for Peace, interviewed team members of YES Network and six peace projects that received seed funding through YES Network. These included three projects from Punjab and one each from Sindh, Baluchistan and FATA. In addition, to evaluation of the projects, consultants also provided support to YES Network in developing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Social Enterprise Competition for Peace in Schools is a very innovative project of YES Network that for over a decade has been providing youth with entrepreneurial opportunities in Pakistan. Through the competition, opportunities have been provided to youth living in conflict affected and conflict prone areas of the country. Unfortunately, in those areas, people in general and youth in particular, have limited opportunities to participate in productive activities. As found in this research, the funded projects have made substantial contribution in transformation of the lives of those who have been directly part of the project. Those members of the projects received training, exposure, confidence, recognition and more opportunities. Many of these initiatives may lead to formal organization in future. However, as pointed out in recommendation at the end of the project, the selected youth members need trainings in strategic planning, organizational development, peacebuilding and peace education to further enhance the scope of their activities.

PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

PURPOSE

The purpose of the consultancy is to draw learning from the innovative Social Enterprise Competition for peace in schools being implemented by the Youth Engagement Services (YES) Network Pakistan.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the consultancy are as follows:

- 1. To provide technical support to the project team in strengthening the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEAL) framework of the USIP funded project.*
- 2. To provide mentoring and supportive supervision in recording and reporting project information in accordance with the principles of operational research.*
- 3. To review/ assess the project, and document lessons learnt and devise recommendations for future programming/ replication.*

METHODOLOGY

The team of consultants, comprising of Dr Zahid Shahab Ahmed and Dr Syed Ali Shah, provided support to YES Network in developing and strengthening its monitoring and evaluations mechanisms for Social Enterprise Competition for peace in schools. In this process, consultants worked closely with the team of YES Network for developing instruments for evaluation and Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Survey.

For drawing lessons from implemented projects, an in-depth analysis was done through individual case studies of six projects from across the country. In addition, interviews of YES Network team were conducted.

LIMITATIONS

The major limitation in this assignment was to physically visited all the individual projects sites because they are spread across the country, and in some cases right in the middle of conflict areas like FATA. Meetings with three groups were conducted in Lahore, and one group in Islamabad. The other two groups were interviewed through telephone, mainly due to budgetary constraints.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Context

There are multiple issues responsible for conflicts in Pakistan. Gender, religion, caste, language and international issues all play a part in conflict in Pakistan. Facing resurgence of nationalists, religious and sectarian insurgency at home, and volatile neighbouring Afghanistan to the west, and insurgency-ridden Kashmir to the north, and an ongoing conflict with India, places Pakistan in a very critical situation. The reasons for this are widely manifested in the form of under-developed democratic institutes, dominance of military and political monopolies of landed and capitalist elite are lessening space for peaceful resolutions of conflicts that have the potential of turning violent and to threaten the federal structure of the country. In this picture, it is to be pointed out that the civil society is relatively weak and has little space to influence the course of policymaking. There is also a presence of various regional, sub-regional and local identities against a weak national identity. Since Pakistan's creations in 1947, governments have failed to promote a collective national identity. The absence of such a national character was also a major cause of East Pakistan separating to become Bangladesh in 1971. It is quite evident that in the presence of such structural flaws, Pakistan is receptive to conflicts of various forms at various levels.

Pakistan faces multiple local and foreign challenges. Internally, there are violent security problems in the form of religious extremism, terrorism, political violence, and sectarianism. With regard to external factors, there has been an ongoing rivalry with India, which has led to three major wars between the two countries. Since the 9/11 attacks, the situation in Afghanistan has produced fresh security challenges for Pakistan, for example, Pakistan has been hosting the largest number about 3 million (1.6 million officially registered and the remaining are unregistered) of Afghan refugees. The so-called 'war on terror' has another internal dimension and that is in the form of continuous security operations in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) by Pakistan troops and drone strikes by the US. Overall, 614,934 families left their home temporary and 309,171 families are desperately waiting to return to their homes.

The 16 December 2014 brutal terrorist attack on an Army Public School in Peshawar that killed 141 students and teachers and left 121 wounded is one of the worst attack in the country's history (Ali & Ahmed, 2014). Since the September 11 terrorist attacks on the US, Pakistan's alliance in the war on terror and its struggle against terrorists continues to cost. The country has lost over 52,000 lives in addition to a heavy economic loss of US\$ 102.51 billion (MoF, 14:2). From Waziristan to Karachi, people are living under constant threat. Youth, the most vulnerable group is both directly and indirectly affected by rising insecurity. It is important to engage with youth by providing them with opportunities that can enhance their capabilities for a peaceful Pakistan.

Project

The project "Social Enterprise Competition for Peace in Schools" is an outcome of the challenges faced by youth in the country, which is full of violence of all kinds. The project focused on the need of experiential and participatory learning for the youth for enhancing the overall learning outcome of turning them in entrepreneurs for peace. The project aims at providing youth with opportunities for establishing social enterprises that could play an

important role in helping deliver on projects for the promotion of peace. YES Network developed a very strong strategy, based on its previous experiences, for launching the competition/project in partnership with leading education groups/systems of the country, such as the following:

- Catholic Board of Education
- Presbyterian Education System
- The Read Foundation
- The Knowledge School System
- Punjab Vocational Training Council

The competition that was organized in ten schools attracted the attention of thousands of students. The winning teams were provided seed funding of up to PKR 25,000 in two installments.

So far, through this project, YES Network has developed entrepreneurial drive among 13,500 young people in low-income and disadvantaged communities across Pakistan for the promotion of peace. It has created a nationwide social infrastructure for people from diverse backgrounds and faiths for the promotion of peace by following principles of social entrepreneurship. The project has educated 45,000 people of all ages on building blocks for sustainable peace in conflict-ridden areas through social media, sports, music and art.

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

This section is devoted to sharing main findings of the assignment through which firstly six case studies will be separately analyzed for collective argument at the end.

FINDINGS

Findings of case studies are structured in a similar manner for focusing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and recommendation in relation to each individual initiative. Recommendations for YES Network are share in the last section.

Case Study I: Non-Sectarian Skill Centre

Introduction: This initiative, which is now named as “The Right Step” is based in Jhang, Punjab, and four girls are running this initiative. This initiative was launched through an initial financial input of PKR 30,000 from YES Network. This is a self-sustainable model because fee is charged in return of computer courses. The purpose of the proposed project was to establish a ‘Non-Sectarian Skills Center’ for the female students of Deobandi and Brelvi *madaris* (Islamic seminaries) in a city that has a very strong sectarian identity in the heart of Punjab. The center provides opportunities



for a positive bond among the female youth of both the sects. This project has been recognized through local and international awards, for example, an award that they received in Russia in 2014. For the purpose of this assignment, Dr Zahid Shahab Ahmed interviewed Saadia and Roshan.

Strengths: A key strength of this project is that it is self-sustainable and the girls have managed to get it running. The second key factor is the family support. Third, very crucial support mechanism is available in the form of backing from the Vocational Training Institute. For example, a staff member of the Institute constantly supports the girls in running this Centre and in managing their project. Finally, the community offers both moral and financial support. This project has received around \$1,000 of furniture and cash in donations. As far as the impact is concerned, this project has provided computer training to 51 girls of *madaris*, in addition to sensitization on sectarian issues. Therefore, this project is directly linked to the issue of sectarian violence in the country, which is a highly relevant topic. As the girls have some support from senior members of the community, mainly because one girl belongs to a very

respectable family in Jhang, this initiative is quickly turning into an organization. The Right Step has already started producing its annual reports.

Weaknesses: Not really a weakness that would harm the project, but girls need to be more confident in managing all affairs relating to the project. Now, there is huge dependence of one key person, Mr Sohail Abbas, of the Vocational Training Institute. Girls could also get opportunity to improve their communication skills.

Opportunities/Recommendations: This group has numerous opportunities to collaborate with peace related organizations for expanding the scope of their work to initiate some in house discussion on peace topics.

Case Study 2: Education through Entertainment

Introduction. Community based theatre programs have received a global recognition because they focus on local issues through local people. In Pakistan, there are local and international organization organizing theatres and trainings to spread awareness of issues relating to conflict and peace. In 2014, International Alert organized six-day training workshops in Lahore on “Theatre Development”. There is also the example of Ajoka organizing theatre programs on peace-related issues. This project “Education through Entertainment” is located in Tharparkar, Sindh, and is run by five boys through an initial funding of PKR 35,000 from YES Network. This is also a self-sustainable model because tickets for stage shows are sold. The proposed project has established a theatre group to promote peace and understanding among different religions and sects. Tharparkar is one of the districts located in the Sindh province. The population can be divided into three main classes, Rajputs, which include Muslim and Hindu tribes and aboriginal tribes. There is no access of media, internet and social media for the awareness about social issues. Theatre shows provide the best way to educate and motivate local people. The team has been organizing theatre shows on complex and sensitive themes for the promotion of peace in the area.

Strengths: The biggest strength of the project is that it is entertaining and informative at the same time. The local people run it, mostly youth, interested in initiating change. The project is located in Tharparkar, which is in interior Sindh, and neglected part of the country. Another aspect, which must be highlighted is that beneficiaries enjoyed entertaining aspect of theatres that made them focus on neglected social issues. Youth running the program gained confidence on their abilities that they can also contribute to positive social change. According to the project team, this project has initiated some level of social change by enhancing the atmosphere of peace.

Weaknesses/Limitation: One limitation is that there is a very limited reach of renowned international and local organizations in Tharparkar; therefore, the architects of this project could not fully utilize the potential of this wonderful/exciting idea.

Recommendations: The youth can be trained in “peacebuilding/peace education” and in “theatre development”, the later can help them make it their profession.

Case Study 3: Peace Musical Concerts

Five male and two female members in Lahore, Punjab, run this project. Lahore is a city which has been under the local and international spotlight due to recent incidents of violence between Muslims and Christians. For this assignment, Dr Zahid Shahab Ahmed interviewed Pastor Raja Shaleem Samuel. Pastor Samuel has also founded the Shalim Institute of Entrepreneurship and Management. The project uses music as a medium to bring together Catholic and Protestants

youth for bring that gaps that are increasing among the youth of Catholics, Protestants, Baptists, Pentecostals, Anglicans, Presbyterians and Lutherans. There is no common platform for the young people to come together and understand each other. The most popular form of cultural expression among youth of all denominations is music. The team organizes musical concerts and competitions to provide youth of different denominations to display their talents and abilities. He started his project with initial funding of PKR 27,500 and now continues to run by selling tickets of musical concerts.



Strengths: A key strength of the project is that it is addressing differences among youth of different factions within Christianity. The issue is very relevant and its implications have been witnessed inside and outside Pakistan. Then, a respected young pastor runs this project from the community. Pastor Shaleem also manages to talk about peace issues in his speeches and peace music is another way for him to work for peace in his community.

Weakness/Limitations: A weakness or limitation is that project has not aimed at attracting the attention of influential Christian leaders in the community. That would have helped this project expand its scope beyond music to dialogue on the issues under focus. For this purpose, Dr Zahid Shahab Ahmed connected Pastor Shaleem with Father Rocky, who is a prominent name vis-à-vis peace dialogues in Pakistan.

Opportunities: Lahore has recently witnessed a worse incident of violence between Muslims and Christians. Considering that, this project could expand its scope through networking with likeminded people and organizations for addressing the issue of interfaith harmony in the city.

Case Study 4: Peace Cricket Academy

Introduction: According to the UN, “sport as a universal language can be powerful tool to promote peace, tolerance and understanding by bringing people together across boundaries culture and religions”. Within countries, especially in contexts affected by conflicts, sports serve the purpose of engaging youth in activities that are healthy. The project of “Peace Cricket Academy”



is one of such initiatives in Mohmand Agency of FATA, which has been faced with clashes between Pakistan’s security forces and the Taliban. Many people have been forced to leave FATA to live at IDPs in other parts of the country, but the ones who live there have no much to do, for example, no education for youth. In that context, two men have established a cricket academy with the initial support of PKR 50,000 from YES Network. This is a self-sustainable project, which is run on monthly membership fee from cricket club members. The

proposed project aims at promoting a culture of peace through sports in the most troublesome area of Pakistan.

Strengths: A major strength of the project is that it is working in a conflict area where youth badly needs to be involved in such health activities. People who are part of the project are happy with it and now the Cricket Academy has gained the confidence of the community elders. Another strength is that the members running the Club are linked to other recognized bodies in the country, for example the Pakistan Cricket Board. This has added to the legitimacy of this initiative. In addition, the members have managed to get funds through community members and corporations, which have set a good foundation for this initiative success in future.

Weaknesses/Limitations: A major limitation is due to the security situation and access for the outside people. Due to these reasons, the Club is unable to organize matches with teams from other parts of the country.

Recommendation: This initiative can be expanded to include FATA youth, which is displaced within the country, especially in different parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Case Study 5: Peace Festivals

Introduction: For exploring various features of this project, Dr Zahid Shahab Ahmed met Shazia Malik and Ayesha Banu. Both girls are playing central role in organizing “Peace Festivals” in Quetta. Quetta in Baluchistan has been facing terrorist attacks from time to time due to which youth, especially female students have developed fear and hesitate to attend their educational institutions. According to Shazia Malik, the idea of “Peace Festivals” came in her mind to bring those students back to colleges and universities. YES provided some training to these selected teams. The team is comprised of four members, including one male and three females. Festivals are organized and expenses are covered through income generation via selling of festival tickets. So far, the financial situation is of “no profit no loss”. YES Network provided seed funding of PKR 40,000. So far, 15,000 people have attended eight “Peace Festivals”.

Strengths: The genuine strength of the project is that it is targeting a very serious issue – insecurity – due to which thousands of students cannot attend their schools, colleges and universities. Among the victims, female students suffer the most.

Weakness/Limitation: This project has its various limitations. Firstly, all Punjabi girls who are still seen as outsiders in Baluchistan run this project. Secondly, the project is unable to generate enough funds to ensure its



sustainability.

Opportunities/Recommendation: For this project to really have an influence there is a need to bring some Baluchi youth onboard. This will have this project reach out to the maximum number of relevant youth. This would also help bridge the gap between Baluchi and non-Baluchi people, which is an important issue needing attention in the province.

Case Study 6: Student Lamps

Introduction: For exploring about “Peace Lamps” project, Dr Zahid Shahab Ahmed interviewed a passionate youngster (Haris Moeen Khan). The interviewee mentioned that, this initiative was launched as a result of what he and his peers experienced during the examination days. He shared his idea with his teacher, Prof. Imran Ashraf, who appreciated the idea and send him and other students to relevant festivals.

Load shedding and power blackouts have become severe in Pakistan in recent years due to which all segments of the society are facing problems. Students face problems in times of annual exams when they have to do preparation through nights and load shedding in those times added to anger among students. Five engineering students from Multan came up with this idea of “Peace Lamps” that have rechargeable batteries and small LED lights. These lamps can be charged with mobile chargers and its production cost is PKR 170 (less than two USD) and was sold



for a little more than two dollars, PKR 230. However, the price varies based on the economic status of students. This project was launched with PKR 10,000 from YES Network. The five group members also made some profit and paid for their annual fees of PKR 3,500 (PKR 17,500 for all five). This project also gave confidence to the members involved in it because they got opportunities to speak to influential people in institutions, such as Registrar. According to Haris, this really boosted their confidence. For him this is what got him a job in a women university in Multan.

Weakness: This project like others run by student continues to face a challenge of group losing interest due to a range of actors, like someone failing in exams to a key person finding a job.

Opportunities/Recommendations: It is very important that when YES Network selects this kind of a student group that there is some effort made to transfer knowledge from this group to new students in that institution. That way news groups will be formulated to carry the work forward, either at the same level or at a different scale.



CONCLUSIONS

Social Enterprise Competition for Peace in Schools is a very innovative project of YES Network. Detailed case studies of six youth for peace projects reflect the significance of this initiative and also lessons can be drawn for further improvement. In conclusion, it is important to mention that this project has managed to promote innovative ideas for peace in areas where they are needed the most, for example FATA and Quetta. The project has directly transformed the lives of the ones who became the direct beneficiaries – the youth behind the ideas. Secondly, through those selected number of youth others have been influenced through sensitization on issues relating to peace and conflict. No doubt that the project adopted a strategic and systematic approach to launch the competition throughout the country. This strength is reflected in the form of the quality of innovative ideas that have been supported through seed funding. The project has been inspiring young people about their role for peace in the country. Now that youth have a vision for establishing peace in the country, but more can be done to enhance the overall impact of all projects and to make them more sustainable. Youth bulge of the country can be transformed into dividend through these kinds of initiatives that are self-sustaining and meaningful for Pakistan. It is encouraging to see that USIP is supporting such unique initiatives that provide youth of Pakistan with well-deserved opportunities to play their role towards the promotion of peace.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are put forward for improvement in this project:

1. Members of selected projects should be trained about strategic planning, peacebuilding, negotiation skills, peace education etc.
2. On individual basis, guidance should be provided to all projects through continues monitoring. This would help in ensuring continuity of those projects.
3. The competition could have ongoing competitive activities, for example scholarships for the best performing teams. These kinds of activities will keep the interest alive of all members in their projects. Scholarships could be provided, for instance for professional certification at the LUMS Centre for Entrepreneurship – an incubator that has been around for about a year but has received a lot of recognition.

ANNEX I: EVALUATION TEAM

Dr Zahid Shahab Ahmed is Assistant Professor at Centre for International Peace and Stability, National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST) in Islamabad. He has over 10 years of experience of working in the international development/ peace-building and in academia. His areas of expertise include, Civil Society, Conflict Mainstreaming, Conflict Resolution, Democratization, DDR, Education, Gender, Internally Displaced, Nonviolence, Peacebuilding, Peacekeeping, Security, Terrorism, and Youth. He has previously taught international and political studies at University of New England and Charles Sturt University in Australia. Dr. Ahmed has also delivered numerous guest lectures at universities across the world, especially on the issues relating to South Asian regional security and peace. He is currently engaged in research studies on Peace and Conflict Impact; Conflict Analysis; Conflict Sensitive Project Planning; Peace Education in the Islamic Context; Conflict Resolution in South Asia; and Nonviolent Conflict Resolution in South Asia. Amongst his many professional accolades is his work with the United National mandated University for Peace (UPEACE) in designing a curriculum on “Peace Education in the Muslim Context” by organizing consultative workshops in Canada (2006) and Indonesia (2007); and with UPEACE in designing a post-graduate program on peace & conflict studies in South Asia. This program has already been implemented in South Asia. Dr. Ahmed has numerous international publications, articles, chapters, and a book (Ahmed, Z.S. 2013, Regionalism and Regional Security in South Asia: The Role of SAARC, Ashgate Publishing Limited, London. ISBN 978-1-4094-6769-4).

Dr Syed Ali Shah is an Academic, Researcher, and an International Monitoring & Evaluation Professional with over 13 years of multi-sectorial experience in Result Based Management; Program Development; Resource Mobilization; Strategic Planning; Program Management; Operational & Academic Research; and Evidence based Policy Advocacy. His areas of expertise include Countering Violent Extremism, Peace Studies, Religious Tolerance, Minority Rights, Youth Activism, Conflict Affected Area Programming, Refugee Assistance, Health, Infectious Diseases, Nutrition, Emergency Response, Social Protection, Women Empowerment and development of Innovative Approaches in community development programs. Dr. Shah has written successful in-country, multi-country and regional program proposals for Central & South Asia, and Africa; national and international publications, strategies, policy documents; and has carried out various technical assignments, research studies, and assessments/ evaluations. His portfolio includes United States Institute for Peace (USIP), Save the Children US, BPRM/ USDS, USAID, CIDA, DFID (UKaid), AusAID, DANIDA, The Asia Foundation, Danish Refugee Council, The Global Fund, The British Council, CARE International, Mercy Corps, The Waterford Foundation, Western Union, AKF, Aga Khan Health Service Pakistan, UNICEF, amongst others.

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