

Introduction

Union Council Poverty Reduction Programme (UCPRP) is based on their 25 year experience of RSPs in community development and poverty reduction across Pakistan. The UCPRP aims at improving the quality life of the rural communities preferably that of the poorest of the poor. UCPRP caters towards removing the common hurdles such as lack of assets, credit, technical skills and inability to afford health care which ultimately put off the poor to climb up the poverty ladder.

A key role of RSPN in this process has been the setting of quality standard for the Union Plan implementation, through agreeing and defining SOPs with relevant RSPs and developing a Manual highlighting the implementation steps of each Union Plan component, based on the field experience and best practice of the RSPs and building capacity of their field managers and other professional staff.

The Orientation Training on UCPRP Manual was conducted from March 29-31, 2010 at Hillview Hotel Islamabad. There were total 24 participants from SRSO (9), TRDP (5), SRSP (5), NRSP (3) and PRSP (1), out of which 7 were women and 17 were men.

Training Objectives

- Orient the participants with the contents of the UCPRP Operational Manual
- Analyse the contents of the Manual interactively and identify issues and problems and recommend their solutions
- Develop RSP wise plan of action for orientation of UCPRP staff on the Manual

Training Methodology

In Orientation Training on UCPRP Manual different methodologies were experienced by the participants. Through power point presentations the session were made interactive and participatory, while the question answer session cleared the mist about the ambiguities of the participants. Also the learning was enhanced by the review activity and was productive. Videos of UCBPRP implemented by SRSO were also shown during the sessions as part of the experience sharing.

Day One

Session 0

Introduction of Participants, their expectations and fears

The workshop was opened with the recitation from the Holy Quran.

On behalf of RSPN workshop participants were warmly welcomed by the facilitator. For repo building and ice breaking the introduction of the participants was carried out. They were requested to lit the match stick and introduce themselves focusing on one of their personality traits starting with the first alphabet of their name, and not going beyond the match stick vanishes. This activity gives them the chance to assess themselves for the overpowering strength of their individuality. It also strengthens the quality to articulate precisely with given time. Participants enjoyed the activity because it gave them the chance to peep in themselves and communicate in ample manner.

The exercise on Expectations and Fears was also carried out in an interactive manner. White Zopp cards were distributed to write down the expectation, while pink cards were meant for the expression of fears. The cards were collected, read, clustered and explained by the facilitator. Afterwards the expectations were matched with the Objectives of the workshop.

Session 01

Introduction to UCPRP

Khaleel Ahmed Tetlay

This session objective was to acquaint the participants with poverty in Pakistan, the importance and objectives of UCPRP, progress, updates and challenges regarding UCPRP, the process review of UCPRP by SDPI and its implications. The resource person showed two sights of Pakistan i.e. the modern and the traditional from the perspective of development. The statistics provided by him gave an overview of the current situation prevailing in Pakistan. The resource person briefly explained what poverty is, attributes effecting poverty and the bands of poverty and the importance of this classification to reach the poorest and destitute families. He also gave an insight of the intra district variation of poverty within a province. The resource person emphasized the fact that appropriate and different programme packages would be required to cater specific development programmes of each poverty band as expressed in their MIPs.

The resource person then shared the progress updates and the highlights of the Union Council Based Poverty Reduction Programme (UCBPRP) implemented by SRSO in Sindh. He said that UC plan is new innovation of RSPs, and a strategic partnership with government. It needs process review to ensure transparency and timely feedback for course corrections. Therefore SDPI was engaged to carry out a third party views on its operations. SDPI checked the level of compliance with the Standard Operating Procedures developed for UCBPR. Based on this review course corrections were made wherever required.

Session 02

Overview of the Manual

Waqar Ahmed Awan

The objective of the session was to acquaint the participants with contents and outline of the UCPRP operational Manual. Resource person also pondered on the process of how this manual was built-up and came to its eventual shape. In an interactive manner each portion and chapter of the manual was shared and an overview was presented by the resource person. To maintain the interest level of the participants, the resource person carried out an ice breaking activity. Resource Person requested to count loudly one by one but the participants with no 4 will have to clap the hands on his/her turn and so on. The participants making the mistake will be out of the game. It helped the participants to regain their energy and interest level. The resource person said that the UCPRP provides a full fledged package for the poor to progress on the poverty band. With the intervention of PSC, UCPRP manual ensures that the programme packages things benefits to the appropriate family.

Session 03

Poverty Score Card

Khurram Murad

The purpose of this session was to let the participants know about the multidimensional benefits of the Poverty Score Card and how to collect its data from the field with maximum accuracy. Poverty Scoring is a tool for measuring poverty mainly developed for giving practitioners a simple, effective and low cost tool for observing the progress targeted by projects. It is also useful to donors for improving transparency and accountability in regard to the income-related MDG. The poverty scorecard is based on existing national expenditure surveys from which 12 indicators are selected as proxy for poverty. The indicators are quantitatively summarized through a statistical procedure. The indicators are simple and inexpensive to collect as well as easily verifiable, such as selected housing features and ownership of consumer items. The Indicators were selected to be:

- Inexpensive to collect, easy to answer, and simple to verify
- Strongly correlated with poverty
- Liable to change as poverty status changes over time

By construction, the scorecard is accurate in that, on average, the estimated poverty likelihoods of individuals and the overall poverty rate of groups are equal to the true values. The scorecard is also accurate for targeting in that poor people are concentrated among low scores and non-poor people are concentrated among high scores. The scorecard also aims to measure *changes* in poverty through time. Thus, some powerful indicators that are unlikely to change as poverty changes were omitted in favor of slightly less-powerful indicators that are more likely to change.

The resource person explained the process and steps of filling the score card form in detail and responded questions of the participants.

Day Two

Recap of the previous day

The day opened with the recitation from Holy Quran and welcoming note of the facilitator. At the end of the preceding day, the facilitator presented an innovative and interesting activity by assigning four volunteered Participants to prepare the sessions for a Talk Show to review the discussion of the previous day. The host of the panel invited and introduced the Experts on each session, while the rest of the participants interacted in the panel discussion through live calls. This activity was introduced to gauge the actual learning of the participants and assess their learning skills. The participants found the activity a tool that made them to express their knowledge in a meaningful way, boosted their confidence and made them to clarify their concepts.

Session 01

Social Mobilization

Mohammad Ali Azizi

This session objective was to explain to the participants the process of social mobilization at CO, VO and LSO level and the common issues in identifying and organizing the poorest and destitute and to suggest their solutions. Social mobilization is a collective movement where people are organized and prepared to achieve their common objectives mainly through self help initiatives. The poverty score card should be exercised before the SM process. The Community Resource Persons should be identified and trained by the SMT. The programme introduction dialogue should be conducted by a senior RSP staff with the entire village. The CRP will then form new WCOs and reactivate the dormant ones if any. The SMT monitors and verifies both the newly formed and reactivated WCOs. The SMT then facilitates formation of VDO and identification and training of Community Book Keeper. The SMT will also provide CMST to the President and Manager of the WCOs and ensures that they do their scheduled meetings and savings regularly and that their records are up to date. After the session the resource person interactively answered the queries raised by the participants. He presented his session through power point slides.

Session 02

Community Investment Fund

Mohammad Ali Azizi

This session was meant to cater the objectives, components, general guidelines and the eligibility criteria of the CIF. CIF is a cost effective method of providing microfinance services to the poor and poorest women run and managed by them and their own organizations. The overarching objective of CIF is the reduction of poverty level through strong institutions in rural areas. IGG and MRL are two integral components of CIF. The former is designed to cater the specific socio-economic development needs of the destitute who are

un-able to generate enough income to repay the fund, and the later is developed to address the cash flow constraints of the poor families who can repay the original fund after using it preferably in productive and income generating activities. The first step in this regard is PSC that objectively identifies the eligibility criteria of the individual on the basis of poverty score band. However, validation of the PSC results by the CO members is another pre-requisite to ensure the accuracy of the targeting the right packages to the right families. The second step is identification and proper training of Community Book Keeper. No CIF should initiate in a VDO without having a trained Book Keeper. Another important consideration is the ratio of Book Keeper and COs. The ratio should not exceed 1:3. The resource person then interactively presented the legibility criteria of IGG and MRL and steps and processes and documentations of each component through power point presentation followed by the question and answer session.

Session 03

Community Book Keeper

Mohammad Ali Azizi

This session was aimed at making the participants to clarify the concepts about the need and importance of record keeping, its roles and responsibilities and the selection criteria, hiring and training of CBK. The resource person highlighted the prime objectives of book keeping. CIF carries all financial management related risks. Transparency is the key tool to mitigate those risks that is ensured by proper record keeping. Therefore a trained book keeper is an important prerequisite in UCPRP who should be capacitated comprehensively by the ToT graduates in financial and non financial record keeping. Later the resource person discussed interactively the selection criteria, process, record keeping at CO and VO level, reporting and its form and formats through power presentation slides.

Session 04

Community Physical Infrastructure

Irteza Haider

This session was focused at making the participants aware of the importance of CPI and what role it plays in UCPRP. Rural infrastructure development is one of the priority areas of interventions in Union Councils Poverty Reduction Programme (UCPRP).The participants were oriented with the main objectives of CPI that included to organize, involve and technically assist local community in identification, planning, execution, monitoring, operation and maintenance of community physical infrastructure schemes (CPIs). The different areas covered by the CPI are Water Supply, Sanitation (Sewerage & Drainage), Agriculture, Communication and others. The Project Process Flow chart was then offered to the participants to let them know the role of an individual RSP.

The facilitator also introduced a physical exercise that maintained the participants' energy levels. Afterwards, the negative list of CPI gave a view about the domain and range of it. Subsequently, the

resource person pondered on CPI –UCPRP operational Manual through PPT highlighting the main features of the chapter in a logical sequence. While interacting with the participants it was highlighted that at the time of identification of schemes the special attention should be given that it is labour intensive to provide the prospect to the local community to get temporary employment at their door step. The pentagon of assets was also shared that covers Physical, (CPI), Social (Soc Mob), Financial (Medp), Natural (NRM), Human (HRD). The role that we are supposed to carry out is to broaden the existing Pentagon up to the scale that is self managed and self sustained.

The resource person emphasized that right from the identification till its feasibility and implementation the environmental and social aspects needs to be addressed through ER,IE, EII, so that mitigated efforts are built-in right at the commencement of any scheme.

Group Assignment

The facilitator helped the participants to revise the proceedings and handouts of the day. Four Participants were again invited voluntarily to prepare the main review session for the next day by making the list of questions from each given presentation and wrap it in the shape of a ball.

Day Three

Recap of the previous day

The day started with recitation from of the Holy Quran. Review activity was carried out by the assigned participants in a fascinating and amusing manner with background music by passing the ball to one another. The questions from each session were wrapped on each ball. The participant receiving the ball has to unwrap the question, respond it, and pass the ball to one of the remaining participants. This activity was productive in a way that it involved every single participant and energized them.

Session 01

Vocational Training

Ijaz Khaliq

This session was aimed at making the participants aware of the UCPRP procedures about Vocational Training. The resource person explained the components of it i.e. Vocational and Technical Training and VO Capacity Building. He kept his main focus on Vocational and Technical Training. The concrete objective of the vocational training includes reduction of poverty by building capacities of the most deprived group of the society for the economic and social empowerment of them through vocational training and employment opportunities. Moreover the resource person explained how need assessment is conducted before the project followed by identifying their needs and skill them for their productive employment. The pre-training, training and post training methodologies were then emphasized to aware the participants of the process of vocational training. The tool in selecting the deserving candidate for the training is again PSC. In last the resource person gave an insight of the guidelines of the vocational training that are set to ensure that the person is properly screened and the trade choice is along the approval of their guardian.

Session 02

Micro Health Insurance (MHI)

Jawad Rehmani

This session objective was to acquaint the participants with the strategic needs, eligibility criteria, the process and the claim processing procedures and payments of MHI. MHI is an interactive component of UCPRP and it's a tool that reduces the burden of medical expenses to the poor. It is about providing an option and empowering the poor to procure quality hospital care. The resource person then explained how the people are lacking behind in basic health facilities, health infrastructure and why it is important to have health insurance. Beside that all RSPs are doing health interventions but there is no sustainable work and the cover design for health insurance to facilitate the poor. The resource person explained the limitations of the RSPs and the insurance company in terms of roles and responsibilities. He briefly conveyed that the process of MHI can become speedier if the poor people are sensitized to the process of insurance. The resource person then made a detailed presentation on the eligibility criteria, the process of insurance,

usage of the electronic card and claims etc via power point presentation in an interactive manner. At the end of the session, he responded clarifications and questions raised by the participants.

Evaluation and Closing Remarks

The closing remarks were given by the facilitator in which she strongly emphasized on the social mobilization techniques and asked the participants about their experience at the workshop. According to the participants the course outline developed for the orientation workshop was precise and also the selection of resource person was up to the mark. The participants found this workshop quite productive and were motivated by the cooperative attitude of the facilitator and her professional commitment. The participants congratulated the RSPN team on facilitating a useful orientation workshop on UCPRP. The participants also came up with the suggestion of organizing the workshop at least for the participants with practical exposure. The participants also evaluated the workshop. The evaluation tabulation is as under while the evaluation form can be seen in annexure.







