

**Note for Record**  
**September 3-7, 2014**

**By: Shoaib Sultan Khan**  
**September 12, 2014**

Subject: **European Union PEACE Programme**

European Union (EU) and Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP) signed a project worth 40 million Euros to implement an Economic Advancement and Community Empowerment Programme (PEACE) with the following outputs beginning October 2012 ending September 2016.

|                                   |                    |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| <u>Coverage</u> Malakand Division | 7 districts        |
| Union Councils                    | 100                |
| Beneficiaries                     | 2.7 million people |

Major Components:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <u>Community Mobilisation</u>                | 12,000 community organisations<br>(COs) |
| Community Managed Micro<br>Hydro Power (MHP) | 240<br>78 initiated MW 6.055            |

Basic Social Services & community Physical Projects

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 315 out of 771 planned/initiated     | 130 completed  |
| <u>Empowerment of Women</u>          | Literacy/numeracy 6000<br>Livelihood training 6000<br>With tool kits<br>WO Managers 2000<br>WO Activists 200 |
| <u>Growth of Economic Activities</u> | Business Interest Group (BIG)<br>Value Chain   |

Partnership & Cooperation with Stakeholders

Political representatives, Divisional and District Administration,  
Civil society organisations, government line departments.

Programme Visibility

Website/web page  
Facebook  
GIS  
Newsletter  
Display panels  
Banners & posters  
Promotional  
Programme snapshots

My main objective in visiting PEACE programme was to learn about the process of social mobilisation adopted by SRSP and I am especially grateful to the Chairperson and CEO of SRSP for arranging this visit.

What was of particular interest to me was how the Project Director PEACE Zahid and his merry band of professionals in each of the 7 districts comprising no more than one Senior Social Organiser as incharge of district with 2 social organizers, one male and one female plus 2 junior Social Organisers, an Human Resource Development (HRD) person, a woman Community Livelihood Resource (CLR) person, an MER person plus depending on the number of MHP projects engineering staff.

The challenge facing Zahid was how to organize 12,000 COs by holding 24,000 Community Management Skills Training (CMSTs) and 12,000 Leadership Management Skills Training (LMSTs) in a period of four years. Aply assisted by Ijaz Ali, both of them picked up the concept of Master Trainers and thought of making them into trained Community Resource Persons (CRPs). The project document had a provision for 1200 Master Trainers. The traditional CRP in Rural Support Programmes (RSPs) lexicon takes considerable time to emerge from the cadre of CO Presidents and Managers. Zahid could not wait. He was put under the tyranny of targets by the Donor.

As the Chairperson SRSP put it Zahid and Ijaz resorted to a fast forward approach of developing CRPs. Potential CRPs were identified in the first CMST organized for all members of the CO, invariably they were from amongst the office bearers of the

organisations and after CMST went through LMST and the 7 days Master Trainers course. Through this approach in less than two years about 457 CRPs were identified and trained. I would call this a Hybrid Fast Forward Model of CRPs.

When I met 43 of these CRPs from the 7 districts at Kalam both men and women, I was most impressed at their willingness to act as CRPs with full commitment and dedication and most surprisingly they were young and many with university degrees. They all came from the grassroots from their respective COs and villages and seemed happy with the rural environment they were living in. To have found such rich resource in an area which even KP thinks as the provincial remote districts was to me no less than a miracle and not one or two but 457 of them and Zahid is confident as the coverage of COs increases the programme would have 1200 of the CRPs they require, almost 12 per union council.

With these extended hands, the capacity of the district teams was multiplied and they were not on SRSP's payroll. They certainly got remunerated when they acquired the capacity on their own to hold CMST/LMSTs or undertook other activities for which compensation was available in the project document.

We heard presentations from each district. Malakand had already 51 CRPs (18 of them are women), Dir had 60, Swat had 114, Buner had 83, Chitral 46, Shangla 71 and Lower Dir 45 male female. The spectrum of activities they had undertaken covered a wide array such as Village Development Plans, PPMs, LMST, Institutional Maturity Index (IMI), Poverty Score Card (PSC). Youth Development, CO/VO formation, opening of Bank Accounts, Resolution of Domestic Disputes, Planning, Managers Conferences, Exposure Visits, CPI identification, countering and resisting influentials, Young Leaders Forum, Citizens Advisory Forum, Aman Mushaira, Human Rights Session, LSO Formation, MHP site selection, Value Chain, Savings Mobilisation, Capacity Building, Cooperative Agriculture, Community Resource Centre, Future Planning etc. etc.

It was mind boggling what the CRPs were capable of doing. In terms of problems, they pointed out the difficult terrain, lack of logistics support, political interference in some

districts, empowerment of women and personal difficulties in terms of availability of time. There was a sizeable percentage of inactive CRPs in each district. The ones who met me came from a grassroots background and on being asked why did they agree to become CRPs, they had some interesting reasons to give like the parents upbringing them in an environment of giving and many wanting to help their not so fortunate sisters and brothers. One of them made my hair stand up. He was a Jahadi and he gave up killing people realizing the futility of what he was doing, did MA in History and also mentioned reading a book in which I was mentioned and what I was doing in social mobilisation.

Having heard their presentations for more than four hours, in between I kept on questioning them. In the end I asked them what is CRPs primary focus and function. What will sustain the activities PEACE is implementing and who will do it when PEACE phases out. If COs are the building block of the three tier social mobilisation, how do we ensure sustainability of the COs because if the COs sustain, the entire edifice of the three tier would sustain. If the foundation is weak and crumbled, then how the VO and LSO would remain intact. The sustainability of CO depends on viability of the organisation by regular meetings, regular attendance, regular savings and these three depend on the micro investment plan (MIP) or member development plan (MDP) of each household. The making of the plan is not enough, its implementation is imperative. Unfortunately the CRPs had not given much attention to this aspect. They had done many impressive things but they forgot the core function.

I urged them to make their own COs model organisations. Otherwise they have no legitimacy to tell others what would make their COs viable and sustainable.

Another task I asked them to perform is to identify potential CRPs from the COs they make and at least identify a few of them who show the qualities like them and make them into full-fledged CRPs who would ensure that their work continues in the future because with increased number of COs/VOs/LSOs, they may not be able to cope with

the demands. Thus ultimately the CRPs success will be judged how many more CRPs he or she has fostered.

Here I have special submission to make to EU that for sustainability of the 12,000 COs after PEACE phases out, the financial sustainability of COs is essential for which a small grant to COs as income generating grant (IGG) may be provided in project document. It may not cost more than one or one and half million rupees per union council amounting to a little over one million Euros for 100 Union Councils but this would act as the glue which will keep the COs survive for a long long time after the phasing out of PEACE.

To Zahid I would say not to overburden CRPs. It is a very rich resource but they should be used wisely by first letting them concentrate on the basics which is fostering viable COs, before they start running in all directions and trying to do everything that comes to their mind or catches their attention. They should address themselves to those activities once they have accomplished their basic task.

The trail blazing PEACE Programme staff under the imaginative leadership of Zahid has done and produced this Hybrid Fast Forward CRP model, needs only slight reorientation to become an amazing tool for social mobilisation of communities by themselves. Any amount of praise for this initiative would be an understatement. I was delighted that PEACE SRSP team got full support from SRSP management and they actively participated in developing this strategy.

We witnessed the fruits of this approach when we visited the Kalam Hydro Power Plant generating 400 KW of electricity providing power to 45 hotels, the entire shopping area and residents of four villages. Last September I had come with Imran Khan and Jahangir Tareen for ground breaking ceremony entrusting the power house lying non-functional for last so many years with the building and machinery totally run down and no better than junk. In its place, we saw a state of art power house well managed by a resident engineer and his staff providing electricity to domestic client at Rs. 5 per unit

and to commercial clients at Rs. 7. We had reached Kalam at night and the whole valley was so brightly lit up as if all the stars from the sky had descended into the valley.

Next morning we met the Power Committee comprising representatives of villages, hotels and shops. The Committee had ensured no theft of power and prompt payment of bills. Consequently after deducting the expenses, the Power Committee was building up a substantial reserve and were thinking of using the funds for welfare work. On Chairperson's suggestion, they readily agreed to consider using some of the funds as CIF for empowering women.

We had a cursory look at some other activities like Value Chain but in terms of partnership and cooperation, I was most impressed by the way army appreciated SRSP's work in Swat. Thanks to Ehsanullah, Director SRSP, Chairperson and I along with others were invited by local commander Major General Javed Bukhari to a dinner a musical evening held in honour of the Corps Commander Peshawar Lt. Gen. Khalid Durrani. We were accorded grand hospitality and everyone was full of praise for SRSP. I also met Brig. Aamer who as Military Secretary to the President of Pakistan had arranged my meeting with the President and later with Ms Maryam Nawaz. He spoke highly about my work to both the Generals.

I came away from Swat with an amazing euphoria of what SRSP was doing in Malakand Division under the PEACE programme. The CEO Masoodul Mulk has transformed SRSP in an organisation observing the highest standards of excellence and assembled a team of professionals both at the management as well as at the field level endowed with dedication, commitment and professionalism, of which any organisation will feel proud of. I tremendously enjoyed and appreciated the approach and contributions of the members of the Management Group made, accompanying me, comprising Aftab, Wasif, Atif, Zahid Khurshid and Nadia. Zahid's group at Swat comprising Ijaz, Khalid, Naheed, Sohail, Ehsan, Aftab, Gul, Shakeel, Fazle Khaliq, Altaf and SSOs Dildar, Sajjad, Shakil, Amnullah, DPMs Nur Ajab and Tariq Ahmad along with SSOs Hafiz and Shujat are setting an example for other field staff to emulate. I met

many more and I will request Aftab and Zahid to convey my appreciation to them. Ehsanullah as Guardian Angel of the PEACE and our permanent host in Swat, has proved a real asset to SRSP.

My special thanks are to Chairperson Munawar Humayun for accompanying me on the visit. She is a true volunteer and her dedication and commitment to improve the lot of the poor and especially the women is peerless. I have not come across any volunteer Director with such commitment. Her ideas and practices in developing agriculture and horticulture have to be seen to be appreciated. The Farmers Economic Group (FEG) approach promoted by her under ASF programme, shows incredible results in giving increased incomes to the farmers. I trust Zahid Khurshid dealing with enterprise at the management level will come up with an operational plan how to disseminate this Advanced Package throughout the KP, where it is feasible.

Throughout my visit to PEACE programme, I was reminded of Brend de Groot of EU. I have yet to come across a Head of Development Division in foreign missions and agencies with his kind of commitment to community social mobilisation. I am so glad that in Benoist Bazin and his team comprising Amaury, Giacomo, Imran and Arshad, we find an equally supportive group of professionals to the social mobilisation approach.