

# Minutes of the 5th National Project Steering Committee Meeting- Hamara Kal Project (2009-2012)

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## 1- Introduction

One of the key activities under the EU-Rutgers WPF co-financed project Hamara Kal - “Rights Driven Institutionalization of SRH of Young people in Pakistan” (2009-2012) is to organize biannual meetings of the National Project Steering Committee (NPSC). The committee has a mandate to review project’s implementation progress according to targets as per work-plan and formulation of future strategies for project implementation in view of emerging challenges. The 5<sup>th</sup> biannual meeting was **held on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2011 (11:00 am to 13:15 pm)** at Rutgers **WPF Office – Islamabad**. A total of **13 members participated** in the meeting (for details please see annexure 1). Following were the **agenda points** of the meeting:

- Review of the project’s performance till June 2011;
- Share re-appropriations proposed in the project strategy/approach and implications of 18th Amendment on the project;
- Update on media issue and media mobilization strategy;
- Appraise on preliminary findings of Mid-Term Evaluation of the project
- Review and approval of the work plan July –Dec 2011

## 2- Proceedings of the Meeting

### 2.1 Welcome Note & Agenda Setting

After a formal round of introductions, Country Representative (CR) Rutgers WPF, welcomed the participants, and appreciated quality of their input so far. He also briefed the participants on the objectives and agenda of the meeting.

### 2.2 Project Review (Jan-Jun 2011)

Programme Manager (PM) gave a brief review of the project progress as per LFA, challenges and lessons learnt during Jan-June 2011. He briefed participants regarding the reaction of the selected media towards some contents of the workbook in April 2011 which partially affected the activities in the project districts, especially in Karachi. He highlighted that moving from LSBE to SRHR education was not that easy in the environment of increasing conservatism as lessons related to growing up, Young people and family, and HIV/AIDS were objected by two newspapers and couple of TV channels. He shared the



measures taken by the project team in revising the workbooks by engaging project teams, religious scholars and District Project Steering Committee (DPSC) Karachi and initiation of media mobilization strategy to generate positive discourse on the LSBE and sexual and reproductive health issue. The



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Rutgers WPF team and implementing partners mobilized all their contacts at all levels to advocate for continuation of the programme.

Despite challenging situation, the project observed a remarkable progress during the review period. Some of the salient achievements include the following:

- The project team dealt with the media reaction effectively by mobilizing its media and govt contacts and ensured timely development and implementation of media mobilization strategy;
- Developed sensitization / capacity building manuals for range of stakeholders;
- Carried out Training Workshops for Healthcare Providers in all the districts to start process for youth friendly health services;
- Enhanced Web-based M&E and rights violation data collection and reporting mechanism;
- Formed sub-committees of DPSCs in all three project districts for advocacy follow ups;
- Completed Mid Term Evaluation of the project; and
- Muster support from all three district government and started negotiations with provincial govt Sindh to get their support.

While talking about challenges, PM briefed participants that turning negative media talk on Life Skills Based Education into positive discourse, restoration of the program activities and support of EDOs / government officials required many additional advocacy activities. . Accordingly, some portions of the workbook required additional funds for re-printing and needed budgetary re-appropriations in addition to few other adjustments in the wake of increasing costs due to high inflation and price escalation.

While responding to one of the query, PM said that though Rutgers WPF and its IPs followed an extensive process of taking feedback from government departments, teachers and head of the schools on the draft LSBE workbooks, however, there is need to engage parents, religious leaders, media and communities in this process to avoid any backlash before its formal launch in the schools. Keeping in view the current context of the Pakistan there is need for exploring alternate ways for delivering SRHR



related messages to young people, parents and communities.

The NPSC suggested revising visibility strategy of the project and implementation of a proactive media-driven advocacy campaign for LSBE and avoid using 'SRHR' for the time being. NPSC members reinforced importance of Life Skills for not only youth but parents and communities. While adding to this point the Country Director-Plan Pakistan emphasized that masses need awareness about the needs of Life skills for youth as Plan



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supported youth helpline receives good number of calls on daily basis, yet it is difficult to approach rural youth through this mean.

## 2.3 Project Re-appropriation Case

The Program Manager briefed the participants that Rutgers WPF has submitted a re-appropriation case to European Union under following objectives:

- To change the name of the organization in the donors' books as of 1st January 2011 the World Population Foundation (WPF) and Rutgers Nisso Groep (RNG) Netherlands have merged under the new name 'Rutgers WPF';
- To authenticate the amendments which have already been approved by the EU Delegation through its letter No DS/ar/gg D(2010) 01249 of 20th September 2010 in line with recommendations of NPSC;
- To make necessary modifications in the description of the action in order to ensure smooth implementation of the project in post 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment scenario;
- To make budgetary re-appropriations keeping in view ground realities, inflation, needs and the actual expenditures trends on various budget lines. PM informed the participants that following set of modifications have been proposed in the description of the action:
  - In the wake of recent 18<sup>th</sup> amendment , removed target of 150 elected representatives and engaging NRB (abolished) and added formation of Provincial Steering Committees;
  - Training workshops for head of the schools instead of orientation sessions in project districts
  - Revised number of target schools from 450 to 270 keeping the target of number of students as 150,000, and defined parents involvement strategy;
  - Revised number of PDFs (Teachers) from 210 to 100;
  - Revised number of PRFs (School Heads) from 56 to 36;
  - Proposed advanced training for teachers on para-counselling skills in order to create a dedicated teacher-led referral system and link education and health interventions for youth friendly health services;
  - Proposed media engagement / mobilization strategy in the wake of current media crisis.



- The proposed budgetary re-appropriations include reduction in the costs of the "Human Resources", "Equipment & Supplies" and "Local Office" budget heads by €90,146, €833, and €4,643 respectively – which are primarily the operations cost – and an increase in the programme expenditure including "Other costs, services", "Others" and "Travel" budget heads by €54,238, €36,352, and €5,032..

The members endorsed that the proposed modifications ensure additional flow of benefits to the target groups and the final beneficiaries.



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## 2.4 Media Mobilization Strategy

The Country Representative Rutgers WPF introduced the media consultant, Mr. Masud Alam to members of the steering committee who has been engaged to support Rutgers WPF and IPs to enhance media linkages and highlighted the background and objectives of media mobilization strategy. The overall purpose of the strategy is to create enabling environment for SRHR through effective and meaningful engagement of Media. The specific objectives of the strategy are to:

- develop resource materials and tools for sensitizing Media representatives on SRHR / LSBE
- sensitize Media on SRHR / LSBE through active participation and awareness raising
- reach specific target audience (policy makers, media, parents and communities) through Media campaigns

Mr. Masud Alam took the discussion further and shared the methodology of engaging media to initiate positive discourse on LSBE vis-à-vis SRHR in Pakistan. He elaborated media action plan entailing activities i.e. workshops with media representatives, development of media guidebook on SRHR issues and media engagement workshops for Rutgers WPF and Partners staff. He supported for using the term of LSBE instead of SRH in all sort of communications with media. He told participants that the slogan of “protecting our children from abuse” could have wider acceptability and should be used as a common agenda while advocating with government officials, media, parents and other stakeholders. He shared with participants that following tasks will be carried out under media mobilization strategy during next six months:

Task 1- Literature Review

Task 2- Review and Finalization of Media Hand Book / Guide Book

Task 3- Showcasing our Case in LSBE Learning Forums

Task 4- Media Sensitization Workshops on SRHR Issues and encourage Debate:

- *Karachi- 02 Workshops- Due on July 20-21*
- *Multan- 01 Workshop- Due on July 25*
- *Mitiari / Hyderabad- 01 Workshop- Due on July 19*
- *Gujranwala- 01 Workshop- Due on July 28*

Task 5- One day training workshop for Rutgers WPF Staff

Task 6 - A concerted and sustained media campaign (6 Months)

- *30 Newspaper articles*
- *18 Radio Programs*
- *12 TV Programs*

The Country Representative-Rutgers WPF identified the gap wherein right wing media had not been taken as project stakeholders before the media crises surfaced up. The participants reflected their own learning based on media and community resistance while working on sensitive issues. It was emphasized that deficiency of appropriate vocabulary in Urdu to discuss SRHR issues cause ambiguity and thus criticism. The SRHR focused organizations should collectively discover and define appropriate terminologies/words to articulate SRHR issues in Urdu and local languages. The participants also appreciated the timely efforts made by Rutgers WPF for managing the issue and highlighted the fact



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that though the number of right wing media organizations are quite limited, however they are still very influential.

## 2.5 Mid Term Evaluation

Program Manager Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation presented the preliminary findings of the mid-term evaluation of Hamara Kal project. She briefed participants on the purpose and methodology of the initiative and assessment results under each of the strategic component of the project i.e. AIM- Assessment, Institutionalization and Monitoring. She shared with participants that the data collection was based on desk reviews, interviewing with Rutgers WPF project team and Partners staff and by having meetings with members of DPSCs in respective districts.

The participants appreciated the process and pointed out that most of the findings show an evaluation



of the processes and less about the impact. PM, PME clarified that since the evaluation covers only two and half years of the project, thus most of the activities are still half way of their implementation and it was very difficult to assess the impact at this point. Also the purpose of the MTE was evaluation of the process and outputs. PM PME also shared observations with regard to project limitations, challenges, strengths and weaknesses. According to her, the project is showing an overall good performance against each objective without any activity being delayed / pending in the work-plan. The participants gave further suggestions on presentation of the MTE

findings. Some of the key suggestions were: inclusion of geographical context for each project district; sharing progress against annual targets as well as progress in each district; and rearticulating some of the findings to avoid discrepancies. Participants also showed their interest in reviewing the draft report which is due by July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011.

## 2.6 Project Planning (July- Dec 2011)

At the end, PM shared the work plan (July-Dec 2011) with NPSC for their review and feedback. The main tasks planned for the next six months are as follows:

- Orientation of 63 new schools and taking on board 60,000 new students;
- Selection and capacity building of Para-counselors and creating teacher-led referral systems;
- Carrying out stakeholders' meetings in the districts to realize advocacy agenda of the project;
- Organizing LSBE Learning forums in the project districts;
- Finalization and sharing of draft mid-term evaluation report;
- Release of regular E Newsletters and annual district-level SRHR violation reports;
- Piloting Parents' involvement strategy;
- Implementation of media mobilization strategy;
- Formation and biannual meeting of Provincial Project Steering Committees;



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## 3. Recommendations

Following are some of the key recommendations by the members of the steering committee:

- There is need to focus on edutainment approach for passing on sensitive messages on SRHR instead of talking through media talk shows;
- Use LSBE as defined in National Education Policy instead of SRHR for the time being to avoid any further negative reaction
- To initiate positive discourse on SRHR issues and LSBE, it was suggested to engage local media groups and own channels of local cable operators which are relatively cost effective and very popular among communities;
- To bridge communication gap between parents and children on puberty issues, there is need to develop and test a parental guide book which could help them in catering adolescents' growing up issues.
- There is need to adopt a multi-pronged approach of implementing LSBE in Pakistan by engaging range of stakeholders including government officials, parliamentarians, media, parents, teachers and religious leaders.



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## Annexure - List of Participants

S. No	Name of the Participants	Organization
1	Ms. Surayya Faiz	Awaz Foundation, Multan
2	Mr. Iftikhar Ahmed Durrani	NATPOW, Islamabad
3	Mr. Hashim Khan	BRSP, Islamabad
4	Ms. Ayesha Aziz	Aahung, Karachi
5	Mr. Fshat ul Hassan	YAN, Lahore
6	Mr. Masud Alam	Media Consultant, Islamabad
7	Ms. Ayesha Ali	Rutgers WPF , Islamabad
8	Mr. Qadeer Baig	Rutgers WPF, Islamabad
9	Ms. Sidra Ashraf	Rutgers WPF, Islamabad
10	Mr. Saeed ur Rehman	Rutgers WPF, Islamabad
11	Dr. Sheeba Naz	FPAP, Islamabad
12	Mr. Haider Waseem Yaqub	Plan International , Islamabad
13	Dr. Zubaida Rashid	Population Council , Islamabad
<b>Regrets Received</b>		
1	Mr. Iftikhar Khalid	Oxfam Novib
2	Dr. Yasmeen Qazi	David & Lucile Packard Foundation
3	Mr. Syed Kamal Shah	Family Planning Association of Pakistan
4	Dr. Tanveer Ahmed	HANDS
5	Ms. Zehra Kamal	Development Practitioner

