

World Population Foundation, Pakistan

The 4th Annual Planning and Retreat 16th – 17th December, 2009 O' Spring – Church World Service, Murree Hills

In 2009, World Population Foundation (WPF), Pakistan initiated a number of exciting interventions and saw growth on local and national level involving all major stakeholders. Thus, Annual Retreat was the right time to review and highlight the achievements made during the course of the year and plan for the year to come.

The two day retreat was held at Church World Service's training facility at Murree Hills from December 16-17, 2009 with the aim of reflecting back on the year 2009 and review where the organisation stood in terms of its strategic planning, programmes and staffing vis-a-vis Country Strategy (2009–2012) and measure the achievements, challenges, and recommend changes for improvements and its effective implementation in the years to come.

All staff members had equal opportunity to reflect back, share their reflections and actively participate in the decision making with true spirit. Different methodologies consisting of discussion sessions, presentations, group exercises, team building energisers and loads of fun made the retreat effective.

Learning, Communication and Resource Mobilisation (LCR) department facilitated the Retreat while the Administration unit ably dealt with logistics. Knowledge Management team consisting of Mr. Kashif Muneer and Ms. Aasia Niazi interjected energisers designed to foster team building. The Retreat started with an evaluation of the year 2009 and sharing of perceived achievements and challenges. It was an attempt to critically review the successes and challenges followed by discussion on overcoming the challenges. In this regard, discussions about staff turnover, culture, incentives and vision and strategies were held.

During the second session, on behalf of the team; Ms. Nazoora Ali, Programme Manager - WeAct presented the review of the Country Strategy 2009 – 2012. Some of the recommendations given by the team included recruiting appropriate staff and retaining them by providing competitive financial and other benefits, ensuring office and staff friendly policies, HRD, focusing on developing linkages and team building.

The third session focus on reviewing the effectiveness of the existing structure/ organogram implemented from January, 2009, identifying gaps and recommendations for 2010 inline with the findings from CSP (Country Strategy Paper) review. The team recommended keeping the programmatic structure alive with few recommendations that included; shifting Communication to Knowledge Management (KM) unit, LCR and KM to be headed by Managers and coordinators to be hired for the implementation of projects. The day concluded with a walk on the Mall Road before the Bar-BQ bonfire dinner followed by fun.

Proceedings of day two commenced with review of last 5 years' financial situation of WPF and budget for 2010. The trends indicated that WPF is moving towards excellence in terms of optimally utilizing its resources for programmatic activities and minimizing overheads.

The Annual Planning and retreat concluded with a thank you note by Country Representative to the team for their active participation and to the facilitators for their hard work. The team left with the feeling of confidence and commitment and headed towards a recreational trip to Ayubia that included a 'Team Walk' and lunch before leaving for Islamabad.

The Retreat also provided staff with an opportunity to stay together, and strategise for the future in an environment and serenity.