



The Asia Foundation

• Celebrating Fifty Years •

PAKISTAN

Supporting Democratic Development in Pakistan
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CLOSE-OUT REPORT

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1. Summary

Supporting Democratic Development in Pakistan (SDDP) was a two-year program awarded by USAID to The Asia Foundation on 27 September 2002. The program's overall goal was to *establish conditions for more effective democratic governance in Pakistan* by creating strong coalitions among a wide array of informed civil society groups demanding more effective democratic governance. The SDDP program plan was organized into three components: (a) improving electoral processes to enable meaningful citizen participation in the 2002 elections; (b) broadening civil society coalitions for democratic governance reform; and (c) legislative training and information.

SDDP has taken Pakistan's democracy a critical step forward by building the capacity of civil society to facilitate citizen debate on key democratic reforms and increasing the impact of citizen demand for reform through innovative use of newly independent broadcast media. It has enhanced the capacity of, and strengthened linkages between civil society networks and media outlets, encouraged freedom of the press, and helped set the stage for more effective and transparent democratic governance in the years ahead. The program has successfully developed citizen coalitions across Pakistan, building social capital capable of reversing deep-rooted public exclusion and apathy. Open and insightful public debates were held nationwide on key policy issues that confront Pakistan, including Pakistan's relations with India, terrorism, economic stability, growing unemployment, corruption, justice, and dismal health and education services. More than 70,000 citizens directly participated in this process.

The SDDP program also brought together more than 3,000 district and sub-district civil society organizations in an effort to mobilize marginalized communities to express and demand reforms for democracy and development in the country. Ordinary citizens articulated their views and expectations, creating space for their inclusion in political debate. More specifically, the program has helped build alliances within civil society, including NGOs, the media, academic institutions through a range of events and activities. Public forums, cultural festivals, and interactive theater performances have engaged people at the community level in a nationwide discourse on issues of real concern to a majority of Pakistanis. For the first time in Pakistan, business professionals were also included in a structured dialogue on democratic reform. Recognizing the enormous potential of the emerging independent media, SDDP successfully partnered with popular television networks to set new trends in media programming. It also introduced new skills and techniques in radio and the print media that continue to have wide public outreach and influence.

In the short span of 24 months, SDDP has successfully infused dynamic energy among a wide range of citizens and civil society organizations demanding reform in democratic institutions and practices. However, barriers to citizen involvement in public policy and accountability are formidable. Pakistan's civil society must consistently assert itself to expand the political space for citizens.

2. Introduction

Supporting Democratic Development in Pakistan (SDDP) was a two-year program awarded by USAID to The Asia Foundation on 27 September 2002. The program's overall goal was to *establish conditions for more effective democratic governance in Pakistan*. The program's specific objectives were:

Short-term sub-objective 1: To increase meaningful participation of voters and candidates in electoral processes.

Long-term sub-objective 2: To establish the foundation for strong coalitions among a wide array of informed civil society groups demanding more effective democratic governance.

Long-term sub-objective 3: To increase public consensus on key agendas for democratic reform of national governance institutions as the basis for return to elected party rule.

To achieve the above objectives, the SDDP program plan was organized into three closely inter-related components: (a) improving electoral processes to enable meaningful citizen participation in the October 2002 national elections; (b) broadening civil society coalitions for democratic governance reform; and (c) legislative training and information.

The first component encouraged larger voter turnout and a qualitative difference in voting patterns. The second component helped build a broad-based, informed public coalition advocating democratic governance reform, and strengthened civil society capacity for sound, independent political analysis. The third component improved the capacity of legislators through training and information. The program plan for SDDP was finalized after a series of iterative discussions between USAID and The Asia Foundation. This report follows the final version of the program plan.

This report will present details of project implementation, against each component and sub-component of the project, including its purpose, intended outputs, activities, and short and long-term impact. The report will also document key challenges faced and lessons learned.

3. Project Implementation

In this section, details of each component of the project are presented, including its purpose, intended outputs, activities, and short and long-term impact.

Component 1: Improving Electoral Processes

Purpose:

The general elections of October 2002 provided a key opportunity to build public demand from all sectors for democratic governance. One of the key barriers to democratization in Pakistan is the apathy of citizens towards the political process that is perceived to be discredited and ineffectual. A steady decline in voter turnout in elections held since 1988 reflects the lack of voter interest and confidence. A large portion of the electorate does not vote, as many citizens feel that their votes do not make any difference. These voters are often termed the silent majority. On the other hand, citizens who use their right to vote often do so to ensure political patronage. Often clan or tribe identity, rather than political or developmental issues, directs voting patterns.

This component of SDDP contributed to reversing the trend of declining voter turnout witnessed in elections held since 1988. It helped build citizen responsibility by educating and mobilizing voters towards enhancing the quantity and quality of voting as a basis for civic participation in democratic governance. The component was specifically designed around the October 2002 elections. All activities under this component were completed in the first quarter of SDDP, with some followup work completed in the second quarter (January-March 2004).

Planned Outputs:

- Extensive and effective media campaigns to “get-out-the-vote”;
- Documented party positions on key issues related to democratic governance and politics;
- Documented public policy recommendations for the incoming government to establish democratic governance and politics in Pakistan;
- Civil society watch groups to monitor the pre- and post-election performance of the contesting political party that comes to power;
- Pre- and post-election opinion polls to assess public perceptions about the role of the general elections in Pakistan’s political development;
- Exit polls and election monitoring reports to assess the conduct of the electoral process.

Activities:

Component	Improving Electoral Processes
<i>Sub-component</i> Media Campaign to "Get-Out-The-Vote"	<i>Key partners</i> Spectrum Communications (Pvt.) Ltd. Pakistan Television Independent Media (Indus, ARY Digital) FM 100

As a lead up to the national elections in October 2002, SDDP designed and implemented an aggressive nation-wide campaign to mobilize voters to use their right to vote. An estimated 120 million citizens were reached through a multi-faceted media campaign run for six weeks leading up to election day, i.e., 10 October 2002. The media campaign included a series of ten TV Commercials aired at prime time on Pakistan Television, Prime TV, PTV World, Indus Vision and ARY Digital; a series of ten radio spots on FM100; billboards in 68 cities across Pakistan; and 45,000 posters disseminated nationwide.



Clips from the TV Commercials
change"

Bill board: "With your vote begin the process of

The media campaign included a series of single-message commercials, of 12-20 second duration, for television and radio. The commercials were targeted at specific voter groups, for example, women, urban/rural voters, and the youth. To maintain impartiality, the commercials displayed people without any reference, however slight, to a particular political party, ethnic community or region.

The media campaign received extensive media coverage, most notably in the article, "Spectrum Asks For a Vote," in the November/December 2002 issues of Aurora magazine, the country's leading publication on advertising and consumerism. The magazine is published Pakistan's most prominent print media organization, Dawn Group of Newspapers.

Component	Improving Electoral Processes
Sub-component Candidate Debate and Political Dialogue	Key Partners Spectrum Communications (Pvt.) Ltd. FM 100 Institute of Development Studies & Practice – Balochistan Pakistan Institute of Labour Education & Research – Sindh South Asia Partnership Pakistan – Punjab and NWFP

Under this sub-component, activities implemented provided information and enabled greater interaction between citizens and electoral contestants. A series of nine radio programs were produced to give citizens information on voting procedures, and on civic rights and obligations within the context of the October 2002 general elections. The shows included analyses by specialists and NGO representatives. To engage listeners, the programs also incorporated popular national songs. The radio programs were aired on independent stations as the state-owned Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) refused to air them on the basis that it had a foreign sponsor.

A series of provincial and national roundtables were held as a lead up to the October 2002 elections. These events brokered a discussion between leaders of political parties and representatives of civil society organizations, including NGOs, the media, and bar councils. Participating political parties included Pakistan People’s Party, Pakistan Muslim League (Q), Pakistan Muslim League (N), Tehrik-i-Insaaf, Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal, Jamhoori Wattan Party, Qaumi Jamhoori Party, Kissan Mazdoor Party, and the Balochistan National Movement. At the moderated roundtables political parties to presented and defended party positions on key issues including economic revival and stability, governance reform, foreign policy, terrorism, and extremism. The events were organized by the civil society coalition, Democratic Rights and Citizens Education Program (DRCEP).



Leaders of key political parties presenting their party manifesto

Component	Improving Electoral Processes
<i>Sub-component</i> Public Debate and Mobilization	<i>Key Partners</i> Institute of Development Studies & Practice – Balochistan Pakistan Institute of Labour Education & Research – Sindh South Asia Partnership Pakistan – Punjab and NWFP Interactive Resource Center – Communications

Over 30,000 citizens participated in public forums held in 42 districts. The public forums were a culmination of a process of public engagement at the district and sub-district levels. Nearly 1,000 civil society organizations led the public mobilization campaign. Their capacity in public engagement was enhanced through a series of district-level training workshops. The trained civil society activists held corner meetings in various parts of the district to begin a dialogue on democracy and elections. This process was culminated in the public forum. Interactive theater was used in more than half of the forums to increase the effectiveness of the debate. An *Awami Mela* (Public Fair) was also organized to provide information while promoting folk music and dance.



Theater performance: District Abbottabad, NWFP
Awami Mela



Sian Zahoor performing in the

Component	Improving Electoral Processes
<i>Sub-component</i> Research on Governance and Electoral Reform	<i>Key Partner</i> Society for Citizens' Rights

Partial support was provided to a book-length research on the October 2002 elections, conducted by the renowned political analyst, Professor Mohammad Waseem. The study was a comparative analysis of political trends, issue areas and leadership patterns emerging in the October elections. It evaluated Pakistan's electoral politics, situating the country's political landscape in the context of electoral mobilization, with reference to media, education, urbanization and social change. Its hypothesis comprises four factors: the definition of elections; political inputs such as political parties, ideologies and policies; electoral profile; and voting patterns in Pakistan.

Component	Improving Electoral Processes
<i>Sub-component</i> Election Day Monitoring	<i>Key Partners</i> Institute of Development Studies & Practice – Balochistan Pakistan Institute of Labour Education & Research – Sindh South Asia Partnership Pakistan – Punjab and NWFP Sustainable Development Policy Institute - Research

720 observers covered 2,160 polling stations and 12,960 polling booths in 72 districts across the country. All observers belonged to civil society organizations. They were trained in election day monitoring by 150 lead trainers who were provide special training as part of this project.



Short and Long Term Impact:

In the short-term, the elections-focused initiatives of SDDP made a significant contribution toward ensuring that Pakistan’s moderate, silent majority is informed, able, and interested in participating in the national elections. The “get-out-the-vote” campaign and public debates, dialogues, and other activities not only encouraged the electorates’ interest in voting and bringing about a higher turnout than in previous elections, but also advanced the pre-electoral dialogue on moderate, pro-democratic values of accountability and transparency in government, tolerance, peace and national stability, as key components in achieving democratic governance. SDDP also helped develop further the capacity of civil society organizations to engage in political discourse at a nation-wide scale. This is a distinctive contribution of SDDP towards the establishment of a vibrant and robust civil society in Pakistan capable of asserting itself in demanding democratic politics and governance.

In the long-term, stimulation and meaningful involvement of larger numbers of voters will help encourage responsive and accountable political leadership. It will help to eliminate the culture of patronage politics. By helping to get citizens engaged in their democratic right to vote, the proverbial silent majority will be reduced, and their votes will signify a positive step away from patronage - and clan-based voting considerations that have historically dominated Pakistan electoral processes.

Component 2: Establishing broad-based civil society coalitions for democratic governance reform

Purpose:

The reform of existing governing institutions, citizen demand for responsive and accountable elected representation, and effective on-going public participation in governance, all require an expanded and more effective role by civil society. The very diversity of Pakistan’s civil society means its perspectives will be varied, but on key issues of democratic governance reform, it is essential that broader and yet more cohesive citizen coalitions for democratic reform emerge. One of the current weaknesses within Pakistan’s civil society undermining its capacity to play a more significant role in democratic governance is limited capacity for political analysis. This component of SDDP helped Pakistan’s civil society channel citizens’ voice, through public fora, debate, and support for advocacy efforts. It also helped build its analytic capacity and provide an information base for its policy advocacy efforts through the production of a series of issue papers.

Planned outputs:

- Assessment of Pakistani civil society organizations
- Agendas for democratic governance reform with broad associational backing
- Broad-based civil society coalitions for democratic governance
- A Report on *Citizens’ Perspectives on A Roadmap for Democratic Governance*
- Preliminary advocacy campaigns on key democracy and governance issues
- A series of issue papers on issues related to democratic governance reform

Activities under each sub-component:

Component	Broadening Civil Society Coalitions
<i>Sub-component</i> Stimulating Citizen Debate	<i>Key Partners</i> Institute of Development Studies & Practices – Balochistan Khwendo Kor – NWFP Strengthening Participatory Organizations – Punjab Strengthening Participatory Organizations - Sindh

Over 70,000 citizens, including women and the poor, presented their perspectives and debated issues related to democratic reform through a series of about 100 public forums held across Pakistan. Though SDDP’s program plan included 25 public forums, in consultation with civil society partners this number was increased to 100 forums. More than 3,000 Pakistani civil society organizations led this initiative. The organizations received training and support to achieve these objectives. This process created political space for citizen discourse and helped build civil society coalitions around common interests.



"The poor do not get any justice"
Participant at a public forum in District Multan,
Punjab



"Women are worse off in our societies"
Participant at a public forum in District Kohat, NWFP

SDDP's program plan included a Citizens' Report, which would document these debates. However this could not be compiled due to delays caused by the need to re-establish a citizens' coalition, training of new partners in citizen engagement and public dialogue, and the challenges of local documentation.

Short and Long-Term Impact:

The immediate impact of these activities was the successful mobilization of Pakistan's civil society and the strengthening of their associational links as an important constituency advocating for democratic governance reforms. An elite comprising of the military, the bureaucracy, and a certain political class have long dominated Pakistan's politics and governance. Public exclusion and apathy is widespread. SDDP has successfully developed citizen coalitions to build social capital capable of reversing this trend. Open and insightful public debates were held across the country on key policy issues that confront contemporary Pakistan, including: Pakistan's relations with India, terrorism, economic stability, growing unemployment, corruption, justice provision, and dismal services of health and education. SDDP has infused dynamic energy among a wide range of citizens and civil society organizations demanding reform in democratic institutions and practices.

SDDP also brought together more than 3,000 district and sub-district civil society organizations in an effort to mobilize marginalized communities to express their views on and to demand reforms for democracy and development in the country. Ordinary citizens articulated their views and expectations, creating space for their inclusion in political debate. More specifically, the program helped build alliances within civil society, including NGOs, the media, academic institutions through a range of events and activities. Public forums, cultural festivals, and interactive theater performances have engaged people at the community level in a nationwide discourse on issues of real concern to a majority of Pakistanis. The impact on each of these key players is detailed below:

Institutional Impact: Provincial focal points: The Public Forums helped SDDP partner organizations achieve large-scale mobilization. In 30 public forums in Sindh and Punjab, there were more than 10,000 participants cumulatively. More

than 4,000 people participated in the *awami melas*. Organizing Public Forums as well as *awami melas*, at the district and provincial levels enhanced the credibility and acceptance of the provincial focal points in the eyes of citizens and civil society organizations. In Punjab and Sindh, SPO worked in partnership with 44 civil society organizations, training their representatives to organize public events and mobilize citizens to actively participate in them. A coalition of 85 NGOs and CBOs from Muzaffargarh and Mianwali districts was developed to organize the *awami melas* in Punjab. The sustained interaction also generated energy for collective action. In NWFP, as mentioned in an earlier section, more than 100 civil society leaders also formed a province-wide civil society coalition.

Khwendo Kor reported that SDDP helped the organization focus on strategic issues like democracy and governance. Until now, Khwendo Kor's program primarily focused on education, health and micro enterprise. Through SDDP it was able to deepen the link between these issues with peace, justice and poverty. It also enhanced Khwendo Kor's capacity to facilitate public engagement. The program enabled Khwendo Kor to expand its links with citizens, the media, political parties and other civil society actors. Similarly, in Hazara, the Omar Asghar Khan Development Foundation extended its outreach to citizens in the entire division. They in turn worked closely with Khwendo Kor so that together they were able to reach citizens in all 24 districts of NWFP. In particular, they were able to demonstrate that participation of women in public events is possible if the organization is well-rooted in local communities and has their confidence.

Box: The TAF Public Forum Model and Good Governance

One of SPO's program components seeks to strengthen and broaden the scope of participatory development coalitions to function as civil society networks engaged in district-level research and advocacy. The experience of SDDP has given activities under this component a new direction. The Public Forums model achieves the desired outcomes of strengthening civil society networks. SPO has adopted the model for the next five years. The strengthened networks will engage civil society to influence the policies of government, donors, CSOs and academia, and help them align their development goals with the priority needs of individuals and institutions in various sectors, including education, health, women's empowerment, environment conservation, human rights and governance. The SDDP experience enabled SPO to recognize the importance of strengthening civil society by supporting the establishment of civil society networks. SPO, in partnership with the Devolution Trust for Community Empowerment plans to empower communities by promoting the concept of Citizen Community Boards. The aim of the exercise is to strengthen local body institutions and achieve good governance. To achieve this objective, SPO and DTCE will build the capacity of councilors at the Union Council level, the CCBs, as well as community-based organizations in decision-making. This would help them plan and manage community-based development initiatives. After its SDDP experience, SPO has decided to adopt the same pattern for district wrap-up as used in the TAF Public Forums. This has been an effective tool for engaging citizens on local governance issues.

-- Excerpt from *SPO Final Quarterly Report, May 1 – August 30, 2004*

Institutional Impact: District partners: District-level organizations all over Pakistan acquired experience of public mobilization. Through this exercise, civil society networks were created and existing networks were strengthened to

create public demand for more democratic and representative governance in the country.

SDDP brought together a diverse range of CBOs and NGOs forging links between organizations were perhaps unlikely to work in collaboration with each other. The SDDP themes of poverty, peace and justice were comprehensive and interlinked, providing these organizations with a shared platform from which to engage the citizens and other civil society organizations. This helped them achieve public mobilization in greater numbers. Local-level organizations engaged in the program gained valuable experience of mass mobilization. Organizing Public Forums gave them practical experience in the democratic process. For many organizations, the link between democracy and the issues of poverty, peace and justice was clearly defined through this activity. Most importantly, the entire process demonstrated the role civil society can play in supporting more inclusive democratic governance in the country.

Almost 250 civil society organizations were trained in political mobilization in Sindh and Punjab during the program period. Many of these organizations were first-timers in the experience of advocacy and activism. Thus new stakeholders emerged in the movement for democratic reform. It is expected that this learning will be integrated into other aspects of their work enhancing the outreach of ongoing and future programs.

Wide dissemination of issue papers and other publications produced as part of the program made information usually confined to a small group of intellectuals, readily accessible to ordinary citizens.

Civil society's partnership with the media was a key impact of the program. The print and electronic media gave consistent and in-depth coverage to the Public Forums, and to the issues raised at the forums, taking the debate to a much wider audience.

Impact on Citizens: In the district forums the marginalized sections of society shared their opinion on the issues of social security, peace, social services, local governance, and basic rights, which contributed in raising the confidence of public to share their opinion in larger public gathering and meetings.

The Public Forums provided first-hand accounts of people's problems. Marginalized communities within society, such as women, farmers, laborers, peasants and religious minorities were given the opportunity to speak in the forums and share their problems and their views. They came up with policy recommendations that built their confidence and gave them a sense of importance.

Public Forums helped mobilize citizens on issues of critical importance to their lives. Participants became aware of the damaging effects of poverty, violence and injustice on society, and on their own lives.

In Balochistan, the Public Forums facilitated interaction between citizens and their local representatives. The role of local government was analyzed and people articulated their expectations from it. The forums thus provided space to citizens to discuss public concerns with their local political representatives.

Local journalists were encouraged to report these issues in local and national newspapers. This media coverage of the forums helped enhance awareness of policy issues at the grassroots level as well as among policy-makers.

The forums achieved a unique plurality of participation. There was a diverse range of individuals including peasants, farmers, teachers, lawyers, small businessmen, laborers, local councilors, factory workers taking part in public discourse. Not only did these forums highlight the underlying macro issues common to a majority of Pakistanis across the nation, they also identified issues that were peculiar and specific to districts and local communities, giving the program both outreach and depth.

The forums promoted a dialogue between ordinary citizens rather than a monologue by landlords, *nazims* and other influential individuals of the community. The people thus were able to speak out, identify their problems and come up with their own solutions and recommendations. A spirit of self-reliance was therefore promoted, with people realizing that they can solve their everyday problems if they act in unison.

The participation of women made these forums truly representative and inclusive. Not only did women attend the forums, they also took active part in the proceedings both through interventions in interactive theater performances and by speaking their views at public forums. This was particularly remarkable in the more conservative areas of NWFP. In many places, the number of women and their significant proportion in relation to male participants was exceptional.

“We thought only a few women will be able to participate in a place like Havelian. However, there were more than 500 women out of a total of 1,500 participants.”

Male participant, public forum, District Abbottabad

Box: Citizen action prompted by Public Forums

Brought together at Public Forums, civil society acquired a vigor and energy that led to the establishment of civil society networks in each district of Sindh. These networks moved to solve people's problems with focus and dedication. In Badin, for example, education emerged as a driving force for the local community. After the Public Forum, participants rallied together to form a network that succeeded in reopening primary schools in two villages of the district. The same network also addressed the issue of drinking water and adopted measures to provide potable water to areas deprived of the resource. *Karo kari*, or honor killing, is a matter of grave concern in Sindh where hundreds of cases of honor killing are reported every year. Following a Public Forum on peace in Shikarpur district, civil society organizations held a seminar on the same issue. More than 400 people participated in this seminar. A Legal Aid Forum was set up during the event to focus specifically on honor killings. The forum included the local bar association, media representatives, a local network of CBOs, and a high-ranking police official.

As a follow-up to the program, in Balochistan IDSP has been encouraged to strengthen its relations with partners. More specifically, IDSP plans to engage partners and learner networks in a strategic alliance aimed at strengthening civil society coalitions pressing for democratic reform. A follow-up of policy issues raised in Public Forums is also planned. Courses on political education, democratic rights, and policy advocacy have been introduced in IDSP's training courses.

IDSP will engage with public sector institutions and line departments to ensure that citizens are involved in public sector development planning and management. Promoting democratic practices in structures and processes of decision-making is also planned. IDSP has plans to work with women political representatives for mainstreaming women's perspectives at the local, provincial, and national levels.

The long-term impact of the activities under this component will be a marked reduction in the culture of silence and tolerance of bad governance that now characterizes Pakistani society and results from a combination of semi-feudal social norms and the exclusion of ordinary citizens from mainstream politics. The older tradition of debate and analysis that was systematically eroded over the past decades will be re-established, and extended to include the public at large.



Ali Qadir of The Network for Consumer Protection and I. A. Rehman of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan at the National Forum in Islamabad

“SDDP’s collective effort recognized that we must encourage people in a process of debate and dialogue over the conditions in our country. We must provide platforms to exercise citizenship, to express needs and aspirations, and to demand justice. SDDP has contributed meaningfully to the demand for democracy. It has resulted in new and renewed partnerships for democratic reform across all sectors.”

Ali Qadir, Chief Coordinator, The Network for Consumer Protection

Over the longer term, the impact of having Pakistan’s civil society focused on reform for democratic governance and engaged with policy makers through broader non-partisan coalitions could be critical to future political developments in the country. It is anticipated that the focus of these coalitions would be on issues that emerged from this process, i.e., internal and external peace and stability, cross-border trade and other collaboration with India, and building a stable democratic environment that will encourage both domestic and foreign investment.

Component	Broadening Civil Society Coalitions
<i>Sub-component</i> Engaging Business Leaders and Professionals	<i>Key Partners;</i> Lahore University of Management Sciences Sustainable Development Policy Institute

More than 200 leading businesspersons and professionals participated in a series of roundtable discussions: *Dialogue on Democracy*. The series included six regional roundtables, culminating in a national roundtable. Each regional roundtable focused on three themes, namely, *Peace and Development*, *Rule of Law*, and *Economic Stability*. About 30 business leaders and professionals participated in each regional roundtable. The recommendations of the regional roundtables were presented and debated with a wider audience at the national roundtable. *Dialogue on Democracy* engaged business leaders and professionals in a structured discussion on democratic governance in Pakistan. A

compendium of publications, including the discussion papers on each theme, was produced by LUMS. This publication documents the entire *Dialogue on Democracy* program. It is being circulated to more than 1,000 key business and professional leaders across Pakistan. It will also be sent to senior policy makers, the media, NGOs, and academic institutions. Under this sub-component, a mapping of key business and professional organizations was also completed.

Short and Long-term Impact

The impact of *Dialogue on Democracy* is evident at two levels. It has (i) influenced Pakistan's business community, and (ii) impacted the program of the partner institution in this activity, i.e., LUMS. The following section provides key elements of influence at each level:

Impact on the business community

- **Initiated a discourse:** For the first time in Pakistan, a structured dialogue on democratic reform was initiated with the business community. Careful attention was given to ensure that the business professionals led the process and set their own pace and terms.

“This the first time we have gathered to discuss democracy. We appreciate this initiative taken by LUMS. This program should be called the Roadshow on Democracy”

Participant, regional roundtable, Peshawar

Many participants appreciated the opportunity to debate issues that are seldom discussed in the business community. They welcomed the opportunity of meeting other business leaders and debating different views.

“India and Pakistan must collaborate to reduce China's influence in the region after the WTO's regime comes into effect in 2005. But as the civil bureaucracy and the military benefit with the continuation of the Kashmir dispute, there is little hope of normalization let alone collaboration between India and Pakistan.”

Participant, regional roundtable, Quetta

While many participants were candid and forthright, some were more reticent. In particular, there was some hesitation in expressing opinions about the military government, the Kashmir dispute, and the eroding writ of the state.

- **Ensured inclusiveness:** The roundtables were organized in primary centers of business and trade, like Karachi and Lahore, as well as secondary commercial centers, like Faisalabad and Sialkot. These continue to be dominated by the more developed and influential centers. The selection of

venues enabled the participation of a wide cross-section of businesspersons from larger and smaller business centers. Moreover, the selection emphasized that institutions such as LUMS are interested in interacting with the business community in relatively smaller commercial centers.

- Developed a better understanding of democracy: In some segments of society, popular perception is doubtful about the viability of democracy in Muslim societies. Some participants in the *Dialogue on Democracy* challenged this perception. They projected democracy as a universal human and social value that complements rather than contradicts religious values. They argued that Muslim societies are as eligible for democracy as secular nations. It was stressed that democracy does not clash with religion; in fact it allows religious freedom. The idea that modernity, development, and a stable order cannot be achieved without democracy, was presented.

“Democracy – at least the evolution of it – is relevant to the process of lawmaking and nation-building. In democracy there is equality, representation, and distribution of resources.”

Participant, regional roundtable, Islamabad

- Promoted tolerance: The roundtables were often marked by divergent views that at times generated heated debate. By providing space for diverse and even dissenting observations and analysis, the roundtables promoted a culture of free debate and discourse, and encouraged greater acceptance of different viewpoints.

Impact on LUMS

- Setting new trends: *Dialogue on Democracy* enabled LUMS to focus on subjects that are not traditionally associated with the business school. Initial internal resistance to the idea of facilitating a debate on democracy was won over by building a convincing argument in favor of cultivating a profile of intellectual activism for the institution. LUMS is a premium academic institution in the business sector. Its plans of continuing and institutionalizing the *Dialogue on Democracy* beyond SDDP will potentially have enormous influence on business professionals and students.

“By successfully arguing for attention to democratic governance we have succeeded in creating space for ourselves in the institution.”

Dr. Rasul Bakhsh Rais
Director, *Dialogue on Democracy*



- Developing inter-disciplinary synergies: Though led by the Political Science discipline, this initiative also involved the Economics and Law sections. Such integration has not been achieved before in LUMS. The experience has prompted the university to consider the development of a training module on cultivating political leadership.
- Training institution to think-tank: The Executive Development Center at LUMS served as the focal point for this activity. It has traditionally organized training programs. The Dialogue on Democracy expanded its portfolio to intellectual debate, elevating its status from a training institution to a think-tank.

Component	Broadening Civil Society Coalitions
<i>Sub-component</i> Tracking Public Opinion	<i>Key Partners;</i> <i>A.C. Nielsen</i>

The purpose of the Public Opinion Survey was to ascertain citizens’ perceptions on democratic reform in Pakistan. It would provide the essential macro context and systematic information complementing the public views expressed through indepth discussions held in more than 100 public forums and seven roundtable discussions. Though the public opinion survey was initiated in early 2004, generating a questionnaire that would gather the required information turned out to be more challenging than anticipated. As the design of the survey and its results depended on the quality of the questionnaire, the Foundation was unwilling to compromise in this regard. The Foundation requested a short-term extension to enable the completion of this ongoing activity that was not accepted. Therefore, in consultation with USAID, it was decided that the survey would be discontinued due to time constraints.

Component	Broadening Civil Society Coalitions
<i>Sub-component</i> Mobilizing the Media	<i>Key Partners:</i> ARY Digital GEO Pakistan Uks Pakistan Press Foundation Interactive Resource Center

SDDP developed a very strong focus on the media. Citizens' views on democratic reform were projected throughout Pakistan, and in other parts of the world, through innovative media programming and reporting. Independent broadcast and print media; and alternative theater were involved in this process.

Television talk show: *Aap Ki Seyaset* (Your Politics) is an innovative television talk show on current affairs. It is "citizen-centered" and presents researched data to stimulate discussions. Under SDDP, 16 episodes of the program were produced and aired. The duration of each episode is about 50 minutes. Each episode was aired at least three times. In the 28-week period in which this program was on-air, the estimated exposure time is 50 hours. It is estimated that the ARY programs reach an audience of 10 million in Pakistan, which is approximately 30% of total viewers in the country. As the episodes are aired on ARY One World and the channel's international beam, the program also reaches viewers in North America, Europe, South Asia, and the Arabian Gulf countries.



Box: Aap Ki Seyasat at-a-glance			
Date of Broadcast	Place of Recording	Theme	Panelists
16 Apr	Islamabad	Education	Ms. Zubeda Jalal, Federal Minister for Education Dr. A. H. Nayyar, Lead Researcher – Curriculum Development Maulana Abdur Rasheed Qazi, Naib Raees, Jamia Fareedya Dr. Saeed-ul-Hassan Chisti, Representative, a private school Ms. Samia Raheel Qazi, MNA (MMA)
30 Apr	Islamabad	Regional Peace	Mr. M.P. Bhandara, MNA and a leading businessman Professor Khurshid, Senator (MMA) Mr. Shah Mehmood Qureshi, MNA (PPPP) Mr. Ijaz Shafi Gilani, Chairman, Galup Pakistan Ms. Madiha Gohar, Director, Ajoka Theater
7 May	Islamabad	Corruption	Mr. Ehsan Iqbal, Chief Coordinator, PML-N Justice (retd.) Jawed Nawaz Gandapur, Judge PHC (1994-2000) Mr. Roedad Khan, Former Secretary General, Ministry of Interior Mr. I. A. Rahman, Director, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan Lt. General Munir Hafeez, Chairman, National Accountability Bureau
14 May	Islamabad	Population	Dr. Donya Aziz, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Population Welfare Mr. Shakeel Durrani, Secretary, Ministry of Population Welfare Dr. Zafar Mirza, Executive Director, The Network Prof Habib-ur-Rehman, Assistant Professor, Int'l Islamic University Mr. Arshad Mehmood, General Manager, NCHD
21 May	Peshawar	Terrorism	Haji Adeel, Secretary General, Awami National Party Mr. Sabir Hussain Awan, MNA (MMA) Mr. Ismail Khan, Bureau Chief, DAWN, Peshawar Qari Fayyazur Rehman Alvi, MNA (MMA) Lt. General Naseerullah Babar, Former Federal Minister of Interior
28 May	Peshawar	Women & Minorities	Begum Naseem Wali, Provincial President, Awami National Party Ms. Razia Aziz, MNA (MMA) Mr. Afrasiab Khattak, Member, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan Ms. Rakhshunda Naz, Advocate & Representative, Aurat Foundation Ms. Musarat Hilali, Advocate and Human Rights Activist
11 Jun	Lahore	Law & Justice	Col (Retd.) Shuja Khanzada, Minister for CM Inspection Team Sardar Mohammad Chaudhry, Former, IG Police, Punjab Mr. Liaquat Baloch, MNA & Deputy Secretary General, MMA Ms. Asma Jehangir, Advocate & Member, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan Mr. Saad Rafique, MNA & Secretary General, PML (N)-Punjab
18 Jun	Lahore	Unemployment	Mr. Idrees Khokhar, Representative, Farmers Association of Pakistan Mr. Ishaq Khakhwani, MNA (PML-Q) Dr. Mehwish Mumtaz Ahmed, Economist (LUMS) Ms. Bushra Khaliq, President, Working Women's Organizations Ms. Huma Fakhir, Lawyer
10 Sep	Lahore	Freedom Of Speech & Democracy	Mr. Taimoor Azmat, Secretary, Provincial Ministry of Culture, Punjab Mr. Jameel Bismil, Artist Mr. Mohammad Waseem, Interactive Resource Center Mr. M. Sharif, Artist Mr. Shah Sharabeel, Theater Director
17 Sep	Islamabad	Violence	Dr. Mohammad Pervaiz, Head-Psychology Department, Quaid-e-Azam University Shahzad Waseem, Minister of State for Interior Maulana Gul Naseeb, MNA (MMA)

Box (continued): <i>Aap Ki Seyaset</i> at-a-glance			
Date of Broadcast	Place of Recording	Theme	Panelists
24 Sep	Islamabad	Violence Against Women	Ms. Khalida Saleemi, Executive Director, Sach Ms. Fauzia Habib, MNA (PPP-P) Senator Kausar Firdaus (MMA) Mr. Sher Afghan Niazi, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs
1 Oct	Multan	Infrastructure	Raja Pervez Ashraf, MNA (PPPP) Ms. Ifat Idrees, Columnist, DAWN Mr. Rauf Mengal, MNA (BNP) Mr. Mohammad Ali Durrani, MNA (PML-Q)
22 Oct	Quetta	Housing & Shelter	Syed Safwanullah, Federal Minister for Housing & Works Ms. Asha Amir Ali, Peoples' Rights Movement Mr. Hanif Abbasi, MNA (MMA)
29 Oct	Quetta	Water-1	Dr. Ishaq Baloch, General Secretary, Culture, Awami National Party Syed Zafar Ali Shah, MNA (PPP-P) Mr. Shamsul Mulk, Former Chairman Wapda Mr. Mohsin Babbar, Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI)
5 Nov	Quetta	Water-2	Dr. Ishaq Baloch, General Secretary, Culture, Awami National Party Syed Zafar Ali Shah, MNA (PPP-P) Mr. Shamsul Mulk, Former Chairman, Wapda Mr. Mohsin Babbar, Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI)
12 Nov	Karachi	Access to Justice	Justice (Retd) Tariq Mehmood, Former Judge Ms. Foqia Sadiq, Researcher, SDPI Mr. Shoaib Suddle, Inspector General Police

Impact: *Aap Ki Seyaset* set a new trend in current affairs programming. It was a high-risk experiment for ARY. Before this program, the channel had not dealt with social issues such as water, education, shelter, violence, women's rights, and infrastructure. This is due to the dominant perception that the viewer's primary interest is politics and political conflict, and that social issues are of secondary importance. The program format was also very new. It was designed as a dialogue between citizens and important policy-makers and experts. The anchor played the classic role of a facilitator. The debate was spontaneous and independent. The audience defined the content of the program and set its tone and pace. This was diametrically different from standard program formats in which the parameters of the debate are determined by the editorial policies of the channel or the personal inclinations of the anchor.

Due to intense competition for viewership among the newly established independent television networks, the editorial staff of ARY needed much convincing to test the *Aap Ki Seyaset* concept. The channel also did not have any previous experience of working with public interest organizations. To ARY's credit, once the decision was made to test this experiment, the channel showed its commitment by providing prime airtime and anchor fees.

The risk paid off. *Aap Ki Seyaset* received a positive response from viewers and also from within ARY. Due to the program's high rating, ARY has decided to continue the program beyond SDDP's project period. The success of the program has also prompted editorial and policy shifts within ARY in favor of social sector programming. Since *Aap Ki Seyaset*, ARY's current affairs

department has initiated more programs on social sector issues than on the so-called mainstream politics. For example, it has started *Achanak Kahin Bhi* (Suddenly, anywhere) and *Women's Issues*. These programs focus on day-to-day problems of ordinary people and women.

“ARY discovered in The Asia Foundation a partner in projecting issues of vital importance and in expanding the discourse on them.”

Syed Talat Hussain, Anchor, *Aap ki Seyaset*



Aap Ki Seyaset provided a platform to citizens to freely express their views on topical issues like corruption, terrorism, and violence against women. Many used this space to speak out. Their interest is indicated by the suggestion made by several participants that they would have preferred more time to ask follow-up questions. There was also significant viewer interest indicated by the viewer feedback received by ARY on *Aap Ki Seyaset*. The following selection of emails is illustrative:

“Meri bhi baat sunni chahyeh thi. Mere sawal taleem par hain. Hum bahar se kyon dictation le rahe hain. Hamari kitabein kyon tabdeel ki ja rahi hain? Aap yeh bhi sawal poochein. (Hear me out too. My question is regarding education. Why are we taking foreign dictation? Why are our books being changed? Please ask this question, too.)”

Arshad, a viewer from Quetta

“The program on violence against women was great. I learnt a lot. We should have more programs like this. Keep up the good work!”

Nawazish, a viewer from Mardan

“Thought-provoking debate, the programs should be live with open telephone lines so that we could also participate in the debate.”

Ali, a viewer from London

Though the program established a distinctive edge due to its boldness and candor, it was felt that the debate could have been even more substantive. Unused to such freedom, some members of the audience were either reticent or overly conscious of political correctness. This inhibited open discourse.

“Everything is so politicized that even issues of public concern get mired in the fractured political debate.”

Panelist, *Aap Ki Seyaset*



A studio audience on the set of the episode on freedom of speech. Audiences in the program expressed their views with boldness and candor.

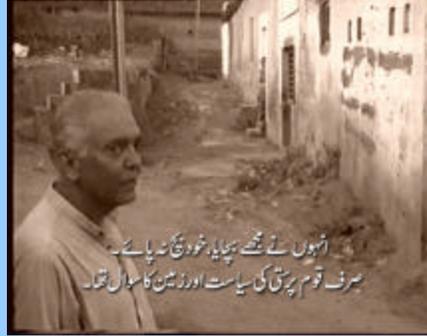
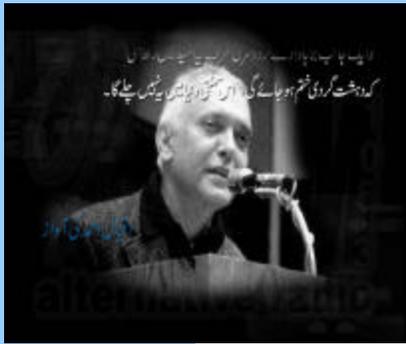
Aap Ki Seyaset also strengthened ARY’s research capacities and information base. The network collected research material and developed a database of information and resource persons on the topics of each episode. New websites were accessed. Dozens of new contacts were made with organizations and individuals. These will benefit future programming in the subjects focused on in *Aap Ki Seyaset*. Being a relatively new entrant in this kind of programming, ARY not only required impetus to experiment with social sector issues but also links for accessing the wealth of valuable information, research, and experiences in these areas and subjects. The channel was able to link up with The Asia Foundation’s partners across Pakistan. According to ARY, this interaction has generated new programming ideas and has provided information of viewership needs at the district and sub-district level.

Television Documentaries on Pakistani Role Models: Rah-numa (Leader): In collaboration with GEO, a two-part documentary program was produced on two prominent Pakistanis, Omar Asghar Khan and Dr. Eqbal Ahmed. These individuals dedicated their lives to creating a more inclusive political environment, and promoting peace and justice (*please see Box for details*).

Box: Rahnuma (Leader)

These documentaries aim to reinforce positive ideas and images by focusing on Pakistani heroes who inspire people into active, rather than passive citizenship. Because of how Pakistani children are taught social studies and history, and because of the media's traditional focus on 'power players', many such heroes remain little known outside their immediate circles. These two 20-minute documentaries focused on the life-stories and works of two Pakistani citizens, Dr. Eqbal Ahmed and Omar Asghar Khan, are a step towards redressing this imbalance. They will also provide positive reinforcement for ordinary people. The films will illustrate how individuals with vision, commitment, energy, and passion can change the lives not only of those with whom they come in direct contact, but hundreds, if not thousands and millions of lives because of the ideas they generate.

Excerpt, GEO's Program Concept Paper



Stills from the film on Dr. Eqbal Ahmed

The documentaries will be aired in January 2005. The schedule for airing was delayed due to Ramzan. The copies of the documentaries will be sent to leading civil society organizations, including NGOs, universities, trade unions, so that they can be used for educational purposes.

Radio: Under SDDP, Uks produced a series of 10 radio shows under its program *Ghurbat, Amn aur Insaaf – Eik Tikon* (Poverty, Peace, and Justice – A Triangle). The programs were based on citizens' views on poverty, peace and justice, expressed at public forums. The radio programs produced around citizens' stories effectively combine investigative journalism and storytelling. They package people's voices and expert opinion. The series made compelling listening. Each program broadcast not-often-heard tales of the poor. Issue-based programming is not generally considered to be popular with the young and casual listeners of FM radio. Though any assumptions on the popularity of the series are premature, the programs tested the Uks team's creativity in making the programs technically advanced and entertaining without compromising the gravity of the issue featured in each episode. A deliberate attempt was also made to keep the language colloquial and easily comprehensible, yet effectively deliver the impact of the content. Uks put together a team of journalists that underwent extensive training in different aspects of broadcasting, particularly technical aspects. Time constraints also meant a fair amount of on-the-job training for the team.

Each program uses an interesting mix of studio-based interviews and discussions, locational stories, features, oral testimonies, thematic songs and poetry, and vox pops (voices of the public). The programs presented the voices of the poor and comments from experts on the issues they highlight. Natural sound bytes, local folk instrumentation, and an original background score composed for the series provides a unique musical backdrop for these stories. The programs were broadcast on four FM radio stations including Mast FM 103 (aired from Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad and Multan); Apna Karachi 107; Awaz 105 Gujrat; City FM 89; and Campus Radio stations in Peshawar and Punjab Universities.

Impact Community-based radio is among the most effective tools for reaching Pakistan's marginalized and dispossessed communities. Effective community radio is, however, a distant reality in Pakistan. Uks is the country's first, and only, independent production house for radio programming. A young organization, the 10-part series produced as part of SDDP is only Uks's second experience in producing public service broadcasting for a nascent, commercial, music-oriented radio industry. SDDP helped develop Uks's capacity in several ways. It enhanced the skills of the production team, improved their technical know-how, and polished their broadcasting and journalistic skills.

Print media: The Pakistan Press Foundation's *Media and Democratic Governance Project*, implemented under SDDP, developed the skills and knowledge of almost 1000 rural-based journalists from all over Pakistan through six media training workshops and five orientations. The workshops developed conceptual clarity on democratic governance and selected SDDP themes of peace, poverty, and justice, and provided a national perspective on them. This helped broaden their outlook. The series of workshops also identified and developed a nationwide cadre of district journalists committed to probing and reporting these issues.

Impact: Most participants had little prior exposure to skills training opportunities despite several years of experience in journalism. Their reporting did not command significant column space in the major dailies due to poor writing and presentation skills. The workshops helped build the journalistic capabilities of the participants. They also strengthened participants' writing skills -- particularly feature-writing. The training enabled reporters to move from event-oriented coverage to issue-based reporting.

“Like the previous workshop, the topics of this workshop were excellent. The process of training should continue, with each workshop focusing on different themes. The lectures were very good and they kept us interested every minute of the day. The workshops definitely increased my knowledge and skills.”

Nayyar Rani Shafaq, 1st prize-winner among women



Prize-winning women feature-writers Nayyar Rani Shafaq and Rozina Johar Khan at the national training workshop in Karachi.

When PPF launched this program, the workshop participants generated one feature a week on SDDP themes (poverty, peace and justice) in the context of their districts. By the third workshop, the frequency had increased to a feature a day. Equipped with new skills, many participants began writing with regularity and keenness. Not only are participants writing with more frequently, their articles and features are better researched and more interesting. They are able to relate local events to national issues and perspectives. They have learnt to give equal space to divergent viewpoints and suggest solutions. There is also a notable increase in the length of the features written by participants indicating more substantive reporting with quotations of sources and facts. The better quality of the articles has led to greater probability of publication, which in turn has motivated participants to write more. Two features written by the workshop participants and published in their respective newspaper prompted government action (*please see Box for details*).

Box: The might of the pen: Features written by PPF workshop participants prompt action

Ziarat workshop participant Wattan Yar Khilji highlighted the issue of deforestation of the pine nut forest in his native Zhob in Balochistan. Khilji linked the issue to increasing poverty in the district, and drew attention to the fact that many families dependent on pine nut yields for their livelihood are increasingly worse-off because of the decimation of the forest. The article blamed the local government for negligence in preventing a forest mafia from cutting down pine nut trees. Apprised of the issue through Khilji's article, the Government of Balochistan ordered an inquiry into the matter and a number of officers were suspended for neglecting their duties. Meanwhile, the article also prompted local residents with influence to find a solution. As a result, it was decided that only 'dead' trees would be cut and steps would be taken to ensure the safety of 'live' ones.

In his article "*Kharan main khushkshali?*" (Drought in Kharan), written during the PPF training workshop in Ziarat, Mohammad Essa delved into the environmental, economic and social impacts of drought in his native Kharan. His well-researched facts and impassioned writing caught the attention of the government and funds were arranged to mitigate the impact of drought in the district.

PPF's training has traditionally focused on news writing skills. For these workshops, PPF designed sessions on feature writing as well which was a new experience for the organization. The Foundation supported PPF in designing sessions and introducing new training methodologies. These are now integrated into PPF training modules. Hence, this partnership under SDDP not only helped train journalists, it also built PPF's capacity to conduct more substantive training on a more diverse range of issues.

Despite facing problems in securing the participation of women journalists, especially from the more conservative areas of NWFP, PPF managed to maintain a minimum 30% attendance of women at all workshops. However, there were some exceptions like Sukkur where the ratio of women to men participants was 3:1. Women who were able to attend the workshops were undoubtedly dynamic individuals and trendsetters in their communities.

The workshops helped sensitize participants to gender issues. Interaction with their female colleagues proved beneficial in acquainting the men with issues faced by female journalists working as correspondents in the districts. They were encouraged to respect the women as equals. PPF enlisted the support of the men in creating a conducive environment for the membership of women journalists at their local press clubs. The women, on the other hand, were encouraged to be less dependent on, or intimidated by, their male colleagues. Interaction in a professional and supportive environment helped build their confidence to the point where they believed themselves capable of supporting other female colleagues. There was increased networking and coordination among women. An informal provincial network of women journalists was created with a resolve to address the problems women face in the profession. Moreover, greater gender sensitization is evident by the fact that a substantial number of articles written by participating journalists related to women's issues.

Introducing district correspondents, most of whom have little exposure to any kind of training and limited educational qualifications, to concepts such as justice, poverty, and peace was another challenge for PPF. Moreover, district correspondents are seldom required to write features. For many the PPF-TAF workshops were their first experience in writing features. Another issue was that many district correspondents are part-time journalists. Unable to survive on low salaries (generally district correspondents of Urdu and vernacular publications receive very low remuneration), they make a living through multiple jobs or professions. It is therefore difficult for them to devote the time and effort required to improve professionally.



A group exercise is underway at the training workshop in Sukkur.
The women outnumbered the men 3 to 1.

Interactive theater: Over 30,000 citizens (including 50% women) participated in about 140 theater performances held across Pakistan. 37 themes/storyline were developed for these performances in various languages, including *Urdu*, *Sindhi*, *Punjabi*, *Pushto*, *Hindko*, and *Seraiki*. 25 theater groups trained through 52 training workshops conducted the theater performances. The Interactive Resource Center (IRC) and its partner theater groups led the implementation of this sub-component of SDDP.

Impact: The use of interactive theater was one of the innovative approaches to citizen mobilization tested under SDDP. Wherever interactive theater was used, the quality of discourse and the level of participation increased substantially. The success of this methodology is indicated by the fact that it is now being used in many other programs, including the Asian Development Bank's Devolution Support Program, the Family Protection Program, and the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund. Through SDDP, many theater groups have been successful in attracting resources and are thus more sustainable. They are now performing independent performances throughout Pakistan. Many individual performing artistes, having developed better skills, were given offers to join other media including television.

The Interactive Resource Center has also been fully established as a national institution. It has a skilled team working with its network of partners across Pakistan. Through SDDP, IRC and its partners enhanced the quality of theater presented. New skills were learned and tested, and greater emphasis was given to rigor in research for each storyline. IRC also expanded its media activities into independent television production. Through the SDDP, IRC has developed close links with independent television networks and plans are afoot to produce a television show, which is based on theater performances. IRC's received media attention and also international recognition for its work.

Box: IRC in *The Review* & *The Friday Times*

The role of public forums in promoting meaningful public dialogue among dispossessed, and effective use of interactive theater for this purpose received coverage in *Dawn's* weekly magazine *The Review* and the Lahore-based weekly, *The Friday Times*. Both articles focused on a Public Forum in Havelian, District Abbottabad, organized by Khwendo Kor and the Omar Asghar Khan Development Foundation.

In Havelian theater activists from the Hazara-based Kook Theater Group and members of the Interactive resource Centre's theater team from Lahore presented a thought-provoking ensemble of stories about poverty drawn from real-life experiences of Pakistani citizens. Titled 'Faces of Poverty', the absorbing performance highlighted the problem of water supply and scarcity, the horror of gender-based domestic violence, and the prohibitive cost and paucity of basic healthcare services.

Excerpt: All The World's a Stage, *The Review*, July 1 – 7, 2004

Most public events in Pakistan are characterized by long speeches by a long list of speakers. The audience participates by listening or clapping. The People's Assemblies are different. The focus of these events is on audience participation. The mechanism enabling it is interactive theater. "This form of theater converts the spectator into a spec-actor," explains Mohammad Waseem of the Interactive Resource Center. Participants could relate to these stories. There was spontaneous applause for poignant points made through the medium of sight and sound. Laughter was heard and tears were held back. After presenting the three faces of poverty, the audience was invited to enact solutions by taking up a role in the play. One spectator came on stage to play the role of the local activist. "We must get organized so that the government is not able to ignore us," he urged. A lady from the audience played the role of a poor woman and urged, "We must not lose hope, we can change our lives if we work together." Another spec-actor said, "If we follow Islamic principles our lives will improve." The message that came through was that the poor must unite so that their voices can be heard. Collectively they can influence policies that are made at district, province, and national levels. A strong partnership between the poor and Pakistan's civil society is needed to make this happen. Such coalitions must be across biradaris, class, gender, religion, and political affiliations. Coordinated and sustained efforts are needed, as poverty is multi-faceted. It is about injustice, ill-health, illiteracy, unemployment, and insecurity. "Violation of rights is a form of poverty," said a participant.

Excerpt: Putting on a Poor Show, *The Friday Times*, July 9-15, 2004

Box: IRC nominated for the World Culture Open Award

World Culture Open (WCO) is an organization and a biennial people-centered "cultural Olympics," the first of which took place in September 2004 with awards, competitions, demonstration, concerts, galas, youth conference, seminars and other events open to all. The WCO awards were created to pay the highest tribute to those individuals and organizations whose efforts and invaluable contributions have benefited both humanity and the world. For the WCP awards, there were 180 submissions from 60 countries. IRC was one of 12 finalists selected in the category of creative arts. IRC was the youngest organization nominated for the award ceremony. The other organizations were working for 30 years. IRC was the only organization selected from Pakistan. The award ceremony has held at the Lincoln Center in New York. The ceremony was attended by more than 3,000 people.

"The World Culture Open Organizing Committee congratulates Interactive Resource Center Pakistan for being a finalist for the World Culture Open Award 2004. You are recognized as an innovator whose work in the creative arts is shaping a new culture of Human Services. We salute you as a charter member of the growing movement to build bridges between societies through the arts and culture."

Citation, World Culture Open

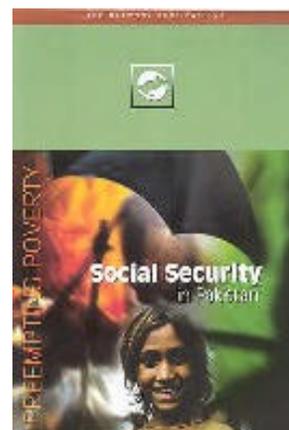
Component	Broadening Civil Society Coalitions
Sub-component Increasing Access to Information and Analysis	Key Partner: Center for Democratic Governance, The Network

The Center for Democratic Governance of The Network for Consumer Protection produced 12 issue papers. Additionally one paper was purchased from SDPI. The following table provides details of the 13 issue papers:

Box: Issue Papers	
Title	Author
<i>Constitution of Pakistan & People's Rights</i>	Nazeer Ahmad
<i>Right to Know: Access to Information in Pakistan</i>	Zafarullah Khan
<i>Pre-empting Poverty: Social Security in Pakistan</i>	Haniya Aslam
<i>India-Pakistan Relations: Confrontation to Conciliation</i>	Ayesha Siddiq
<i>A Long Way Ahead: Political Parties in Pakistan</i>	Nazeer Ahmad
<i>In Search of Shelter: Housing Problem in Pakistan</i>	Arif Hasan
<i>Land, Peasants and Poverty: A Case for Equitable Land Reforms in Pakistan</i>	Mazhar Arif
<i>Quest for Justice: Judicial System in Pakistan</i>	Foqia Sadiq Khan
<i>Women on Trial: Gender Violence in Pakistan</i>	Zaigham Khan
<i>Struggle Without End: Industrial Relations & Labour Rights in Pakistan</i>	Zeenat Hissam
<i>The Case for Land and Agrarian Reforms in Pakistan</i>	Sharukh Rafi Khan, Ali Qadir, Aasim Sajjad Akhtar, Ahmad Saleem and Foqia Sadiq Khan
<i>Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan</i>	Raja Ehsan Aziz
<i>Religious Militancy & Sectarian Violence in Pakistan</i>	Tahir Mehdi

The Network translated some of the issue papers to achieve wider dissemination. This included the issue papers, *Constitution of Pakistan & People's Rights* and *Rights* and *Quest for Justice: Judicial System in Pakistan*. In response to an overwhelming demand for the papers, the print-run of each issue paper was increased from 1,000 to 3,000. Electronic versions of the issue papers were also made available on the project website to enable wider dissemination.

The issue papers generated considerable media interest. Several articles were published in national dailies based on the topics and discourse of the issue papers. The issue papers received positive reviews from academics, journalists, and readers. The Network received feedback on the issue papers through emails, letters and phone calls. Irshad Ahmed Haqqani, Editor *Jang*, Pakistan's largest-circulated newspaper, lauded the effort through a letter sent to the organization. *The News*, a leading national English daily, serialized the paper on justice systems in Pakistan. Both *The News* and *Dawn* reviewed the issue paper *Pre-empting Poverty: Social Security in Pakistan*.



The electronic media was also used to disseminate the research contained in the issue papers. A series of radio programs titled *People's Power* was initiated during the quarter to stimulate citizen debate on issue paper topics. The program was designed as a talk show with a panel of experts on the topic. Listeners were able to call in and comment on the issue or address questions to the panelists. The program became quite popular and generated tremendous audience interest in the form of live calls on the show and letters. A number of the programs were re-broadcast on public demand.

The impact of issue papers went beyond the media. The Sindh Education Commission asked for permission to use material in the papers for their training manuals. They also showed keen interest in translating the papers to use as training material for trainers.

Published papers were uploaded onto the project website which was developed during this quarter (www.cdg.org.pk). All the papers are available on PDF format on the website.

"The project helped The Network build a strong working relationship with a number of civil society organizations that will be an asset for the organization."

Zaigham Khan
Project Director, Centre for Democratic Governance
The Network for Consumer Protection

Impact: Public interest efforts are often hindered due to the lack of good quality information. Moreover, people producing knowledge were the only consumers; it was not reaching people. It is widely believed that knowledge should be presented in a format that could be consumed by everyone. The issue papers produced under SDDP had done two things: they had preserved the integrity of research while talking about issues in a manner anyone could understand.

The project helped The Network build its capacity on issues of governance and democracy, an area crucial to the organization's mission and goals. With SDDP support The Network set up the Center for Democratic Governance (CDG), a unit of the organization that is committed to the realization of SDDP objectives. The Network is continuing with some SDDP activities, beyond the project period through other resources. For example, *People's Power*, a series of radio programs initiated during the project is continuing. This program is broadcast every Thursday on FM 99, and debates the themes highlighted in the SDDP. Keeping the spirit of citizen participation, listeners are invited to call in with their comments. Audience interaction in the program has been very encouraging. Discussions on air have been wide-ranging and lively.

Through this sub-component, SDDP helped strengthen political analytic capacity within civil society. The ultimate objective, advanced through this effort, was development of informed public opinion and a culture of public debate on strategic issues related to democratic governance.

Component	Broadening Civil Society Coalitions
<i>Sub-component</i> Supporting Advocacy Initiatives	<i>Key Partners:</i> All SDDP Partners Schuitema Pakistan

35 representatives of ten SDDP partners were provided training on Leadership and Advocacy. The training was provided by Schuitema Pakistan (Private) Limited. It was facilitated by Mr. Etsko Schuitema and Ms. Kausar S. Khan. Mr. Schuitema has extensive experience in conducting leadership and organizational management training and has written several books on this subject. Ms. Khan is a faculty member at Aga Khan University and has extensive experience in facilitation on a wide range of issues including communications, team building, participatory approaches and advocacy.

The training helped participants explore and develop leadership skills to be applied towards strengthening civil society organizations and public advocacy efforts. The training was based on the Schuitema Leadership Care and Growth Model, which is the result of 20 years of research by the Schuitema team.

“The product of a real leader is exceptional people. Leaders calibrate their focus on producing outstanding subordinates, who in turn are empowered to produce exceptional results.”

An excerpt from the Schuitema Care and Growth Model

The training helped clarify concepts such as empowerment, intent, and accountability. Differences between leadership and management; and power and control were debated in detail.

“The concept of taking and giving and linking it with management vs. leadership is a new idea and perspective and changes your paradigm.”

Noor Muhammad, Strengthening Participatory Organization



Participants, Workshop on Leadership and Advocacy

The training was interactive and intensive. Debates were lively and engaging as participants explored the model and skills introduced in the context of their work.

“The most interesting thing was the constant challenge of accepting these new ideas and how to apply them. How can we put more emphasis on duties? We have been emphasizing a lot on rights. We need to emphasize more on leadership and how to become a leader, rather than being just an ordinary person”.

Maryam Bibi, Khwendo Kor

As the workshop was residential, it providing enormous opportunities of networking and exchanging ideas and experiences, beyond the formal sessions. As the training was relevant and of good quality, a followup two-day session for SDDP partners was organized in The Asia Foundation’s office in Islamabad.

Component 3: Legislative training and information

Activities under this component were undertaken during the period October 2002-June 2003. During SDDP's third quarter (April-June 2003), the USAID initiated plans of introducing a three-year program for strengthening legislative governance in Pakistan. In view of this upcoming program, USAID requested the Asia Foundation to discontinue program activities under this component after 30 June 2003.

Purpose:

Newly elected public representatives to the national and provincial assemblies faced new training and information needs. Under this component, SDDP helped meet the basic information needs of the newly elected parliamentarians and the secretariat staff of the legislatures.

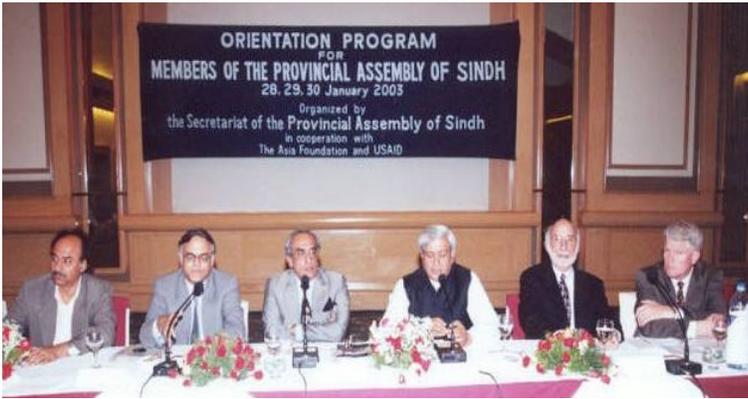
Planned outputs:

- Tailored training sessions for select, newly elected public representatives
- Tailored training sessions for staff of the provincial and national assemblies and the Senate
- An established "clearing-house" on legislative issues for use by elected public representatives, parliamentary staff, and the public at large

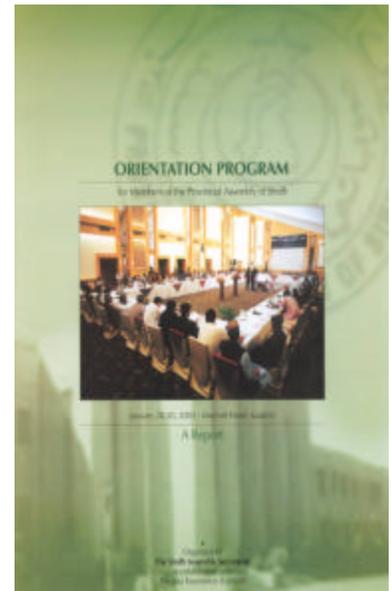
Activities:

Component	Legislative Training And Information
Orientation, training and information provision for legislators	<i>Key Partners</i> Secretariat, National Assembly of Pakistan Secretariat, Senate of Pakistan Secretariat, Provincial Assembly of Balochistan Secretariat, Provincial Assembly of NWFP Secretariat, Provincial Assembly of the Punjab Secretariat, Provincial Assembly of Sindh

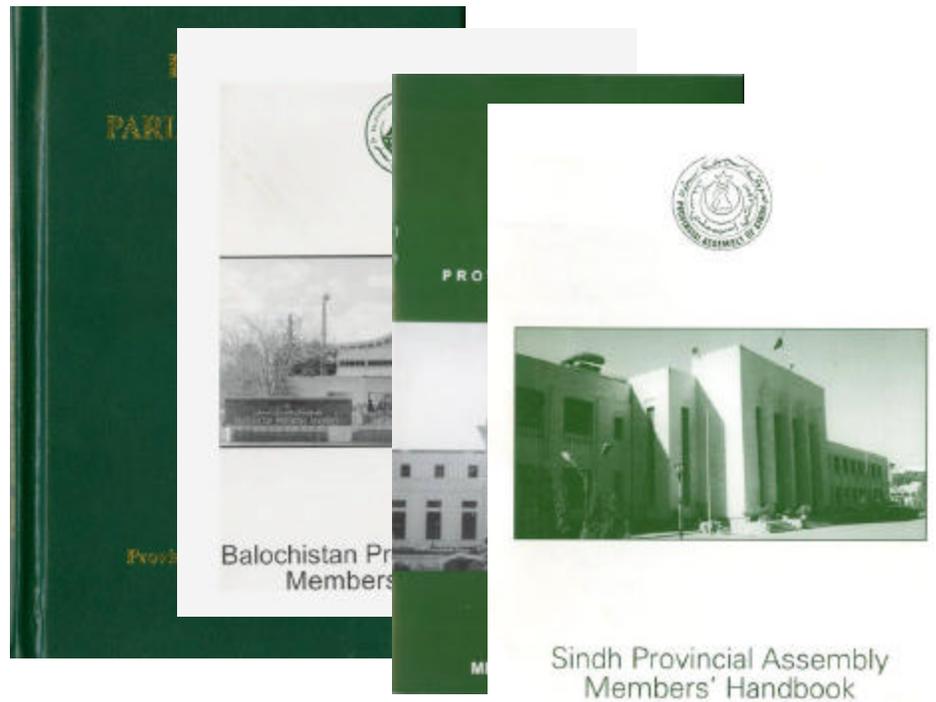
In collaboration with the secretariats of the National Assembly, the Senate of Pakistan, and the four provincial assemblies, a needs assessment was carried out to determine the information and training needs of the newly elected legislators – nearly 90% of whom were first-time entrants to the parliament. Based on this assessment, a series of Members' Handbooks were produced and disseminated to legislators in the four provincial legislatures. An Urdu version of the Handbook for Members of the Senate was also produced. An Orientation Session was organized for Members of the Provincial Assembly of Sindh.



Honorable Speaker, Muzaffar Hussain Shah, presiding over the Orientation Session for Members of the Sindh Assembly



Report of the Orientation Session



Sindh Provincial Assembly Members' Handbook

Short and Long Term Impact:

In the short-term activities implemented under this sub-component helped meet the information needs of the newly elected legislators. This support was particularly critical and timely as nearly 90% of parliamentarians were first-time entrants in the parliament. The activities also helped strengthen the capacity of the staff of the Senate secretariat to meet the information needs of Senators. In particular information about the Money and Finance Bills was very relevant, as under the Legal Framework Order, the upper house was given the role to review these bills for the first time.

4. Key Challenges and Lessons Learned

Timely Disbursement

Though one of the components of SDDP related to the 2002 general elections scheduled for 10 October, 2002, the SDDP program was awarded to the Asia Foundation on 27 September 2002. Due to pre-award authorization and the Asia Foundation's strong program presence in the country, it was able to effectively implement almost all the activities included in the component related to the October 2002 elections. However, timely disbursement of funds is essential for implementing programs such as SDDP that are directly linked to other scheduled events.

Impact of the war in Iraq

In March 2003, a group of the Foundation's key Pakistani NGO partners in SDDP decided to suspend program activities that receive financial support from USAID as an expression of protest against the war in Iraq. As they were playing central coordinating roles, this decision affected the nationwide coalition of more than 2,500 civil society organizations engaging citizens in a public dialogue and building district-level coalitions under SDDP. Following this setback, the Asia Foundation contacted new partners and re-established a nationwide civil society network. To be certain that the new partners were able to effectively implement the SDDP activities, significantly greater technical backstopping from the Foundation was required. The ability of the Foundation to set the program back on track after this setback is due to its extensive and close contacts with Pakistan's civil society organizations.

Limited civil society capacity

Every effort was made to ensure effective selection of partners for implementing SDDP. However, the Foundation faced some challenges in finding an adequate match in terms of institutional capacity of partners and the technical expertise required to implement SDDP activities. The lack of institutional capacity to undertake the proposed activities led to delays in implementation.

Political uncertainty

Sustained disagreements between the government and the combined opposition in the National Assembly over the Legal Framework Order adversely affected SDDP's program activities under the Legislative Training and Information component. Political uncertainty, including repeated disruption and protests during legislative sessions created an environment that was not conducive to effective implementation of SDDP's planned orientation sessions for legislators. Several orientations for the national and provincial legislators were confirmed and postponed at short notice. The adhoc confirmations and postponements underscored the need for a more institutionalized approach to capacity building of legislatures. It was felt that for such programming to be more effective it is essential to collaborate with established public/private sector training facilities like the Civil Services Academy, the Pakistan Administrative Staff College, and well-established institutions like the Lahore University of Management Sciences. Such an approach is more strategic than attempts to undertake the

training from an NGO platform. Established public and private institutions are also better regarded by legislators.