



## 2<sup>nd</sup> National Coordination Meeting Report

(Islamabad, April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010)

Society for Alternative Media and Research (SAMAR) is an advocacy based organization working on a project **“Supporting and monitoring implementation of tobacco control laws by strengthening Civil Society Organizations and supporting government authorities at sub-national levels”** under a grant approved by the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids (CTFK). The purpose of this project is to; i) monitor the implementation of tobacco control laws and to provide technical support to the Tobacco Control Cell, Federal Ministry of Health (MoH), ii) focus on coalition building to seek support of CSOs and iii) liaison with the media to highlight the need of effective tobacco control in Pakistan.

As an objective **“Monitoring of implementation of laws and expansion and capacity building of the coalition members at national and sub-national (provinces and districts) levels”**, a one day national coordinating and networking meeting with coalition members was held to discuss the current situation of tobacco control in Pakistan. The other purpose was to develop a future strategy on how to build an interactive relationship between government implementation authorities and civil society organizations at district level for effective implementation of tobacco control laws.



The meeting was organized by Coalition for Tobacco Control – Pakistan (CTC-Pak), SAMAR on April 13, 2010 at Islamabad, Pakistan which was attended by 45 coalition members from all four provinces of Pakistan. The Director General of Tobacco Control Cell, Federal Ministry of Health (TCC) and the EMRC Technical Officer of International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (U-TO also attended this meeting. The representatives from Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, Washington and The Union, Edinburgh were suppose to attend the meeting but they were unable to participate due visa constraints.

After the introductions, CTC-Pak read the regret letter sent by CTFK acknowledging the efforts of CTC-Pak in becoming a diverse coalition from all four provinces of Pakistan and applauding SAMAR as the factor in the development of the coalition and its capacity building to the participants. The participants cheered the encouragement from CTFK upon recognizing their efforts in making the policy makers accountable to its commitments and responsive to public health issues.



The Director General (DG), Tobacco Control Cell explained the tobacco control laws and their history. He emphasized the need for raising awareness regarding the issues of tobacco control and the laws enforced by the Government of Pakistan on much larger scale. The DG appreciated CTC-Pak in monitoring the status of the implementation of laws and supported the view that the focus should be on joint collaboration of government and civil society to further strengthen the efforts for bringing compliance to the laws. He informed the participants that Tobacco Control Cell is now focusing on issues like promoting smoke-free places, smoke-free public transports and to prohibit underage sales. The laws is also being revisited to make it stronger and issues like making cigarettes more costly, banning of sheesha (flavored pipe tobacco) and gutka (smokeless chew tobacco) from public places will be a part in the revised version. The TCC is in the process of organizing various awareness raising seminars at district levels which are to be participated by district implementation authorities, press clubs, bar associations, educational institutes and civil society organizations in those districts as there is no education of the tobacco control or the laws available at the district level government offices. This will result in the formation of District Implementation Committee (DICs) which shall then replicate the efforts of raising awareness at district level.

The DG was of view that there is lack of research on tobacco related issues in Pakistan such as we have no information on how much the government spends on the cost of health as compared to the revenue that is generated by the tobacco taxes. He also supported CTC-Pak for its pro active role and stressed for further strengthening the coordination between the TCC and CTC-Pak.



The Technical Officer from the Union informed the participants upon the role and responsibilities undertaken on behalf of Bloomberg donor agencies in an approved grant. He explained the process of preparing proposals with respect to the requirements of donor, the procedure of grant reviews and approvals.

The Executive Director, SAMAR, then briefed the participants on the overall role of a coalition as a representative of a civil society, its importance to provide support to policy makers as well as its impact on policy changes. He highlighted the issue of lack of updated data on tobacco control issues and how tobacco is directly related to increase in poverty and health hazards. He suggested to pool in sources and resources for research to acquire latest data. The Executive Director drew attention of U-TO towards this issue as the donor agencies, such as Bloomberg Global Initiative for Tobacco Reduction (BGI) being the donor they should revisit their strategy in this regard for under developing countries such as Pakistan.

The U-TO assured the participants that the suggestions from this meeting will be shared with the Union office.



The participants took keen interest in all the issues and in the following session of discussion CTC-Pak members presented the situation of tobacco control and the status of laws implementation in their areas. They shared their work experiences brainstormed on how to make coordination among the coalition members more effective, further strengthen the coalition and develop advocacy measures regarding monitoring of tobacco control laws and their implementation in the country as well as supporting the TCC in its efforts for the compliance of laws.



The participants appreciated the efforts of CTC-Pak for organizing the training workshops to enhance their capacity on the issues related to tobacco control in general and the monitoring of the laws in particular. The discussion also included advocacy issues like involving local media for educating the community and building campaigns with support from local governments and other stakeholders.





Following suggestions were made by the participants:

1. The TCC while forming the District Implementation Committees should focus on CTC-Pak members' areas.
2. At least one CTC-Pak member should be included in District Implementation Committee at district level.
3. As the laws are in the revising process, amendments should be made to raise tobacco taxes and making the implementation authorized person accountable for not complying the laws.
4. Tobacco Control Courts should be formed where cases related to the violations can be taken up.
5. Community level mass awareness campaigns should be organized with joint efforts of TCC and CTC-Pak for bringing behavioral change in the society.
6. Information on tobacco control should be displayed prominently in the community.
7. Media should be involved in the activities for broader spreading of messages. In this regard, press appearances' should be more frequent.
8. The coordination among the CTC-Pak members should be further strengthened by having more frequent follow-up meetings to evaluate performance and reviewing the strategies.
9. Since not all the members could be invited to one national meeting, periodical meetings should be planned in future that shall involve all members, new and experienced, at regional level for more efficient coordination and working in tobacco control drive.
10. To bring new members on board with the rest of coalition members, refresher training workshops should be planned at regional level.
11. The information material should be translated in local languages i.e. Sindhi for dissemination of messages on broader level.
12. World No Tobacco Day should be observed at regional levels.

At the end of the meeting CTC-Pak thanked all the participants for their dedication and commitment. The participants appreciated CTC-Pak for providing a common platform to register their voice as their public health right, review the overall work and strategize further actions.





Coalition For Tobacco Control - Pak



#### List of member participants:

1. Action Through Teaching and Awareness (ATTA), Bahawal Nagar, (Punjab Province)
2. Aims Organization, Muzaffar Garh, (Punjab Province)
3. Akash Rural Social Development Organisation, Kambar, (Sindh Province)
4. Al Mehran, Sukkar, (Sindh Province)
5. Al-Eimman Development Organisation, D.G.Khan, (Punjab Province)
6. Azad Social Welfare Association (ASWA), Shikarpur, (Sindh Province)
7. Baluchistan Development Society, Jarafabad, (Balochistan Province)
8. Benazir Bhutto Hospital, Islamabad, (Federal Capital)
9. Citizens Community Forum (CCF), Kandh Kot, (Sindh Province)
10. Community Development Foundation , Nawab Shah, (Sindh Province)
11. Development Institutions Network, Shikarpur, (Sindh Province)
12. Dost Welfare Society, Rahimyar Khan, (Punjab Province)
13. FARZ Association, Rawalpindi, (Punjab Province)
14. Future Development Foundation, Sargodha, (Punjab Province)
15. Health Organization Literacy Organization (HELO), Seetpur, (Punjab Province)
16. Hum Shehri Magazine, Islamabad, (Federal Capital)
17. Human Development Society (HDS), Sukkar, (Sindh Province)
18. Kainaat Development Association, Kandh Kot, (Sindh Province)
19. Lab E Mehran, Sukkar, (Sindh Province)
20. Lahore Educational & Welfare Society (LEWS), Lahore, (Punjab Province)
21. Management and Governance Network Society (MAGNETS), Sukkar, (Sindh Province)
22. Mashal Community Development Welfare Society, Sibbi, (Balochistan Province)
23. Mashal Development Sibbi, Sibbi, (Balochistan Province)
24. New Star Welfare Association, Sohbatpur, (Balochistan Province)
25. OLLAS Development Organisation, Loralai, (Balochistan Province)
26. Organisation for Development of Human Empowerment, Loralai, (Balochistan Province)
27. Pakistan Rural Education and Development Organisation (PREADO), Ahmad pur Sharkian, (Punjab Province)
28. Pakistan Rural Education and Development Organisation (PREADO), Ahmad pur Sharkian, (Punjab Province)
29. Roshan Zindagi Development Association (RZDA) Thatta (Sindh Province), , (Sindh Province)
30. Rural initiatives in sustainability & Empowerment (RISE), Peshawar, (NWFP Province)
31. Sindh Awareness Organization (SAO), Daulatpur, (Sindh Province)
32. Social Welfare Society, Rahimyar Khan, (Punjab Province)
33. Society for Education and Development (SED), Nankana Sahab, (Punjab Province)
34. Society for The Empowerment of people (STEP), Kushab, (Punjab Province)
35. Soofi Sochal Sarmast Welfare Association, Jacob Abad, (Sindh Province)
36. Speak Social Political & Empowerment Association for KILLIWAR, Quetta, (Balochistan Province)
37. Sudhar Development Organisation, Booreywala, (Punjab Province)
38. Sustainable Development Vision (SDV), Haripur, (NWFP Province)
39. Ufaq Development Organisation ?, Multan, (Punjab Province)
40. Village Development Association, Kandh Kot, (Sindh Province)
41. Voice of Nation (VN), Loralai, (Balochistan Province)
42. Women Social Organizaiton Pakistan (WSO), Muzaffar Garh, (Punjab Province)
43. Womens Rights Association, Multan, (Punjab Province)
44. Youth Development Forum (YDF), Hala Matyari, (Sindh Province)
45. Youth Development Organisation, Rajan Pur, (Punjab Province)