



Two Trainings at Sub-National Level On monitoring of implementation of tobacco control laws Coalition for Tobacco Control – Pakistan Report Dec 2009

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 bring the tobacco control statutes in Pakistan to conform to FCTC provisions through monitoring those already developed and promulgated, lobbying for those not in place and assisting Federal Ministry of Health (MoH) in drafting new legislations as in Pakistan international treaties need to be translated into national laws to be enforceable.

As an objective of Activity “Two training workshops at sub-national level on monitoring of implementation of laws, locally based advocacy campaigns on tobacco control issues etc.”, SAMAR through its Coalition for Tobacco Control – Pakistan (CTC-Pak) is to conduct two one day training workshops at sub-national level to enhance the capacity of coalition members on the issue of monitoring the implemented tobacco control laws in their respective areas through periodical surveys.

CTC-Pak organized two sub-national one day training workshops on the topic of “Monitoring of Implementation of Tobacco Control Laws and Scanning of Local Media” at Multan and Sukkur on 17th and 19th November 2009 respectively. This activity was participated by all coalition members from all four provinces of Pakistan; Punjab &





NWFP members attended the Multan session hosted by CTC-Pak member Ufaq Development Organisation (Multan) and Baluchistan & Sindh members attended the Sukkur session hosted by CTC-Pak member MAGNETs (Sukkur). Government District Health Officers from both cities also attended these trainings.

The purpose of this activity was to sensitize the coalition members on tobacco control laws, the process of monitoring of its implementation status and scanning of local news media for the purpose of archiving national news items related to tobacco control.

Mr. Khurram Hashmi, National Coordinator CTC-Pak, explained the issue of tobacco control, the role of Ministry of Health, World Health Organisation's international treaty – Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, tobacco control laws in Pakistan and their weak enforcement. The participants were of general understanding that majority of the people in their working areas are not aware of the laws for prevention of Smoking; at many places these laws are even not implemented in spite of acknowledgement i.e. in the government offices most of the officials do smoke freely. It is necessary to get aware the innocent public and these laws may be got implemented.

The CTC-Pak's monitoring process of the implemented legislation and a monitoring tool was shared with the participants. The training session sensitized the participants on the purpose of the need to monitor the implemented laws, assess the level of awareness among the people, sharing of information material for better understanding and the influence of tobacco industry in the respective area.

This was followed by a group activity and





presentations made by the participants.

The second sessions of the training workshops were conducted by Mr. Jaffar Mehdi, Resource Coordinator CTC-Pak, who explained “Tobacco Control and the Role of Media”. He emphasized the participants to understand the power of media and how to effectively use this tool in their tobacco control campaigns. The participants were trained on how to scan local media and extract the required information in a group activity.

At the conclusion of Multan training workshop, the Chief Guest, Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed Paracha, Medical Superintendent of Civil Hospital Multan, expressed his views and said that the training workshop regarding laws for prevention of smoking organized by CTC-Pak certainly deserve appreciation as such activities have never been arranged in the city before. This shows the commitment of CTC-Pak towards its members and community replicating the efforts at grass root level. He thanked the hosts and participants for making this activity a success and assured his support to CTC-Pak in the campaigns for effective tobacco control.

The experience in Sukkur proved to be quite different than Multan. Almost all participants from Sindh province were relatively new members who joined the coalition during the year 2009 (post 1st National Coordination Meeting). This was their first activity with CTC-Pak as well as CTC-Pak’s first exposure to them in person. It was learned that all of them had very little or no knowledge on the issue of Tobacco Control or the law implemented.

Realizing the need of the situation, changes were made in agenda and the activity was initiated with an additional two hours session where the concept of tobacco control, the





national situation, the parties involved and role of the coalition with objectives were introduced. The participants gradually gained confidence and took active role in following sessions.

Similarly to Multan, at the conclusion of Sukkur, Dr. Irees Maimun, EDO Health, the chief guest, thanked the audience and commented that now, CTC-Pak did an exemplary job in bringing stakeholders from various expertise on a joint platform against the tobacco epidemic. Now there is an organized active group which will inform the health hazards of tobacco consumption on a broader level and play a vital role in spreading the awareness in the community. He also thanked the participants for taking keen interest in the issue regardless of the fact that they were new to this and understand that it is not only government health professional's duty to inform the people but is a general obligation that people must be informed on grim situation and how important it is to approach the issue in much more vibrant way. Now, thanks to CTC-Pak, they are in a better position to cater the messages forward.

At the end of both trainings, the participant also thanked the CTC-Pak for providing them this opportunity as it had helped them greatly in addressing the issue at hand since their knowledge had been enhanced. They met with and made new friends with whom they can build strong and effective campaigns to spread the messages in the community. They were concerned about the gaining support from local government at district level since the local government is not very much active on this issue. However, they shall do their best in acquiring the support. They also expressed their concerns that such training sessions should be conducted on regular intervals and the time allocated for such activity should not be restricted for one day only so the issues





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related to tobacco control could be explored more deeply.

At the end of both trainings, monitoring tool was shared with all the members that shall help them while carrying out the surveys in their respective areas.

The members were requested to complete the activity in three weeks time and submit the forms with CTC-Pak so analysis can be made and a report based on the results can be prepared.

Certificates were awarded to the participants at the end of both activities followed by thanks from CTC-Pak.

