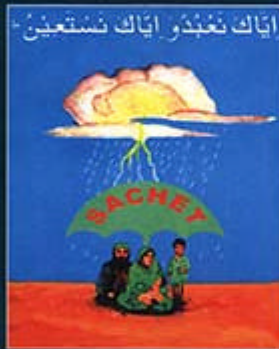


Promoting Human Development

SACHET ANNUAL REPORT 2001



إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ -

Society for the
Advancement of
Community,
Health,
Education and
Training

An Organization for Pakistanis by Pakistanis



Message

It is a well-recognized fact that in our country social development has lagged behind economic development, resulting in illiteracy, poor health awareness and facilities, lack of skills resulting in unemployment and poverty. SACHET is making strenuous efforts to supplement government efforts to redress the neglect of social amelioration of our masses.



On the occasion of the publication of the second annual report for the year 2001, it is a matter of great satisfaction for me to note that the multidimensional programs, launched by SACHET during the short period since its inception, are making a qualitative impact on the underprivileged communities in Islamabad/ Rawalpindi area in particular and the masses across the country in general.

Gender is the key focus and perspective of our policy, programs & projects. I am grateful to all our well wishers for the moral as well as financial support and cooperation. I laud the SACHET team for its hard work and endeavors for a noble cause with sincerity and resolve. I hope they will work with greater zeal and commitment in the years to come.

I wish them all success.

Message

Under the inspiring leadership of Dr. A.Q KHAN (NI & Bar HI), SACHET successfully completed in December 2001, two & half years of dedicated social development & voluntary services. SACHET has provided at the doorsteps of remote community, free medical care, health and general education and training with the twin objectives of helping the needy and at the same time developing their income generating capabilities for a sustainable change in the society.



The modern, prototype SACHET clinics are symbols of hope & change. SACHET is employing all modes of communications as internationally acclaimed TV programs, community get together, medical camps, printed materials etc. to disseminate information regarding gender & related issues. A Board of Directors, comprising eminent development scientists & philanthropists regularly meets to monitor the ongoing and chalk out new programs, and take necessary administrative and financial decisions.

SACHET is very grateful for the positive support of its programs by the Community, Philanthropists, Program Managers, Coordinators, Doctors, Social Scientists, Volunteers and Local Administration.

Foreword

SACHET emerged on the continuously expanding horizon of Pakistani NGOs, in 1999. That was the time when themes and resolutions adopted at CEDAW, ICPD &+5 and Beijing's Platform for Action were gaining new watchfulness in South Asia and occupying central position in NGO activities. However, the efforts geared at achieving gender justice and social harmony in South Asia still remain modest in spite of all the good intentions mainly due to limited political commitment and relatively inadequate stakeholders` participation. Launching another NGO with the slogan "For Pakistanis and By Pakistanis "and vision of human development of

the disadvantaged with a gender perspective was not only challenging but also risky. The word, gender in a patriarchal society is perceived as an imported agenda item. Our entry in this area not only raised suspicions among orthodox patriotic circles, but some self-appointed custodians of society also felt threatened. Our journey has been and is following a rocky pathway. However, in spite of limited resources, we continue to possess limitless determination to move ahead at a steady pace.



Dr. Rakhshinda Perveen
Executive Vice President

By the grace of Allah, our sincere approach enabled us to record some tangible progress in our immediate environs. We have used quantitative as well as qualitative indicators to gauge our success. Some of them are community acceptance, community empowerment, stakeholders` participation, popularity of the word and concept of gender and utilization of our services in defined areas of health, education and poverty alleviation cum Income generation.

SACHET is not an organization, which is merely engaged in target-oriented development. Instead we stress to portray our organization and ourselves in a modest manner as a small team of dedicated professionals working for the achievement of the objectives of bringing positive changes in the condition and position of men and women in our areas of activity.

SACHET is accepting and facing the challenge of development to improve the quality of people. As such, we interpret development as a multidimensional process involving major changes in the social milieu, power structures, which control society, popular attitudes, national institutions, reduction of poverty and acceleration of economic growth.

SACHET is a promise, which is feasible and has a probability level of being fulfilled. Among the people in SACHET, there will not be any lack of creativity, intellectual curiosity, courage and commitment.

INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT

The Annual Report 2001 of SACHET presents the three facets of its performance, commitment and future vision.

- Our past, which serves as a beacon for our present and our future.
- Our present, which serves as a source of encouragement and contentment.
- Our future which, always allures us to work harder and harder.

The report, which is meant to fulfill the information needs of our stakeholders regarding our performance, has been divided into three parts,

- The first part of the report discusses the vision SACHET envisages for the promotion of Human Development in Pakistan.
- The second part provides the details of progress and achievements in its priority program areas i.e. Health, Education, Poverty Alleviation cum Income Generation and Training.
- The third part throws light on AGEHI Resource Center - the technical wing of SACHET. AGEHI advocates Gender sensitization, Education and Health promotion through Advocacy, Research and Communication.

We, at SACHET, believe that our strength lies in recognizing, analyzing and channeling efforts towards real solutions.

Promotion of Human Development being our mission, we are determined to make the lives of poverty-stricken masses somewhat easier and happier.

SACHET - Promoting Human Development in Pakistan A Gender Sensitive, Environment Friendly and Development Oriented Multi-Dimensional Organization

The Society for the Advancement of Community, Health, Education and Training (SACHET) is a non-government, welfare and development organization that seeks to make meaningful and lasting interventions in areas central to the process of human development, which encompasses different dimensions of socio-economic progress.

Working in the service of vulnerable communities living under the shadow of poverty and deprivation, SACHET's philosophy is closely linked with the concept of sustainable development, whereby its beneficiaries are empowered through durable service delivery in the fields of health, education and poverty alleviation-cum-income generation. Aside from the afore-mentioned program areas, training of trainers and community members is an integral supportive component of the organization's agenda. Gender, therefore, is a crosscutting theme that pervades all program activities as a methodology for behavioral sensitization. All our programs are consciously targeted towards narrowing the existing gender disparity so pervasive in the Pakistani society.

Established in May 1999 by Dr. A. Q. Khan (NI & Bar, HI), who defines SACHET as an NGO "operating at the micro level with mega objectives," the non-profit organization is a dream come true not just for the eminent scientist, but also for all those associated with or benefiting from its vast prism of initiatives. We believe in treading carefully, which is why the organization's operational area in terms of service delivery is thus far restricted to meeting the felt needs of communities living in low-income, hard-to-access, and ignored localities situated in the outskirts of Rawalpindi and Islamabad only. However, when it comes to poverty alleviation-cum-income generation, advocacy, and Information, Education and Communication (IEC), the geographical spread of SACHET's activities extends across all four provinces, including Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and the Northern Areas.

Briefly stated, our mandated objectives are as follows:

- To promote gender awareness and sensitivity in Pakistan.
- To narrow the gender gaps in health, education, and economic participation.
- To promote economic empowerment of the underprivileged.
- To promote awareness and sensitivity about sexual and reproductive health (SRH) rights, information, education, and

SACHET is a not donor-dependent, but is a donor-friendly organization that sustains its activities through financial assistance from local and overseas Pakistanis as well as philanthropists. It accepts international assistance in the form of information exchange, thereby allowing sufficient room for networking with global support agencies and multilateral development institutions that share our development vision. The organization's resource center namely, Advocates for Gender, Education and Health Information (AGEHI) - is constantly being upgraded. It already boasts of an impressive collection of books, printed material, videos and CDs acquired as a result of this non-funding, intellectual alliance with various research, educational, and development institutions. It also receives Health Communication Material from various prestigious institutions/organizations like Johns Hopkins University, Population Council etc.



IMPLEMENTATION

How we go about it

No matter how noble the intentions or how well stated the objectives, the benefits of a program cannot trickle down to the intended beneficiaries without the formalization of an objective implementation strategy. During the last two years, SACHET has comprehensively tested with success, a three-tier approach consisting of the following three components:

- Information, Education and Communication (IEC)
- Advocacy
- Service Delivery

IEC plays a decisive role in creating awareness and changing behavioral patterns prevalent in communities. The publication of calendars, posters and a quarterly newsletter; the holding of community meetings and 'mehfils' at the village level; and the launching of a website are some of the ways in which SACHET disseminates information, promotes education, and facilitates communication at the grass roots level.

Relying on active advocacy to exercise positive influence over policy makers, public institutions, and stakeholders, has been and continues to be SACHET's forte. It serves as a platform for exchange of views on indigenous subjects that an average Pakistani can identify with. Aside from a television show on gender issues, seminars, discussions, and talks are arranged every now and then to bring together, intellectuals, academics, students, health professionals, and ordinary citizens from different walks of life for constructive dialogue. Such activities provide ample scope for intellectual discussions and open debate leading to certain concrete solutions.

SACHET takes great pride in having harnessed the power of the electronic media to raise awareness about gender-related issues relevant to all times, past and present. Its 19-episode venture 'Gender Watch' proved to be a trendsetter in highlighting the obtrusive gender disparity in all dimensions of human development. Developed and directed by Dr. Rakhshinda Perveen, the innovative series won the 'Best Private Production Award' at the 10th PTV Annual Award Ceremony held in Lahore in March 2001. It won rave reviews in the press for qualifying as a program that left an indelible mark on viewers' way of thinking. SACHET is the first organization that not only pioneered a gender show on television but also defined 'gender' in a Pakistani perspective by finding its alternative word 'sinf' in Urdu. Before this, the words 'sinf' and 'jins' (meaning 'sex') were interchangeably and loosely used.

Once the ground has been leveled by virtue of IEC and advocacy initiatives, the task of service delivery comes into play. Careful assessment of needs is followed by delivery of free services in areas where health, education and training are perceived as privileges of the rich and influential only. The establishment of free clinics in localities where government health facilities are either non-existent or non-functioning falls in this category, as does the formation of computer training institutes and vocational training centers.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

'Capacity Building, Competition, Recreation'

SACHET's work environment cultivates friendship at the personal level, capacity-building at the professional level and competition - rather than rivalry - at the organizational level. The office hierarchy virtually exists for the maintenance of discipline only. With the mean age of professionals being 25 years, never has there been any incongruity between seniors and the junior lot. Working at SACHET is like working in a family - a closely-knit unit where companionship and professionalism go hand in hand.



Capacity-building and human resource development is one of the most distinct attributes of our work environment. We firmly believe that the more we invest in our workers, the better the organization's output. In return, all employees are evaluated on the basis of their performance rather than personal contacts.

Seventeen staff members benefited from 10 major training workshops, internship programs, and conferences arranged under the aegis of various local and international organizations during the period under review. The training was provided by the World Health Organization, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency, The American Centre, The British Council, the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, First Women Bank, Population Council, Aahung, Aga Khan University, Askari Commercial Enterprises, Eco-Conservation Initiatives, and the National Rural Support Program.

An eagerly-awaited platform for capacity-building is the monthly general staff meeting, which affords a rare opportunity for face-to-face interaction among all employees ranging from a driver and a receptionist, up to the executive vice president's level. The unique meeting is chaired by one of the staff members on a rotational basis, with another making input in the form of report writing. It witnesses a junior chairing the proceedings in the presence of the organizational heads, and other senior staff members. The idea is to impart the confidence and skills required for report-writing and conducting the proceedings of a meeting. The forum not only paves the way for cohesion but also affords an opportunity to voice one's grievances, if any. Being an environment-friendly NGO, SACHET condemns and discourages smoking, thus our immediate environment is smoke-free.

Again, SACHET is not an 'All Work, No Play' environment. Birthday parties, farewell receptions, Eid Milan parties, and picnics provide the much-needed break from routine activities that restore and rejuvenate the staff members' ability to resume work.

At the organizational level, it has always been our policy to build alliances with NGOs, government agencies, international donors, and development organizations. Being a growing organization, we believe in cooperating rather than competing with sister NGOs. SACHET is a member of several NGO networks and programs including the Population Association of Pakistan (PAP), the National Trust for Population Welfare (NATPOW), and the government's 'Khushhaal Pakistan' project.

SACHET AND GENDER

- ❖ All four program areas of SACHET - health, education, poverty alleviation-cum-income generation, and training have a gender perspective to them. Gender sensitization, equity and mainstreaming are vociferously advocated and implemented in all our activities.
- ❖ SACHET's architecture encourages communication between both genders while guaranteeing privacy during office hours. This way, we can claim to have internalized the concept into a reality in our own premises.
- ❖ SACHET is the only NGO in Pakistan that offers the facility of paternity leave to its male employees on the birth of their first two children.
- ❖ All research carried out by SACHET contains gender desegregated data.
- ❖ SACHET pioneered a gender show on television titled 'Gender Watch.' It also defined the word 'gender' in a Pakistani perspective by finding its alternative word, 'sinf,' in Urdu.
- ❖ SACHET has launched a special campaign titled 'Fight Against Dowry' (FAD) to eliminate a social evil that continues to be a cause and justification for violence against women.
- ❖ SACHET has a women Executive Vice President so that female representation is ensured at the decision-making level.
- ❖ The proportion of women in SACHET's Technical Advisory Group equals that of men.

EMPLOYEES' BENEFIT SCHEMES

SACHET is the only NGO in Pakistan that grants the right of paternal leave to its male employees. One off day in each trimester for medical check-ups of their wives, and four on the delivery of the newborn are granted for the first two children only. This is in addition to maternity and standard leave. We are also contributing to the EOBI (Employees Old Age Benefits Institution) scheme, and have included the facility of Provident Fund with effect from January 2002. The office also provides free pick-and-drop to staff members interested in availing the facility.

GENDER WATCH

SACHET is nationally recognized as an NGO that harnessed the power and reach of the electronic media to produce an exclusive 25-minute television series that sensitized target communities by challenging age-old perceptions on various subjects including domestic violence, education, health, child rights, sexual abuse, honor killings, etc., all pegged to gender, and discussed in a purely indigenous context.

Titled 'Gender Watch,' the objective of the program was to enable women and girls to break out of the stereotyped roles to which they have been relegated by challenging some of the centuries old perceptions. SACHET started working on this project in 1999. The series was divided into two phases the pilot phase consisted of six episodes, with 13 more developed in the next stage. The objective was to enable women and girls to break out of the stereotyped roles to which they have been relegated by challenging some of the centuries old societal attitudes towards them. The interactive program, which was aired on PTV, PTV World, and Prime Television, incorporated the views of policy-makers, community workers, youth, students and program implementers.



The entire range of Gender Watch videos is available at the SACHET Gallery as well as the AGEHI Resource Center.

PROGRAM AREAS OF SACHET

HEALTH

Access* to Health (Primary & Reproductive) for the Disadvantaged Community

In Pakistan, public sector expenditure on health is as low as 0.8 percent of the GNP, as against 4 - 5 percent recommended by the World Health Organization. Poor scores on health indicators and high prevalence of preventable diseases reflect the state of the country's health sector, creating ample room for a strong public-private partnership. The pitiable state of health delivery in Pakistan and the inadequacy of the public health sector in catering to the needs of an ever-growing population make it mandatory for the private sector to play its role in increasing the efficiency of a health sector in disarray.



SACHET's health program is in keeping with the reproductive health goals of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994, and with those reiterated in the Platform for Action developed at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. We firmly believe that health is at the heart of all development initiatives.

Ensuring equal access to essential health services, particularly for the poor and the marginalized segments of the society, is the cornerstone of SACHET's health interventions. This endeavor is essentially directed towards communities residing in small, neglected villages located in Rawalpindi and Islamabad districts.

CLINICS, MEDICAL CAMPS, SPECIAL INITIATIVES

Our health program is divisible into four key areas: primary health care, reproductive health care, special health initiatives, and medical camps. SACHET extends primary and reproductive health care and services through free clinics established in Banigala, Shahdra, Pinyali and Ghagri under its Community Development Programs (CDPs), which focus on health, education, poverty alleviation-cum-income generation (PACIG), and training.

All SACHET clinics are located in villages which may differ from each other in terms of their geography, population and physical traits, but share the same profile when it comes to inequity in health status. In most cases, SACHET has taken the lead in implementing outcome-oriented public health strategies in areas where economic and social factors play a crucial role in access to adequate health care. Women and children are often the ones who endure maximum sufferings in such scenarios.

The few medical practitioners and quacks who do provide limited services in these villages charge exorbitant fees, which a majority can ill-afford. Moreover, these private practitioners focus on the curative side only. The absence of health facilities is further compounded by barriers such as distance and poor road infrastructure, which add to the physical and mental stress of a patient in need of emergency treatment.

(* Geographical, Social and Financial)

SACHET Free Clinics Shahdra (1999 to 2010)

On October 12, 1999, SACHET launched its Community Development Program (CDP) with the establishment of a free clinic in Shahdra, a quaint village located 15 kilometers east of Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad. A bumpy road links the village to the capital.

The clinic was established in an abandoned Basic Health Unit (BHU), which was without any doctor and paramedical staff for many years. SACHET adopted the BHU, got the dilapidated building completely renovated and instantly embarked upon its mission of improving the health status of the village population through provision of free health services.

Spread over 2,006 acres, Shahdra has a population of about 25,000, with eight villages surrounding it within a radius of five kilometers. People benefitting from services being provided by the clinic aside from the population of eight villages in the catchment area, the clinic is also visited by the inhabitants of Phareela and Neelam Bhotto in NWFP. Since Shahdra borders the Haripur District, these two villages are also included in our catchment area. Patients from these villages visit the clinic in Shahdra after traversing a two-hour journey by foot through a mountainous terrain.

As many as 17,675 patients were treated at the clinic during November 2000 to December 2001.

SACHET Free Clinics Pinyali (2000 to 2010)

SACHET's second CDP was launched in Pinyali, a village situated on the Kahuta Road in District Rawalpindi. The clinic was launched on February 2, 2000. Thirty thousand patients have been treated during November 2000 to December 2001.

The clinic seeks to provide services to a population of 50,000 inhabiting Pinyali and 21 villages in its catchment area.

SACHET Free Clinics Banigala (2001 to 2010)

Banigala, which is located at a distance of 18 kilometers from SACHET on the road leading to the National Institute of Health, was chosen for the establishment of SACHET's third free clinic launched on February 1, 2001.

The project catchment area is spread out in a hilly terrain consisting of five villages with a population of 35,000. As many as 17,000 patients have been treated at the clinic during February 2001 to December 2001.

SACHET Free Clinics Ghagri (2001 to 2010)

Ghagri, the latest addition to the SACHET family, came on August 17, 2001. Situated on Japan Road, 0.5 kilometers off Islamabad Highway and 20 kilometers from Zero Point, the population of Ghagri and 16 other villages in its catchment area comes to around 50,000.

Even though a basic health unit is located in a village near Ghagri, that facility is operating without a medical doctor for years. More than 10,000 patients have been treated at the clinic during August 2001 to December 2001.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Investment in health improves quality of life. Going by this philosophy, SACHET has been placing utmost emphasis on the provision of free primary and reproductive health services to its target beneficiaries. While doing so, we follow the lifecycle approach, which focuses on improving the overall human condition of men and women in all stages of their lifecycle.

In the sphere of primary health, our well-equipped clinics offer a wide range of curative and preventive health care services. The provision of emergency services, medicines, health education and diagnostic and referral services also fall under the purview of the clinics. All clinics have adequate supplies of medicines mentioned in the Essential Drugs List of our National Health Policy.

On the reproductive health side, information dissemination on Reproductive Health Services and counseling to married and unmarried men and women of reproductive age, creating awareness with regard to the reproductive health rights of women and responsibilities of men, provision of reproductive health services including antenatal and post-natal care, immunization of expecting mothers and children under 5 and referral services for surgical contraception are effectively being catered. Special emphasis is placed on highlighting the role of men in reproductive health, including family planning.

Pregnant mothers visit the clinics for regular check-ups. They are also guided on antenatal and post-natal care to forestall avoidable risks, services which they had never dreamt of before the establishment of SACHET clinics. Services for temporary family planning are available at the clinics. However, cases requiring surgical methods are referred to other hospitals. Lectures and discussions are arranged at the community level to enable couples to make informed choices about the number and spacing of their children.

The clinics also offer awareness, counseling and screening for Hepatitis (B, C) and HIV/AIDS and management of other sexually transmitted diseases. It will be relevant to mention here that SACHET spends 20 percent of its time and resources on creating awareness on HIV/AIDS, especially in gender perspective. All clinics strictly follow best practices protocol for infection prevention and waste management.

COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATORS

Bridging the gap between felt health needs of the community and actual needs as perceived by health professionals

In order to bring about long-term and sustainable improvements in the health status of its target populations, SACHET has taken upon itself to select and train village girls as Community Health Educators (CHEs) in Shahdra. We would replicate this experience in other communities also. This special initiative has not been as simple as it sounds. The selection and training was preceded by the most difficult stage of convincing the village communities to allow their daughters to acquire training as CHEs, because projects envisaging community welfare and development can hardly materialize without the locals' participation and input.

The idea behind the initiative was to train a corps of CHEs who would be responsible for breaking the chain of ignorance by creating awareness on diverse health issues like nutrition, immunization and preventable diseases which, according to the World Disaster Report 2000, claimed 13 million lives in 1999. The CHEs visit rural women in their homes with easy-to-understand health messages and information. SACHET's Program Unit has designed a special training module for CHEs.

The CHEs played a commendable role in motivating and mobilizing the people of Shahdra to get their children vaccinated against polio during the National Immunization Days. SACHET also provides logistic and financial support to the district health authorities to make the polio eradication campaign a success.

For SACHET, the goal of community mobilization is to ensure that appropriate health-seeking behavior becomes part of the social norm. Communities need to be aware of the need for prompt and special care to prevent unnecessary suffering. Our community education endeavors seek to address traditional beliefs that fall outside the traditional reach of the health system.

MEDICAL CAMPS

SACHET has a tradition of establishing free medical camps on a quarterly basis in areas where permanent health facilities are non-existent. Such camps have been organized in Kahuta, Banigala, Golra Sharif, Neelam Bhotoo, Noorpur Shahan, Jhangi Syedan, Bari Imam, the Katchi Abadi in I-11 and Shahdra Khurd. A satellite medical camp was organized for the residents of Phareela, Haripur District, NWFP, in November 2000. These camps not only provide curative and preventive health services, but also create awareness on health issues through advocacy and communication strategies.

Responding to the natural disaster that struck Rawalpindi and Islamabad in 2001, we arranged a series of emergency medical camps to assist the flood victims. Medical check-ups of over 3,000 victims were carried out and they were provided free medicines. SACHET also launched a campaign to collect donations for them.

COMMUNITY SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

SACHET provides health services to students of three schools for working children in Rehmatabad and Dhoke Munshian-Rawalpindi. These schools are being run by Volunteers' Foundation, an NGO working for the uplift of rural communities. The schools are situated in peri-urban slums where domestic violence, child labor and drug addiction are rampant.

We participate in a bimonthly activity in which free medical check-ups of students are conducted. They are provided essential medicines, multivitamins and iron supplements, milk and fruits. A majority of these students are under-nourished or suffer from dental cavities and throat infections. Cases requiring prolonged treatment are followed-up on a regular basis. Two hundred students aged between 5- 15 years are regularly benefiting from this initiative. Eighty percent of these children have never visited a hospital for medical check-up or treatment.

SACHET's Community School Health Services have had a special meaning for Sakina Bibi, whose 11-year old daughter, Saira, was diagnosed as suffering from Tuberculosis by SACHET's visiting team of doctors. Till then, her deteriorating health had been a mystery.

"She had been suffering from low grade fever for eight months. We did not have the resources to take her to a doctor or a hospital. We noticed a constant decline in her weight for no apparent rhyme or reason. She was generally lethargic," Sakina Bibi said to explain the condition of the frail and feeble Saira, whose physique makes her look at least three years behind her age. "God bless the doctors who diagnosed the disease," the mother prayed.

"We happily send our children to this school because in addition to acquiring education, they get milk, fruits, and free medicines in case of need," Sakina Bibi said.

Health education, with special emphasis on personal hygiene, is also imparted to students through IEC. Occasionally, SACHET also provides notebooks, stationery items, etc., to the school.

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MANAGEMENT OF CLINICS

The clinics are staffed by two doctors (male and female), a dispenser, eight Community Health Educators (CHEs) and a sanitary worker. A field support coordinator, a field coordinator and a project officer manage the health facilities in terms of administration, community participation and quality assurance.

WORKING OF CLINICS

All patients visiting the health facilities are taken to a filter clinic where vital signs, weight and height (of pregnant women and children) are listed by a qualified lady health worker. They are then examined by the male or female doctor, as the case may be. Patients requiring first-aid or primary care make use of the dispensary, while those diagnosed as being in need of specialized treatment or surgery are referred to government hospitals under SACHET's referral network.

To ensure the maintenance of an acceptable level of efficiency and care, the quality of services being provided by the clinics are evaluated against a pre-formulated checklist on a quarterly basis. Every clinic gets medicinal supplies on a quarterly basis to ensure all-time availability of essential drugs. Record-keeping is another formality that is rigorously carried out to ensure that the history and status of all patients is properly preserved and maintained.

The clinics are visited on a monthly basis by the project officer and routinely by the field support coordinator and the field coordinator to keep the clinics going.

Since clinics are a component of the Community Development Program (CDP), promoting social interaction to mobilize community is an ongoing activity. We strongly believe in taking the community along in decision-making so that policies are devised on the basis of their suggestions, and implemented to respond to their felt needs. Interaction with the local community has been institutionalized in the shape of SACHET committees which consist of five or six people from the village, who are involved in the identification of prospective projects and even lend help in monitoring them.

The clinics remain open daily 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. six days a week.

IMPLEMENTATION

As already mentioned, SACHET follows a three-tier strategy to achieve its health objectives. These are service delivery, IEC and Advocacy.

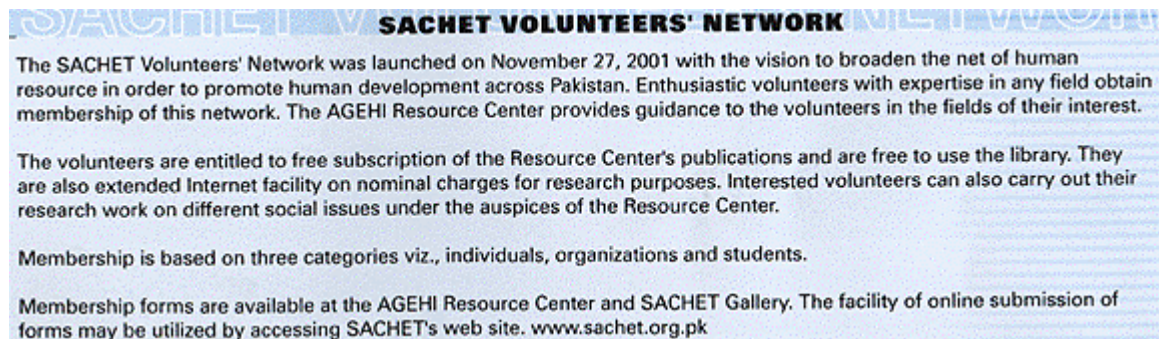
Advocacy and communication efforts particularly focus on highlighting the role of men in reproductive health and family planning by creating an enabling environment for mutual discussions and debate in 'Behnaan di Mehfil' and 'Bharavan di Mehfil' (assemblies of sisters and brothers). These gatherings, which serve as a platform for exchange of ideas on indigenous subjects with a purely Pakistani perspective, are conducted to bring about positive attitudinal change among the village communities and to mobilize them to give express and share their concerns.

CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS

Aside from the provision of free clinical services and preventive healthcare facilities, our CDPs also envisage measures for enhancement of literacy rate and poverty alleviation through skill development. (Details are given in the section Education and PACIG.

However, there are a series of constraints that prevent SACHET from launching its health program with full throttle. What we need to upgrade and strengthen our existing health program include the availability of technical expertise, laboratory services and community-oriented public health professionals.

The biggest hurdle, however, is lack of material resources. Additionally, while arrangements for internal monitoring and evaluation do exist, we feel hindered by the lack of technically sound professionals for periodical external monitoring and appraisal. The non-availability of trained and committed service providers is seen as another major constraint. However, we are advancing at a promising pace in spite of all limitations.



SACHET VOLUNTEERS' NETWORK

The SACHET Volunteers' Network was launched on November 27, 2001 with the vision to broaden the net of human resource in order to promote human development across Pakistan. Enthusiastic volunteers with expertise in any field obtain membership of this network. The AGEHI Resource Center provides guidance to the volunteers in the fields of their interest.

The volunteers are entitled to free subscription of the Resource Center's publications and are free to use the library. They are also extended Internet facility on nominal charges for research purposes. Interested volunteers can also carry out their research work on different social issues under the auspices of the Resource Center.

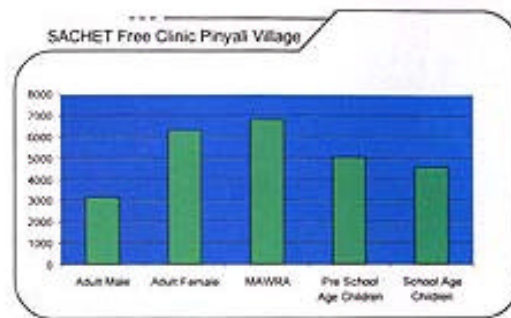
Membership is based on three categories viz., individuals, organizations and students.

Membership forms are available at the AGEHI Resource Center and SACHET Gallery. The facility of online submission of forms may be utilized by accessing SACHET's web site. www.sachet.org.pk

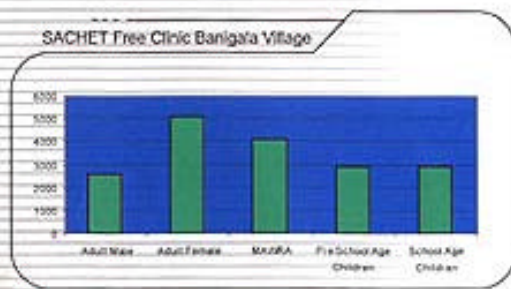
Patients Turnover Classification at SACHET Clinics



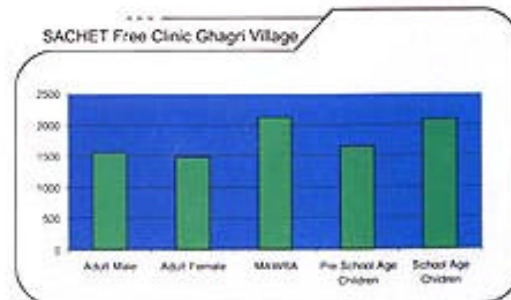
(Nov. 2000-Dec. 2001)



(Nov. 2000-Dec. 2001)

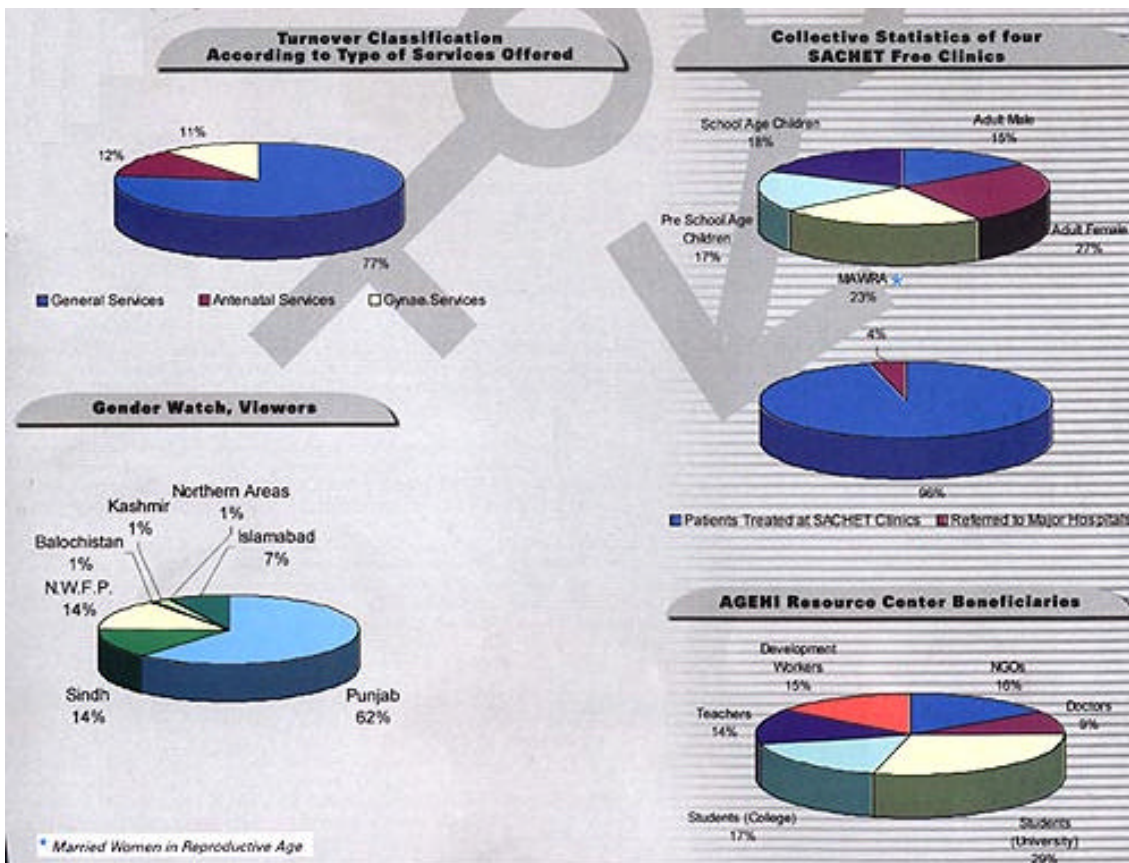


(Feb. 2001-Dec. 2001)



(Aug. 2001-Dec. 2001)

Patients Turnover Classification at SACHET Clinics



POVERTY ALLEVIATION-CUM-INCOME GENERATION PROGRAM

Economic Empowerment of the Disadvantaged Community

A program for poverty alleviation-cum-income generation (PACIG) assumes heightened significance in a country ranking on the 160th position on the basis of its poverty profile (Reference: World Development Report 2000). With 40 percent of Pakistan's population living below the poverty line, and earning less than one dollar per day, the need for initiatives leading to economic empowerment and skill promotion and development can hardly be over-emphasized.

A three-pronged strategy governs SACHET's approach towards PACIG. Arranging skill development activities for women to create economic empowerment; imparting training on how to conduct business within limited resources; and providing a marketing outlet for products are the three main stages of the program. Additionally, awareness sessions are also conducted to teach women how to increase their output within given financial constraints.

SACHET's first collaborative venture under PACIG was launched in October 1999 in partnership with Hawwa Associates. This income-generation project, which imparted skills training to women residing in low-income localities of Islamabad in order to make them economically self-reliant, provided SACHET with the requisite expertise to start its own project along similar lines. The dream came true with the opening of SACHET Gallery, our first project under PACIG, followed by a micro-enterprises development project namely, SACHET Microenterpriser for Life (SMiLe), the establishment of Skill Development Centers in Shahdra and Bani Gala, Skill Promotion activities and training for income generation.

The following projects have been launched under PACIG program during the period being covered by this report:

SACHET Gallery (March 2000-2005) 'Cutting the Middleman'

SACHET Gallery has built bridges for a rewarding alliance between skilled women and men residing in low-income rural localities and ardent buyers in the city of diplomats and the local elite. Located in Blue Area's Beverley Centre, the Gallery serves as a sales outlet for under-privileged entrepreneurs who remain invisible either owing to lack of economic opportunities and the absence of an enabling environment for business development and enterprise, or because of the imperious presence of the middleman.

The above definition should not imply that the Gallery merely serves as a sales outlet, because the project's actual strength lies in identifying, persuading and guiding disadvantaged skilled workers with a capital need and a productive skill, to explore avenues for their economic empowerment.

In November 2001, the Gallery engaged rural women in Rawalpindi in an income-generation project involving the making of paper bags for shopping purposes. It is at the Gallery that we sell dreams. The project seeks to empower disadvantaged women and men from the rural and urban areas by making them economically independent; promotes their entrepreneurship by facilitating direct access to big markets; and instill in them, the confidence to conduct business transactions. Less obviously but definitely, the Gallery also revives various traditional arts and crafts which are facing the threat of extinction owing to absence of potential avenues for promotion and sales.

Over 100 consignors from 27 cities in all four provinces of Pakistan regularly send their products for sale at the Gallery. The allocation of quota is prioritized to benefit disadvantaged people the most, followed by talented persons who cannot market their skills because of poverty of opportunities, NGOs, and SACHET itself. Being a growing organization, SACHET strongly believes in cooperating, rather than competing with sister NGOs. Twenty percent of the Gallery's consignors, therefore, represent the NGO sector.

Being a gender-sensitive organization does not mean that we remain indifferent to the social role that men are expected to play in fulfilling their responsibilities towards the family. Male consignors are, therefore, encouraged to participate in this empowering activity to augment the household income. Men constitute 30 percent of the Gallery's total consignors.

The average monthly income of a skilled person ranges between Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 4,000, and may at times exceed this amount. Eighty percent of the sale proceeds land in the producers' kitties, with the remaining 20 percent retained by SACHET to partially support its free clinics. However, in case of special people, 90 percent of the sale proceeds are handed over to the producers, with the Gallery retaining 10 percent of the share.

**Shop for a Cause at SACHET Gallery
See What We Have**

Hand-embroidered dresses from Multan, Bahawalpur and Nowshehra; wooden crafts from Faisalabad; dry flower arrangements from Attock, clay pottery from Hala, cushion covers and block-printed dresses from Matli and Bidh Shah in Sindh, pashmina shawls from Swat; handmade woolen cloth from Chitral; and 'khaddar' from Khushaab are some of the products that have been brought under one roof to attract prospective clients.



Our strong belief in the power of networking to foster healthy competition and coexistence is apparent in the Gallery as well. Catchy products being promoted by various other NGOs such as Kashaf, Threadnet Hunza, and Kato Phulkari Centre-Haripur also find a window of display at our sales outlet.

Embroidered handicrafts depicting the intrinsic traditions of Pakistan's mountain culture adorn a distinct corner of the Gallery, where products by Threadnet Hunza are on permanent display. The sophisticated hand-embroidered items range from handbags and passport bags to pencil cases, jewelry boxes, and home accessories like doorbells, and wall hangings. The products have captured the international market owing to their high quality workmanship.

CATEGORY OF CONSIGNORS	
Deserving Consignors	Female: 45 % Male: 30% } 75%
NGO's	20%
Talented Consignors	4%
SACHET	1%
TOTAL	100%

Mode of Payment to Consignors

The signing of a contract precedes formalization of a working relationship between the Gallery and its consignors. As far as the mode of payment is concerned, SACHET encourages consignors and entrepreneurs to open their personal bank accounts as a guarantee for foolproof transactions. The measure also seeks to bolster their confidence. All payments are made through cross-cheques.

SACHET MICROENTERPRISER for LIFE (SMiLe) Developing Microenterprisers

Launched on April 13, 2001, SMiLe facilitates skilled men and women by providing them with the initial capital required to start a business. One of the long-term objectives of this micro-financing project is to eliminate poverty through financial empowerment of talented people constrained by lack of material resources. Interest-free loans are extended to deserving candidates who possess the necessary abilities to run a business according to existing criteria. The project is driven by the 3M approach consisting of 'micro-credit,' 'micro-financing,' and 'marketing.'

The concept of SMiLe emerged from the operational activities of SACHET Gallery. The fact that many of the Gallery's consignors were inhibited by lack of capital and were unable to increase their output and profitability sowed the seeds of this three-year project. Products made by those utilizing the loan are marketed from the Gallery's platform.

Beneficiaries are trained in entrepreneurial and marketing skills such as break-even analysis, profit calculation, record-keeping and preparation of income statements. Training for the first batch was held at the SACHET Gallery in May 2001. Currently, we are in the process of screening the second batch of beneficiaries.

Tangible and Intangible Benefits of Project

Aside from the most obvious financial and social benefits that the project entails for its beneficiaries, a healthy change in the perception and outlook of producers taking advantage of the scheme deserves a special mention. They have gained in terms of dignity and self-respect, and feel immense pride in having assumed the ability to steer their lives through thick and thin.

The extension of loans under SMiLe is divided into four stages: procurement of loan applications, initial screening of deserving applicants by the project team, final selection of candidates by the project director and finally, the grant of the budgeted loan facility.

The first batch of beneficiaries hailed from the rural areas of Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Taxila, and Matli-Sindh. Interest-free loans ranging between Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 10,000 were extended to three women and two male entrepreneurs in the first phase (April-October 2001) of the project. Barring a Pinyali-based applicant, who failed to utilize the loan on the project for which it was granted, all the remaining entrepreneurs have started their own businesses; have doubled their capital; and have started repayment of loans.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Recovery

Our team constantly motivates and periodically monitors various aspects of the business to ensure appropriate and productive utilization of funds. A Project Progress Meeting with the credit/consignor coordinator and a field coordinator is held at the end of each month to assess progress.

This is followed by a thorough evaluation at the end of each phase of the project to measure the sustainability and success of the project in qualitative and quantitative terms. How successful has been the team in empowering its target beneficiaries? Has the project aroused the interest of other people in the community? Has the real goal of the project been realized? These are just a few of the questions that become relevant during the evaluation process.

The project's progress depends on the results of evaluation obtained in the previous phase. Our strategy is based on the principle 'Learn from your mistakes and never repeat them.' As a result, the completion of one phase marks the achievement of a milestone as we proactively mould ourselves to address concerns and needs that effect the smooth execution of SMiLe.

Beneficiaries get a six-month grace period, after which they are required to start repayment of loan. Loan repayment is spread over 18 months, and serves as a revolving credit that is disbursed to fresh applicants.

SKILL PROMOTION PROJECT (2000-2005)

'Invisible Workers Become Visible'

There is no dearth of talent in Pakistan, but there definitely is a dearth of initiatives directed towards the promotion of skilled people. Skill Promotion, therefore, forms a vital component of our poverty alleviation-cum income generation program. The challenge begins with identifying and establishing liaison with gifted people both men and women - and ends with the marketing of their products in what can be termed as a multi-dimensional endeavor.

Activities related to the Skill Promotion Project (SPP) are managed at SACHET Gallery. This project identifies and promotes skilled artisans and craft-persons who neither have the resources nor access to appropriate channels for recognition and marketing. The talent hunt is carried out by a field coordinator, who is assisted by a consignee coordinator once hidden talent comes to the fore.

Skill Promotion Activities

Our first activity under the SPP was the arrangement of a three-day exhibition of 'khaddi' and 'khaddar' cloth by weavers of village Mitha Tiwana, Khushab, in May 2000. This was followed by a more varied exhibition of arts and crafts from all over Pakistan in May 2001, and a third exhibition featuring a demonstration of work on 'khaddi,' held in the second week of June 2001.

The first two exhibitions were planned to coincide with International Labour Day, and the third was arranged to celebrate International Crafts Day. All the exhibitions attracted a stream of buyers and admirers, who equated the activities with Lok Virsa's annual artisans-at-work festival although on a much smaller scale.

Fourteen artisans from all four provinces and Azad Jammu and Kashmir participated in the 'Meet the Invisible Workers' exhibition held in May 2001.

Aside from this nationwide activity for skill promotion, the Gallery has made it a tradition to hold short duration exhibitions of different products indigenous to Pakistan's culture. On an average, 2-3 exhibitions are arranged each month to garner recognition for skilled people who deserve both recognition as well as the right to a respectable living, which comes through participation in income-generation activities.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (2001-2005)

The aim of SACHET's Skill Development Project - a powerful tool for financial empowerment - is to enable girls from disadvantaged communities to learn skills that can serve as a source of income-generation for them.

Our first Skill Development Centre was established on a pilot basis in Shahdra in February 2001 under the Community Development Program. Located in the middle of the valley, the Centre is within easy access of communities in the surrounding villages of Khurd and Kalaan. A two-room vacant house identified by the community is being used to conduct courses.

The success and popularity of the community-based project encouraged us to establish another one in Bani Gala in May 2001, with a third intended for Pinyali later this year.

What the Centers Offer

These Centers, which offer three-month courses in sewing and cutting, are a component of activities falling under the purview of poverty alleviation-cum income generation and training. Trainees learn stitching of garments for children, ladies, and gents, and are free to utilize the platform of SACHET Gallery for marketing their dresses.



SACHET AND SPECIAL PEOPLE

The state of development for special persons, who, according to official calculations, form 10 percent of the country's population, is particularly dismal. SACHET makes a conscious effort to bring special people into the limelight. One manifestation of this undertaking is the allocation of a separate sales corner at the SACHET Gallery to display crafts and products made by children and women suffering from disabilities.

WELCOME
NATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE FOR DISABLED PERSONS
AL-FARABI SPECIAL EDUCATION COMPLEX, G-8/4 ISLAMABAD

SACHET and Special Children

Sales Corner: In May 2001, SACHET allocated a distinct sales corner in its Gallery to exhibit products made by special children. The corner was inaugurated by the Minister for Culture, Sports, and Minorities Affairs, S K Tressler. Items made by over 100 special children are on display in the Gallery. The objective is two-fold: one, to promote the skills of children with disabilities, and two, to provide a marketing outlet for their products to enable them to earn a decent livelihood. We believe this would help to raise their self-esteem and confidence. The Gallery often arranges exhibitions on important occasions, such as International Day of the Disabled, Independence Day, International Labor Day etc., to attract a wider clientele so that the sale activity gets a boost. Ninety Percent of the sale proceeds from these exhibitions are spent on the welfare of special people. Some of the items made by special children are: cushion covers, place mats, towels, bamboo baskets, wall hangings, woolen sets, and table covers.

Education Project: We established the SACHET Computer Laboratory for Special Persons at the National Training Centre for Special Persons, at Al-Farabi Center G-8 Markaz Islamabad, under our education program. Inaugurated on August 28, 2001, by our president, Dr. A Q Khan, this capacity building program in the field of Information Technology aims to train an average of 150 students in different software applications like MS Word, MS Power Point, Web Page Development, use of the Internet and other specialized programs for persons with disabilities. SACHET has donated 10 networked computers, scanners, printers, and split air-conditioners for the Centre.

A total of 96 students, with an average age of 16 - 17 years, have received training at the Centers ever since their launch, with the male-female ration being 5:95. In Shahdra, 5 males registered for the course, and successfully completed it. Training is imparted by a male and a female trainer selected from the community. However, since the number of male participants was not encouraging, we did not continue with courses for males.

All trainees get the benefit of a free medical check-up once a month. They also make use of the health education services being provided at our clinics.

Facilitation and Sustainability

SACHET has taken upon itself to provide all the necessary paraphernalia (such as sewing machines, irons, scissors, tailoring chalks, measuring tapes, etc) to the trainees. In return, a registration fee of Rs. 50 is charged from each trainee. The amount, which is expended on payment of the trainers' salaries, is charged to ensure punctuality and serious pursuit by trainees. The Centers are always keen to rope in young persons who are not enrolled in schools and who may be wasting their time in dull activities.

Monitoring

The Centers are monitored on a weekly basis by the program officer for poverty alleviation, as well as the project coordinator. They are assigned to get feedback from students for a correct analysis of how much they are learning. 'Are students able to bring their knowledge to practical use?' 'What difficulties are they encountering?' These, and a couple of other questions, are included in the checklist of those responsible for the project's monitoring and assessment. How far the trainees have developed and polished their skills becomes self-evident at the conclusion of each training course, which is followed by an exhibition of the garments stitched and designed by them.

Training Project

SACHET launched a Training Project for Poverty Alleviation-cum-Income Generation on July 14, 2001 by holding a one-day workshop on wax painting and wallet making at SACHET Gallery. The workshop was attended by women from Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

The Gallery regularly holds training workshops and classes in wallet making, block-printing, cutting, sewing, wax painting, and basic business skills. These 2-3 day courses are attended by impoverished men and women living in the rural settings of Rawalpindi and Islamabad, as well as by the university and college students.

Trainees are required to pay a subsidized fee, which serves as a source of revenue for the outlet and helps to sustain the project.

EDUCATION

Access to Functional and Vocational Education for the Disadvantaged Community

Education has never been a priority agenda for development in Pakistan, a country where 150 million children aged 6 - 11 are out of school and where the adult literacy rate remains below 40 percent (Reference: State of Pakistan's Children 2000). Surveys conducted by the United Nations

and the World Bank indicate that Pakistan ranks 6th among SAARC countries, 9th among E-9 countries, 31 among Muslim countries, and 131st among the 180 countries of the world in terms of its education profile. According to recent statistics, 51 percent of Pakistan's population aged 10 and above (66% males and 35% females) have ever attended school. Of these, 49 percent males and 25 percent females complete primary education.

A most unfortunate feature of our education is the high dropout rate among girls in rural areas. Twenty five percent girls leave school without completing primary education. The overall primary dropout rate for children fell marginally from 17 percent to 16 percent during 1991-1997. The decline was greater in case of girls from 20 percent in 1991 to 17 percent in 1997.

According to the 1998 census, participation rate at primary level is 77 percent. The overall primary school enrollment rate for boys has increased from 73 percent in 1991 to 80 percent in 1997. (Reference: Education for All Year 2000 Assessment Pakistan Country Report, Ministry of Education). The 1998-2010 Education Plan sees Pakistan entering the next century with universal primary education.

SACHET's education program focuses on the provision of functional and vocational education to un-served and disadvantaged student communities in Rawalpindi and Islamabad districts. We have established three computer training centers, are set to adopt three government schools in Shahdra under the 'Adopt-A-School Initiative,' and also offer limited scholarships to brilliant students who may not be having the resources to continue their education.

SACHET COMPUTER TRAINING CENTERS

SACHET has established computer training centers in Shahdra, Banigala and at the National Training Center for Special Persons. These capacity building centers in the field of Information Technology (IT) impart basic computer education to students so that they do not lag behind in the IT race, and have brighter prospects for getting absorbed in the job market.

SACHET Computer Training Center Shahdra

SACHET's first computer training center was established in Shahdra on January 27, 2001. Four batches of students comprising 48 students all of them boys - attended three-month courses in MS Word, MS Excel, Inpage Urdu and Coral Draw during January to December 2001.

The courses were attended by matriculation to degree level students. Since the female literacy rate in Shahdra is extremely low, girls have not been able to benefit from the courses.

SACHET Computer Training Center For Special Children, Al Farabi

On April 28, 2001, SACHET established a computer laboratory for special persons at the National Training Center for Special Persons, G-8 Markaz, Islamabad. A collaborative project with the Al-Farabi Centre - a government-owned institution the laboratory was inaugurated by the President of SACHET, Dr. A. Q. Khan (NI & Bar, HI) in the presence of the Federal Minister for Women's Development, Social Welfare and Special Education, Dr. Attiya Inayatullah.

The establishment of this Center is a manifestation of our belief that the society must begin to recognize the abilities rather than the disabilities of special persons, and must share the burden of education and training of the disabled in order to brighten their chances of employability and hence the right to a dignified life.

SACHET has equipped the laboratory with 10 networked computers, scanners, printers, and split airconditioners. The Center annually trains 150 special persons in basic software applications like MS Word, MS Power Point, Web Page Development, use of the Internet and other specialized programs for persons with disabilities.

SACHET Computer Training Center Banigala

Banigala was chosen as the third location for a computer training center. Inaugurated on May 22, 2001, this Center also imparts basic computer education skills. Till December 2001, sixty matriculation and degree level students (50 males, 10 females) have attended the courses in three batches from the time of the Center's inception.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Brilliant students who cannot afford to continue their studies on account of financial constraints are assisted through scholarships. In view of the limited number of stipends, all cases are thoroughly scrutinized to ensure that only truly deserving students are selected. Some of the beneficiaries of these scholarships are studying in various federal government institutions.

PARTICIPATION IN "ADOPT-A-SCHOOL INITIATIVE"

During its two and half years of interaction with the community in Shahdra, SACHET gravely felt the need to improve the standard of education in its public education institutions, which have been showing extremely poor results over the years. This prompted us to become a partner in the government's 'Adopt a School Initiative.' We offered to adopt three government schools (a high school for boys, a high school for girls, and a middle school for girls) in Shahdra. The Directorate of Education and SACHET have, in principle, agreed to pursue this project.

This initiative is directed towards the rejuvenation of government schools through public-private partnership, under which the government retains ownership and invites a private partner to provide financial resources and/or assistance in kind to bring about mutually identified improvements in the schools.

The formalization of SACHET's partnership in the initiative will pave the way for a series of programs and activities aimed at improving the standard of the three schools in Shahdra. Some


of the planned activities include holding of refresher courses for teachers, establishment of a library, holding of coaching classes during summer and winter vacations, career counseling sessions, and computer training courses.

Since only a healthy body can house a healthy mind, SACHET will also bring all students under its school health services net. Regular medical check-ups of the students will be conducted, and they will be provided free medicines. The students will also be educated on various social and health related issues through awareness sessions so that they can become informed and responsible individuals.

FIGHT AGAINST DOWRY (FAD)

The AGEHI Resource Center of SACHET carried out a research on gender-based violence against women in Pakistan. Our research findings confirm that dowry is one of the major causes of domestic violence against women. Incidents of physical and psychological abuse targeted against newly-wed women who suffer condemnation for not bringing sufficient dowry with them are an everyday occurrence. Growing societal pressures and the demand for dowry has made it impossible for many parents to get their daughters married.

Fight Against Dowry, (FAD) a three-year advocacy project of the AGEHI Resource Center, was launched on November 27, 2001 in a bid to eliminate the practice of dowry. We have devised a series of strategies to sensitize young boys and girls to take practical steps to eliminate the social curse. During the pilot phase of this project i.e., six months, we will focus our attention on educational institutions in Rawalpindi and Islamabad district. The campaign will be extended to other major cities across Pakistan in due course of time.



TRAINING PROGRAM

Capacity Building of the Social Engineers

Training for Human Resource Development is yet to evolve as a full-fledged program area of SACHET. It is, nevertheless, one of our core supportive activities incorporating in-house training and capacity-building of SACHET's own employees, as well as of colleagues in the social sector.

Our work philosophy is embedded in the spirit of team work. SACHET provides the technical tools as well as the theoretical knowledge necessary for the professional growth of employees responsible for the execution and implementation of its varied development strategies. The focus, thus far, has been on domestic training only, with employees in the Program, Administration, and Finance departments, as well as the AGEHI Resource Center, reaping dividends by attending workshops, training courses, and conferences. These trainings are arranged in collaboration with different local and foreign partners in development. SACHET also shares its expertise with other NGOs in the social development sector.

It would not be out of place to mention that SACHET initiated an internship program in its Health, Education, Poverty Alleviation, Administration, Finance & Research areas to impart relevant experience & exposure to the fresh graduates. So far 20 persons have completed their internship in various programs with us.

**AGEHI RESOURCE CENTER-SACHET
(Advocates of Gender, Education & Health Information)
Engendering Development**

Founded in September 2000 by Dr. Rakhshinda Perveen, AGEHI (an acronym for Advocates of Gender, Education and Health Information) is the technical wing of SACHET's program unit. A' Agehe is an Urdu word meaning knowledge, awareness, perception, and insight. The resource centre is engaged in active advocacy for gender sensitization, education and health promotion by disseminating information, facilitating networking and conducting research.



The idea of establishing AGEHI dates back to the time when our 'Gender Watch' series was nearing its conclusion. The NGO received loads of requests from young people in the remote areas, students, and university graduates all of them keen to gather information on gender-related issues. Since it was not possible for us to satiate their thirst for knowledge by continuing 'Gender Watch,' it was decided that information dissemination should be formalized by establishing AGEHI.

In addition to its relevance for outsiders, the Resource Center also fulfills the intellectual curiosity of our own staff by serving as a focal point for personal and professional growth. All staff members in the finance, administration and program units are encouraged to spend some time in the resource center to keep abreast with latest news, and to develop the habit of scanning newspapers on a daily basis.

The Resource Center informs policy makers, educationists, journalists, concerned citizens, civil society representatives, students, young professionals, researchers, and program managers working in the areas of gender, education and health through a broad range of activities. It is working on three types of projects viz., IEC, Advocacy and Service Delivery. The major activities under IEC include the publication of a quarterly newsletter, SACHET's yearly Calendar, and the development of a website.

The AGEHI Newsletter is designed to create a platform for exchange of information and ideas on diverse issues of interest. The ultimate objective of the newsletter is to promote positive dialogue on policies and programs.


AIDS/ HIV RELATED ACTIVITIES BY AGEHI RESOURCE CENTER (Dec. 2000 – Dec. 2001)			
Time Allocated for HIV/ AIDS related activities	20%	Public Transport Drivers (Male)	10%
No of Awareness sessions held	18%	General Public	29%
Total Number of Participants	1400	Male female Beneficiary* (Ratio)	5:2
School Students	15%	Urban Rural Beneficiary* (Ratio)	3:4
College & University Students	46%		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dissemination of Advocacy Videos on HIV / AIDS ▪ Dissemination of information material ▪ National Poster contest on HIV/ AIDS ▪ SACHET Calendar 2002 "Let's work for AIDS free Pakistan" 			
* Most awareness activities were planned for male participants			

SACHET'S CONTRIBUTION TO HIV/AIDS AWARENESS-PROMOTION

As stated earlier, SACHET spends 20 percent of its time and resources on promoting awareness on HIV/AIDS. In this regard, DoSTI (Dare to Sensitize Train and Inform) an advocacy project of the AGEHI Resource Center, was launched in November 2000. The project's objective is to promote sensitivity and awareness about sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS in Islamabad and Rawalpindi districts.

Other objectives include information dissemination about STDs/STIs including HIV/AIDS, data collection on perception, knowledge, attitude and practices related to STDs, promotion of healthy attitudes and establishment of an informal network of advocates of gender and health among the target audience. The project also trains the target audience in gender and reproductive health perspective.

The target audience of our campaign comprises early adolescents, late adolescents, youth and local transport drivers all of them are seen as belonging to the high-risk group, and hence are more vulnerable to the epidemic.



The advocacy projects include community literacy projects, Dare to Sensitize, Train and Inform (DoSTI) - a project to sensitize youth about sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), studies on violence against women, and arranging an annual national poster competition on HIV/AIDS.

SACHET's Computer Training Centers are the service delivery projects of AGEHI Resource Center under the education program. They operate through the AGEHI Resource Center.

SACHET's SOCIAL MOVEMENTS



FUTURE VISION

SACHET's vision is inextricably linked to the qualitative goals outlined in the ICPD Plan of Action, which places human beings at the centre of all development initiatives, the Cairo Conference, which interlinks women's empowerment with the role of men in fostering gender equity, and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which challenges all cultural and social prejudices against women. We perceive ourselves as being in a position where we can assume responsibility for identifying and bridging the gaps between de facto and de jure interventions in the context of CEDAW.

One of our primary goals is to strengthen, expand, and continue existing services in health, education, poverty alleviation-cum-income generation, and training, without compromising on quality. We wish to replicate all successful programs and excellent practices in other parts of Pakistan. The expansion plan will be implemented with the support of Volunteers Network, a recent initiative that seeks to broaden the net of human resource in order to promote human development.

Talking about individual projects, we intend to play a defining role in turning the tide against HIV/AIDS in Pakistan, a low prevalence, high-risk country in terms of its HIV/AIDS status. We will challenge the vulnerabilities, threats, and risky behavioral patterns prevalent in the society through prioritized action. In doing so, we will involve young boys and girls at the center of awareness initiatives - a goal which finds manifestation in our project DoSTI (Dare to Sensitize, Train and Inform). We aspire to launch this program, which is currently targeting adolescents, youth, and local transport drivers in Rawalpindi and Islamabad only, to other parts of Pakistan.

SACHET is also keen to replicate its campaign against dowry throughout Pakistan in order to evolve a broad-based consensus opposing this social evil, and to institute practical measures to eliminate it from the society. We also wish to expand our Nutrition Initiative, under which malnourished children residing in the urban slums of Rawalpindi and Islamabad are regularly provided milk, fruits, vitamins, and iron supplements.

The realization of all these aspirations depends on community acceptance, which continues to be the biggest measure of our success thus far. No development is possible without community involvement and participation. Unless local communities are empowered to take charge of their own lives and destiny, outside interventions cannot make a lasting impact. We will continue to organize and involve communities in decision-making through the platform of our village committees.

Does SACHET have the resources to make its dreams come true? To a certain measure, 'yes.' Ever since its inception in May 1999, we have said "no" to donor dependence, and have mostly relied on our indigenous resource base. Our financial resources are, to some extent, augmented by overseas Pakistanis and philanthropists. We have thus far accepted foreign assistance in kind only. However, the sustainability, expansion, and replication of our programs is not possible within the limited funding currently at our disposal. We will approach international donors sharing SACHET's vision for human development, and seek their assistance in helping us win the race against ill health, illiteracy, and poverty.



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Exempted from Income Tax under Government of Pakistan, Central Board of Revenue's Notification No. SO-II-26 (288)98-99/6689, Dated 24-05-1999