



An Afghan girl speaks in front of her class at the CWS children's rehabilitation center in Bamyan, Afghanistan.

## Editor's Message

Dear Readers:

Church World Service-Pakistan/Afghanistan's September to December, 2009 newsletter encompasses news on latest activities, addresses key social issues, and shares organizational aims. From advocacy to emergency response, CWS-P/A actively worked for the needs of the people of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Special emphasis is placed on child and gender issues that are at the forefront of humanitarian concerns. In Afghanistan, our project for girls' education is underway while our awareness project in one of the most remote areas of Pakistan shows that dedication and long-term intervention can bring about positive changes in even the most conservative places.

Discover the importance of nutrition security in Hot Topic, and learn about one of our partners in Partner's Profile.

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter. Please send your feedback and suggestions to [commoffice@cwspa.org.pk](mailto:commoffice@cwspa.org.pk)



CWS-P/A

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### **CWS-P/A Improves the Lives of Hundreds of Families in Balakot** *November*

CWS-P/A's Expanded Dairy Development Program continues to support 260 female-headed households in Balakot through scientific techniques, training, and support at its model dairy farm, which was recently recognized as one of the top ten model dairy farms in Asia and nominated for the Global Development Network Award. The beneficiaries, selected from an earlier project that assisted 2005 earthquake-affected female-headed households with livestock distribution, breeding, and veterinary care, are experiencing higher income due to increased milk output, expanded dairy product production, and greater access to marketability of products.

Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED) supports the project, and on November 20, 2009 an EED representative visited the farm and project area. The modern construction of the farm holds approximately twenty cows and twelve calves; artificial insemination is used to improve breeding and milk production. During the visit, a training session was ongoing, and the participating women showed enthusiasm for learning new techniques. Among the discussion topics was the usability of whey, a byproduct of cottage cheese. By adding rose or almond syrup, a refreshing drink can be made for use or sale; previously, the women were unaware of this and were in the practice of discarding or feeding the whey to their animals. The combination of awareness and technique development of dairy products improves the lives of these women not only by increasing their earning potential but also their confidence and sense of entrepreneurship.

A visit to a nearby village from which some beneficiaries come further strengthened the positive results observed about the program. Gathered at the home of a trained veterinarian worker, a group of beneficiaries shared how being part of the program has improved their lives. The women confirmed that they are seeing increased profits by selling surplus milk in the market; one woman shared that by not having to purchase milk for her family and having excess to sell, she earns 1,500 rupees (approximately USD18) more each month. Another woman shared that her young daughter does not want her to sell the excess milk because she wants to keep it for herself; the girl drinks milk before and after school everyday. Her full, rosy cheeks showed evidence of a healthy child. Families also benefit from the earned income and report ability to afford their children's school fees.

Part of the visit included discussing the women's additional needs. Through discussion, one suggestion welcomed by the women was the provision of kitchen gardening kits and training. Many of the women currently practice home gardening for personal consumption. They felt that increasing their skills through training would help them grow a variety of products and also improve output so that they would have additional products to sell in the market. The desire to receive additional training and continue to increase their income potential demonstrates the positive influence CWS-P/A's programs have had in the area.

### **Organizational Unity toward Humanitarian Accountability Partnership**

*September-October*

As a full member of Humanitarian Accountability Partnership, CWS-P/A adopts the highest standards in terms of accountability, particularly toward individual beneficiaries and communities. After becoming a full member in 2008, CWS-P/A's Quality and Accountability team, supported by the internal HAP team, began steps to help the organization prepare for the HAP audit leading to HAP certification. After review of departments and other internal systems, the team decided to take the next step by conducting an externally evaluated baseline survey of all departments.

Programmatic and support departments participated in the baseline survey conducted by HAP International which aimed to assess to what degree the individual departments and organization as a whole comply with HAP 2007 Standard in Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Management. The two representatives from HAP International conducted interviews and assessments with CWS-P/A staff, partners, and beneficiaries. Based on the results, feedback was shared with staff in terms of how close the organization is to meeting requirements that would qualify CWS-P/A for HAP certification.

The positive results of the baseline survey encouraged staff to feel more confident in terms of accountability and existing practices within the organization. After making continued improvement in some noted areas, CWS-P/A aims to pursue certification during 2010.



## **Working Toward a New Era for Pakistani Women**

*November*

The inability to speak about sexual harassment encounters is commonly found in parts of the developing world and is prevalent in Pakistan. This strengthens the insecurity felt by victims and further hinders socio-economic development and progress. Given these reasons, sexual harassment procedures need to be consistent and free of gender and class bias.

CWS-P/A works to promote social justice and under its program, Promoting Good Governance, organized multiple thematic sessions on "Sexual Harassment and its Legal Remedies" with guest facilitator, Dr. Fouzia Saeed. In total, six sessions were held in six different cities including Islamabad, Hyderabad, Karachi, Multan, Faisalabad, and Lahore. Participants representing CSOs, NGOs, government officials, university students, media persons, lawyers, youth groups, and activists were present at these sessions. During the sessions, Dr. Saeed emphasized three main topics: the definition, dynamics, consequences, and causes of sexual harassment; myths surrounding sexual harassment which protect the harasser and place blame on the victim; and remedies at the individual, organizational, legal, and societal levels.

Participants supported a proposed bill, "Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace." They further supported suggested amendment to section 509 of Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) so as to ensure the protection of the dignity of women. Dr. Fouzia Saeed highlighted that the proposed bill had been drafted after a seven year research by AASHA (Alliance Against Sexual Harassment). Officially, the amended bill, "Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2009" was unanimously passed by the National Assembly on November 4, 2009, and the amendment to section 509 of PPC sets a clearer definition of sexual harassment. This will become law once passed by the Senate.

CWS-P/A's sessions received media attention in the various cities where they were conducted. The media emphasized the alarming statistics shared by Dr. Saeed including that 80-90% of women experienced sexual harassment; subsequently, the relevance of the topic in relation to the proposed bill and amendments was highlighted.

More than four hundred individuals attended the six sessions. Coming from various backgrounds meant that the topic related to the individuals and their fields in different ways. During the session in Islamabad, several participants shared their opinions with CWS-P/A's Sidney Traynham. Dr. Faiza Awais, a psychotherapist who currently works for an NGO, expressed, "It is important to know the clear differences between gender discrimination and sexual harassment in our work with communities." Another participant, Mr. Raja-Shiraz Janjua, a practicing criminal and civil lawyer, stated, "Just last week, people asked me what is sexual harassment, and there is no information available for us as lawyers." Regarding the session, he added, "We gained very much from this opportunity; we have now a clear concept of harassment and what we can do."

CWS-P/A recognizes the importance of bringing issues such as sexual harassment to a platform in which various stakeholders can gain awareness and propose solutions. The joint efforts of various stakeholders including activists, NGOs, civil society, media, and government are the best ways to bring about change. Although passing of the amendments indicates a framework for change and stricter criminal ramifications, additional steps are required. At the conclusion of the sessions, emphasis was placed on the need to set accountability systems at various levels, remove fear so that women speak about incidents of sexual harassment, and change the general mindset to zero tolerance for sexual harassment.

### Child Rehabilitation Center in Bamyan Enters a New Phase *September*

On September 1, 2009, CRC-Bamyan entered a new, one-year phase. During the one-year period, a total of 100 children are expected to benefit from the program's activities which aim to improve education and life skills of children aged seven to thirteen years. The new CRC is located in Surkh Qool Village where a total of five hundred families live without access to schools. In the first half of September, CWS-P/A and its implementing partner, Cooperation Center for Afghanistan, conducted a survey of the area in order to identify children for the program. The entire region suffers the consequences of decades of war, drought, and famine; however, the selected children come from the families who experience the most significant social and economic problems.

On September 26, the CRC officially opened. The current curriculum consists of a variety of topics such as general information about Afghanistan, peace, health and hygiene, child rights, social cooperation, and environmental protection. Other issues addressed include the importance of sports recreation and a balanced and healthy diet.

During October, students of CRC-Bamyan were asked about their experiences. One eleven-year old student, Saber, shared, "Before being introduced to CRC, I was only playing in the streets with my friends and not studying at all. Also, I was not paying attention to health and hygiene issues. From being at CRC, I have learned how to behave with parents, teachers, elders, and classmates, how to keep my face, hands, and body clean, how to play in a good manner with friends, and the basics of reading and



writing. The CRC staff has good behavior with us. They give us tools for playing and prepare food for us." Saber thanked CWS-P/A for offering this initiative to him and shared his dreams of becoming a good governor in one of Afghanistan's provinces so that he can work for peace building.

CWS-P/A envisions that providing a comprehensive education and life skills development program to the children of Afghanistan will help secure the future. While Afghanistan continues to suffer from war and natural disasters, the pathway toward recovery and development is still possible. Working with children to overcome obstacles and face life's challenges is a method CWS-P/A believes will strengthen the nation's ability to regain progress lost by decades of destruction.

### Disaster Risk Reduction Initiative Advances in Afghanistan *November*

Throughout 2009, CWS-P/A as the focal point for the Global Network of Civil Society Organizations for Disaster Risk Reduction in Afghanistan has actively maintained ongoing discussions, workshops, and activities related to DRR. In collaboration with the Government of Afghanistan, UN, and other organizations, CWS-P/A has been working to form a national platform for DRR.

In Kabul, Afghanistan on November 15, 2009, a conference of twenty-four participants met in order to highlight issues concerning the official launching of the National DRR Platform. Confirming commitment to the platform and expressing the importance of avoiding future gaps in the implementation of disaster management projects occurred during the conference. Participants ensured consistent support and cooperation. Dr. Abdul Matin Adrak, General Director of Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority, thanked participating members and gave special acknowledgment to CWS-P/A for its facilitation and support to ANDMA.

The official launching event will take place on January 24, 2009. The National DRR Platform will aim to bring experience, expertise, and resources from various stakeholders to work toward a common goal, to create a safer and more resilient Afghanistan. CWS-P/A will continue its DRR initiatives in Afghanistan while actively engaging in the Platform, which will be headed by ANDMA.

## Improving Community Health through Hygiene Promotion *October-December*

Under the Water Quality Improvement and Promotion of Hygiene Project, CWS-P/A organized two separate series of hygiene promotion activities in Rawalakot, Pakistan.

Disaster Response Unit, Muslim Hands, Help in Need, Child Rights Commission, Jammu Kashmir Welfare Association, Dhamni Rural Support Program, Hajira, and Pallandri also strengthened the positive turnout for these activities. In particular, Help in Need donated more than 700 bars of soap for the hand washing demonstrations.



A second hygiene campaign took place from December 7-12, 2009. Despite the severely cold, winter weather, more than 3,000 community members from several villages attended the events. Students, teachers, and community members participated in the activities which promoted essential health and hygiene practices including safe water collection, safe excreta disposal, hand washing with soap, and environmental hygiene. The purpose of the hygiene week was to help communities prevent various diseases by addressing causes at the household level. In Banjosa Union Council, Rawalakot, three schools collaborated to create a display of placards and banners on hygiene related issues. According to local sources, this was the first time various villages collaborated to promote healthy lifestyles. Other participatory activities took place in three additional union councils; the activities included hygiene sessions in schools, story telling, cleaning campaigns, and drawing competitions.

Between October 8 and 22, 2009, the first hygiene campaign consisted of demonstrations, role plays, hygiene sessions, and distribution of information material to more than 5,000 community members. This two-week campaign overlapped with Global Hand Washing Day (October 15); events for this internationally recognized day included public displays of placards and banners designed by students on topics related to hygiene. Partnerships with local partners including

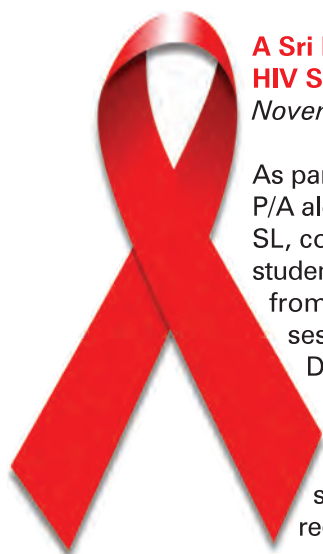
WAQIPH is being implemented in North West Frontier Province and Azad Jammu Kashmir by a consortium of organizations. The overall aim of the project is to minimize the risk of water and sanitation related diseases while contributing to the development of regions still recovering from the 2005 earthquake.

## A Sri Lankan Student Takes Action after HIV Session *November*

As part of its ongoing efforts in Sri Lanka, CWS-P/A along with its implementing partner, YMCA-SL, conducted an HIV awareness session for students in Trincomalee Province. Dr. Arul Kumar from the Government Hospital facilitated the session with assistance from Dr. Thevarajah. During the session, which was held on November 8, 2009, Dr. Kumar encouraged participants to establish health clubs at their respective colleges so that their fellow students could access accurate information regarding HIV and other health related topics.

The participating students enthusiastically listened to the information and suggestions. One student was extremely motivated and became the first to initiate a health club at his college.

Action taken by the participants demonstrates that CWS-P/A's outreach influences students to consider the causes, preventive measures, and impact of HIV. Addressing HIV through awareness sessions that include participatory activities such as poster competitions and group discussions helps students understand the importance of knowledge and sharing basic information with their peers. In its endeavors, CWS-P/A joins the global cause to reduce HIV prevalence.





### Overview of IDP Response Activities

December

Continuation of relief distribution and services to IDPs in Pakistan occurred from September to December alongside plans to move toward recovery initiatives in Swat. While IDPs from Swat began to return to their homes, a new influx of IDPs from Waziristan required emergency relief.

CWS-P/A balanced the needs of IDPs and was able to complete its distribution of food and non-food items to Swat IDPs. Thirteen thousand five hundred families benefited from food packages while an additional 4,800 families received essential non-food items including kitchen sets, blankets, hygiene kits, and mosquito nets. This is in addition to the distribution of 600 food packages and 229 shelter kits at the onset of the crisis.

IDPs from Waziristan, who for the most part took refuge with host communities in Dera Ismail Khan and Tank, received assistance despite security issues and delayed receipt of required permits for humanitarian organizations to enter the region. By the mid of December, CWS-P/A provided non-food items to 800 families in D. I. Khan. The next round of distribution will take place in January 2010, and WASH activities will also begin.



CWS-P/A's provision of health services in Mansehra, Abbottabad, and Swabi continued through December. More than 23,000 health consultations were provided to the IDPs since mobile health service began; services included diagnosis, free medicine, health awareness, pre and post natal care, and vaccinations. The health team also conducted more than 1,300 health education sessions for IDPs and host communities.

The organization also maintained its responsibility as the host of Sphere and HAP focal points in Pakistan. CWS-P/A's Sphere and HAP teams diligently conducted a series of workshops that enhanced the capacities of organizations responding to the crisis in terms of quality of assistance and accountability to beneficiaries.

As the year ended, CWS-P/A actively prepared for planned recovery activities in Swat. The comprehensive approach to rehabilitation includes health, education, livelihood, agriculture, WASH, and capacity building.

## Enhancing the Capacity of Partners through Long-term Intervention

December

For more than a decade, CWS-P/A's Capacity Building Program has provided training and technical support to hundreds of organizations. In the past year, CBP's program, Promoting Good Governance, initiated a transition from individual training to working in collaboration with partner organizations in order to further develop their capacities based on organizational needs.

For the first time, PGG is working with one of its partners, Action Aid Pakistan, in order to offer a series of workshops to enhance the organizational capacities of eleven of AAPK's partners in Sindh and Balochistan. CWS-P/A and AAPK will jointly decide on the topics for the workshops which will take place from December 2009 until December 2010 based on the needs identified for the eleven participating organizations.

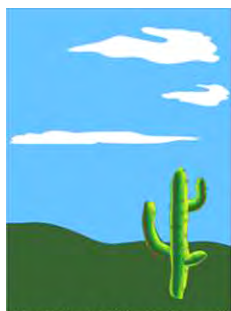
The first workshop, "Orientation to Organizational Development," took place from December 15-17, 2009 in Karachi. The aim of the workshop was to further develop the conceptual knowledge of the participants in terms of organizational development with a rights-based approach and to enable the participants to apply the knowledge in their work. The orientation session covered multiple aspects, but a few of the key topics included examining internal and external environments that affect the organization, experience sharing on how organizations cope with the challenges of a dynamic environment, the roles and



responsibilities of governance and management, and broadening perspectives on relationships with beneficiaries, government, donors, and other stakeholders.

Throughout 2010, the same eleven organizations will benefit from a series of workshops on topics such as human resource management, financial management, security management, and strategic planning. By providing a comprehensive training program to these organizations, CWS-P/A aims to strengthen not only the capacities of the participating organizations but also AAPK's resource for future activities and programs in targeted communities. By enhancing implementing partners' organizational development capacities, programmatic activities will be applied more effectively and efficiently, thus, leading to improved sustainability.

## Partner's Profile



A longing for the fullness of humanity

TAANGH WASAIB ORGANISATION (TWO) is a rights-based initiative of university and college teachers, students, social workers, and citizens aiming to promote communal harmony, gender equality, and respect for human rights. Established in 1998, TWO is an independent, not-for-profit NGO. The organization depends on its vast resource of 1,500 volunteers and partnerships with professional organizations and resource persons.

On partnership with CWS-P/A, Rubina Feroze Bhatti, TWO General Secretary, shares,

*"In 2008, on request of TWO, CWS-P/A conducted a need assessment of theater group for evaluating its performance and came up with recommendations that there are number of challenges in terms of leadership, image, structure, human resources and development, implementation, performance delivery, documentation mechanism, knowledge, skills in relation to theater group. Consequently, TWO in collaboration with CWS-P/A has initiated a long-term capacity building program of theater group for proper usage of theater as an advocacy tool in its work.*

*I am grateful to dedicated team of CWS-P/A who has been working hard and professionally with Taangh Theatre Group for its development. During this one year of partnership Taangh Theatre Group improved its skills especially in documentation and performance delivery. These efforts brought fruit and Taangh Theatre Group became the member of International Theatre Network "Theatre Without Borders".*

*For me, this joint venture of CWS-P/A and TTG is a huge learning and lot of fun as well."*

# Securing the future of Afghan Girls

■ *Written by Saadia Haq*

In countries such as **Pakistan** and **Afghanistan**, poor women are forced to rely more than men on **public services** because they do not have other **options**.



Girls and women from relatively poor households are more likely to remain uneducated and not receive proper medical attention because limited family funds are prioritized for men and boys. CWS-P/A recognizes the significance of addressing gender issues and equality; by designing projects catering to women's welfare, the organization simultaneously recognizes women's rights.

Due to an era of war and destruction, the majority of Afghan people have little or no access to basic rights including education and health; opportunities to rebuild lives and livelihoods are scarce. Currently, approximately 80% of the Afghan population cannot read or write, and the country's female literacy rate is between 9-18%, the lowest in the world. CWS-P/A's project, Enhancement in Enrolment of Girls and Quality of Education, Laghman, is a step toward realizing the education needs of Afghan girls. Supported by Presbyterian World Service and Development, CWS-P/A's project activities began in January 2009 in Laghman Province. The prior two decades of assistance in the area for rebuilding and restoring livelihoods strengthens the acceptability of the initiative by community members.

The project activities focus on Qarghayi, the largest district of Laghman. During the war, Qarghayi suffered heavy infrastructural damages; 40% of houses were completely destroyed, along with schools and health care facilities. In recent years, the region received a high influx of returnees who rely mainly upon agriculture. Government estimates

show that the population of children under fifteen years of age in Qarghayi is 32,500 out of which 13,200 are girls. Currently, only 4,200 girls attend school. Reasons vary but mostly include poverty, social taboos, long distances from schools, and lack of trained teachers.

CWS-P/A, through its implementing partner, Afghan Development Association, conducted an initial assessment of damaged schools for girls. Based on the assessment results, eleven schools were selected for repair and construction improvement. CWS-P/A and ADA also involved identified schools' management, administrative staff, and the Qarghayi Education Department.

The project strategy also involves advocating for girls' educational rights and supporting the local teachers through different awareness raising activities and capacity building opportunities. Over several months, 117 teachers from the eleven targeted schools received training on classroom methodology. The training emphasized interactive teaching and participatory techniques. Marzia, a 27-year old teacher with several years experience at the local girls' high school participated in a training held in July. Marzia shares, "This workshop was an eye opener; for years, I mainly used teacher centered methodology with my students. I used to observe that my students would only be physically present in the classroom, and I failed to get their attention and interest inside the classroom or during lessons. But now, I have learned how to involve them to get active participation during my lessons.





Something was missing earlier; my teaching was unable to grasp their attention or have some positive impact on their learning; it was affecting my motivation as a teacher." The training served its purpose of capacity building for trainees; Marzia regained her belief as a teacher and enthusiastically adds, "Making lesson plans is no longer a hardship since we learned that lesson planning can be both teacher-student focused. I no longer feel dispirited and confused. I have a better grasp over my teaching and have observed that my students show more interest during the classes. There are many eager faces, and it's a different sight to behold."

Between July and September, five health and hygiene sessions were also organized for the local communities, and a total of 21 teachers, 16 parents, and 67 female students participated in these sessions. The awareness sessions, held at the Mandrawar and Qarghayi girls' schools, focused on health topics including vaccination, prevention, and the treatment of contagious diseases. Special attention was also given to lethal, early childhood diseases and awareness on HIV and AIDS. Overall, the trainer focused both on sharing comprehensive knowledge and also how communities, particularly girls and women, can practically apply this new knowledge to improve their daily lives.

Living in the Afghan village of Tara Khel, located in the center of Qarghayi District, ten-year old Bushra attends a local school. Coming from a large family consisting of six members, Bushra's parents struggle to provide her education. The family is dependant on her father's meager income that is generated sporadically from teaching Holy Quran at the local mosque where he serves as a religious cleric.

Although Bushra is a very bright student, she faces many obstacles in her school life. She shares, "The condition of our school is really bad; we don't have a proper classroom or chairs to sit on. Our daily classes are on the ground, and dust not only ruins our clothes but also we fall sick

now and then. The complete building is damaged, and only higher class students sit in one classroom." Bushra dreams of becoming a doctor; however, this dream would not have been possible if CWS-P/A and ADA had not conducted a student needs survey in the targeted schools. She adds, "I am not able to get all my textbooks since there is no extra money to buy them. I had thought maybe the school administration will be able to help me buy those books, but they are also facing financial crisis and can't distribute books. When CWS-P/A came to our school and asked us about our needs, I was happy for when they asked me, I told them that I need seven more textbooks. They have noted my name down in their list. I hope to get my school books soon, and in this way, my father won't be burdened with more expenses; paying school fees is tough on him." Although Bushra's dream of becoming a doctor will take many more years, for now, her and numerous other girls stand to benefit from CWS-P/A's girls' education project.



Community involvement is essential for the project's success and for sustainability of improved girls' enrollment and education. Eleven Parent Teacher Committees have been established; thus far, 165 community members joined these initiatives. Parents and community elders were attracted through dialogue, awareness sessions, and the PTCs' home visits. Consequently, 863 new female students enrolled in the eleven targeted schools.

Dr. Abdul Wadood Zhman, CWS-P/A Project Officer, enthusiastically shares, "CWS-P/A has received immense support from both District Government Qarghayi and the local community, and I would say it's a stepping stone. By assisting in education opportunities for girls living in Laghman Province, we are securing the future of Afghanistan."

# Overcoming Challenges: Working in Remote Areas of Pakistan

■ *Written by Kelli Siddiqui*



Throughout Pakistan, rural and remote areas lack resources, trained professionals, and tools to improve social sector indicators on their own. Despite the widespread destruction caused by the 2005 earthquake, new opportunities arose because humanitarian organizations and the international community placed interest in rebuilding and improving the lives and livelihoods in the affected communities. More than four years after the earthquake, efforts continue.

Among various, ongoing initiatives related to rehabilitation of earthquake-affected areas, CWS-P/A's involvement in Allai Valley is notable despite limited attention given to this isolated region. Prior to the 2005 earthquake, social sector indicators for Allai Valley were some of the poorest in the North West Frontier Province. Political and physical isolation remains a leading cause for the lack of development in the area; with elevations reaching as high as 9,500 feet, the area comprises of more than two hundred villages of which some are more than four hours hike from the nearest jeep path. The majority of families survive on subsistence

agriculture and remittances from overseas or elsewhere in Pakistan. Literacy rates are only 10% for males and 3% for females; in such difficult to reach places, qualified teachers or other professionals rarely work. The earthquake destroyed 80% of schools and damaged the remaining 20%, thus, further impeding access to education. Similarly poor statistics exist for other social sectors, particularly health indicators. After the earthquake, unemployment rose from 4.4% to 24.2% which further decreased families' abilities to access the weak educational and health services.

Recognizing the importance of assisting and developing Allai Valley, CWS-P/A joined the Partnership for Rehabilitation and Development of Allai, a consortium aiming to increase access to quality education, improve water quality and sanitation practices, and enhance the local environment. CWS-P/A operates an ongoing awareness raising project that complements projects of other consortium members. The awareness raising initiatives include theater performances, participatory video making, puppet shows, and radio broadcasts that educate school-aged children and other community members on key social topics including education, water and sanitation, and the environment.

Halfway through the four-year project,<sup>2</sup> CWS-P/A along with its implementing partner conducted an impact assessment to determine to what extent the various methods were bringing about change within the targeted communities. The study considered children who had participated in the activities, community members, teachers, and implementing partners' staff. Through group discussions and in-depth interviews, the community provided valuable information to the assessment team. Released in May 2009, the results indicated preferences and children's retention of knowledge for the four main methods. All groups ranked the puppet shows as the most effective method for conveying messages on education, water and sanitation, and the environment. An overwhelming 90% of community members ranked puppet shows as excellent for children's learning; children, some who had attended events more than one year earlier, reenacted the characters and expressed interest in the shows' topics. Although not as strongly evident, the results for participatory video making indicated that 87% of community members ranked this activity as good and having a lasting impact on the children. Seventy-six percent of community members ranked interactive theater performances as good for children and community engagement. This slightly lower figure may result from a



lower number of participants in this activity being interviewed by the assessment team; only 7% of assessment participants had taken part in these performances. The least effective method was the radio broadcasts. Due to the terrain and interference, radio broadcasts actually only reached communities at the highest altitudes, thus, decreasing their effectiveness. As a result, radio broadcasts were removed from the project's activities.

Segregation practices caused security concerns during the first two years of the project. Female humanitarian workers and community members were not permitted to work in the area. This was a setback from the original intention of the project to improve access and knowledge for both men and women. Despite severe threats to women,

CWS-P/A and other partners persevered and worked for improving lives and livelihoods in Allai Valley while respecting the communities' demands. By offering the awareness activities for boys and male community members, the community gradually developed an understanding and appreciation for the positive changes these activities bring.

Despite these success rates in Allai Valley, one challenge remained after the impact assessment. An overall objective of PRDA is to improve access and knowledge for both men and women. However, despite the communities' willingness to allow humanitarian organizations to conduct such initiatives in the region, girls and women have not equally benefited from the advocacy program due to lack of permission to participate. Strict cultural practices of segregation prevent women and older girls from engaging in activities outside of their homes, including attending school. After more than two years of working within the communities, puppet shows are only available for primary school girls. CWS-P/A was able to overcome this challenge through dialogue as well as demonstrating respect for local, cultural practices.

In 2010, CWS-P/A will be able to offer opportunities to more women and girls in Allai Valley. Puppet shows, theater performances, and participatory video making activities will be held separately for girls after female teachers receive training on conducting these types of activities. This will allow girls above primary school age to participate in activities. Men, other than the performers, will not have access to these events, thus, preserving the cultural practice of segregation while contributing to raising awareness among the females in terms of education, water and sanitation, and environment. Positive results are expected to increase as girls transfer this knowledge to other women in their families. Habits such as hand washing will improve overall family health. Working with the rigid community will continue to pose many challenges for CWS-P/A and its partners; however, a chain of advancement, even if slow, has begun. Through girls' participation and emphasis placed on the importance of education for all, female access to education, health, and other social services will gradually begin to improve in Allai Valley. Although statistical changes will take years to appear, making these first steps is critical to the progress and development of this isolated region of Pakistan. CWS-P/A intends to continue working in Allai Valley after the PRDA project ends in order to address unmet needs in terms of further development of the region.

*The PRDA consortium partners are Save the Children, USA, Sungi Development Foundation, and CWS-P/A. CWS-P/A's implementing partner for the advocacy program is Interactive Resource Center.*

<sup>1</sup> EDO Education Batagram

<sup>2</sup> PRDA Needs Assessment, March-April 2006

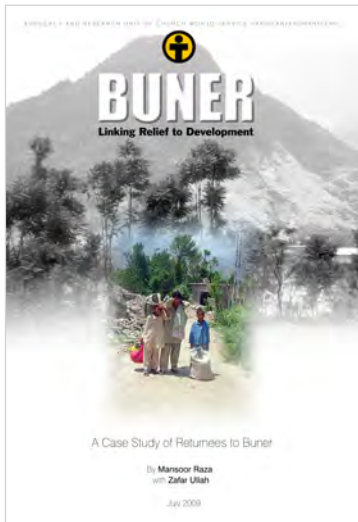
## Suggested Reading

### “Buner: Linking Relief to Development”

Researched and written by Mansoor Raza with Zafar Ullah for CWS-P/A, this report analyzes the socio-economic and political situation for IDPs returning to Buner. By considering the pre-conflict structure and the current needs of returnees, effective rehabilitation and development can occur. The report not only considers general facts and statistics but also on-ground observations and personal accounts of IDPs, government officials, and aid workers.

As the focus on IDPs transitions from relief to recovery, this report provides insight into how to effectively plan assistance that will benefit the rehabilitation, development, and advancement of the lives and livelihoods of the residents of Buner. It also provides general knowledge of the region which can help understand the nature, practices, and expectations of the people.

*This report is available in PDF on CWS-P/A's website.*



## CWS-P/A's Mission Statement

CWS-P/A as an ecumenical organization will struggle for a community based on social justice, regardless of class, religion, gender, and culture by assisting marginalized communities to achieve economic prosperity and improve human and social capital through participatory endeavor, which liberates people and enhances their capacities to take control of their lives.

## HOT Topic

### Nutrition Security

Food insecurity threatens Pakistan and Afghanistan; however, less recognized yet as important is the danger caused by nutrition insecurity. Food insecurity is usually measured in terms of caloric intake whereas nutrition security accounts for access to mineral nutrients and adequate healthcare. The importance of addressing nutrition security in conjunction with food security is essential for improving lives. Nutrition security is important at any age but particularly essential for children and pregnant women.

According to reports, 41% of South Asian children under the age of five are malnourished.<sup>1</sup> Regions affected by conflict and disaster over extended periods of time experience negative effects from decreased access to adequate healthcare and an increase in food insecurity. Both Pakistan and Afghanistan face high levels of food and nutrition insecurity. Nearly seventy-seven million Pakistanis, nearly half the population, are food insecure.<sup>2</sup> Half of child deaths in Pakistan can be attributed to poor nutrition.<sup>3</sup> In Afghanistan, war, drought, loss of livestock, and high food prices cause widespread food and nutrition insecurity. Malnutrition and food insecurity affect 8.4 million Afghans.<sup>4</sup> More than half of Afghanistan's children under the age of five do not receive adequate nutrition.<sup>5</sup>

Nutrition security not only ensures the opportunity for improved physical and mental health but also increased abilities in terms of productivity, capacity, and development. Pakistan and Afghanistan will advance economically and socially when issues such as nutrition insecurity are addressed.

CWS-P/A recognizes the need for improved food and nutrition security in both countries. The organization's comprehensive food security initiatives promote a well-balanced diet and proper health and hygiene care through awareness on such issues as well as distribution and training for kitchen gardens. Initiatives that target youth also incorporate the importance of proper healthcare and nutrition. In Afghanistan, CWS-P/A's Child Rehabilitation Centers provide nutritious lunches for all participating children in an attempt to promote and improve their health. Health programs in both countries also work toward proper mother and child care including pre and post natal nutrients and vitamin intake as well as timely vaccinations. The dangers of nutrition insecurity increase during emergencies. CWS-P/A's emergency response plans include provision of appropriate healthcare services with emphasis on mother and child care; additionally, food packages meet international standards which at least meet daily caloric intake needs.

- <sup>1</sup> Hunger Pains: Pakistan's Food Insecurity, June 2009
- <sup>2</sup> World Food Programme, 2008
- <sup>3</sup> UNICEF, 2008
- <sup>4</sup> RUSI, October 2008
- <sup>5</sup> FAO, 2006

“Let us not look back in anger or forward in fear but around in awareness.”

*James Thurber  
(1894 - 1961)*

Words  
of  
Wisdom