

Note for Record:

Subject: Sukkur - BoD Meeting and Field Visit June 30-July 1, 2012

1. SRSO Board of Director (BoD) meeting held on June 30, 2012 among other things, discussed the crucial issue regarding our strategy in the context of “Conflict with RSPN and USAID”, due to alleged mismanagement in USAID/RSPN sponsored SARP project, implemented by SRSO in the year 2010-11.
2. In the BoD meeting, all but Government nominees were not present, including ACS (D) and Secretary Finance. They even did not attend the last emergent BoD meeting, held at Karachi on June 2, 2012. Even their representatives were not present in the meeting. This attitude is not understandable because SRSO is a GoS sponsored organization, the senior functionaries of GoS should have participated in the important decision making proceedings. However it was encouraging that Project Coordinator (Ms Shireen) and Secretary Investment Ms Naheed Shah actively participated in both the meetings and shared the responsibility. The BOD unanimously decided to put SRSO view point before USAID through their Advocates (M/s Fazl e Ghani Advocates Karachi and M/s Liz and Todde Washington.) Budget 2012-13 and the routine items including PPHI implementation and issues were dealt by the BoD.
3. SECOND DAY in the morning, we visited under construction “SRSO Complex” on Shikarpur Road. The progress was up to the target, however due to change in the design for foundation of additional floor and construction of the basement, some quantities have changed which have resulted cost escalation. The project management was asked to do proper networking of all activities so that the building with fixtures is completed by April-May 2013 and we can shift the offices by June 2013. The SRSO management was told to make all arrangements for shifting from rented premises by June next year because no office rent would be provided in the Budget 2013-14 for offices located in Sukkur. The issues w.r.t. Sindh Building Control Authority (SBCA) would be referred to Ms Shireen Narejo to discuss and sort out at Karachi with Competent Authority.
4. From Sukkur, we proceeded to attend “LSO Convention” arranged at village Dahar, UC Sewan, Taluka Lakhi, District Shikarpur. SRSO management, Members BoD and Mukhtiarkar Lakhi (Mr. Jabbar Memon) participated.
5. About 20 LSOs representatives made their presentations highlighting their achievements and future plans. One of the most important thing noted this time was their (LSOs) interventions in the conflict areas and their efforts to settle the local disputes (tribal feuds). MER people (SRSO) have been asked to highlight such achievements through case studies.
6. As informed and also confirmed by the management that CIF is being properly utilized, managed and circulated and in some cases it was 3rd cycle of the circulation. A few educated presenters talked about Poverty Score Card and change of score upward of many beneficiaries. Since PSC has been introduced recently for CIF, a proper survey would be under taken once, three cycles are completed.

7. In the earlier presentation at SRSO HQs, it was informed that around Rs one billion has been distributed as CIF and IGG and the number of beneficiaries of household is around one lac in a way one million poor people are being benefitted just in two years' time, which by itself is a big achievement for SRSO and GoS. Our pioneer MR. SHOAB SULTAN KHAN (SSK) must feel proud of this achievement.
8. It was heartening to learn that LSOs are now working as an institution and meeting Government functionaries in delegation for provision of Health and Education facilities and provision of small infrastructure schemes. It is observed that now public pressure coming up from far flung rural areas for their basic rights.
9. It was noted that our LSOs are facing two major of problems. One, their "Registration" (with Sindh Social Welfare Department or any other institution), secondly opening of their accounts with Banks. In this connection, Director BoD Mrs Shireen will take up the issue with Secretary of the concerned department in GoS. The problem of opening any new account is bit difficult one because certain regulations recently introduced by SBP especially wrt to Associations (NGOs) require verification of the Body, photographs of the office bearers, NIC and confirmation by NADRA. For village women, it appears to be difficult to meet such conditions. However, SRSO Head Office has been directed to sort out issue with Banks. In case if such restrictions are not applicable to Microfinance Banks then MFBs should be approached.
10. On return from field, members took visit of the "Animal Farm" operating in "Bhains Colony" Sukkur. It was observed that due to extreme hot weather and "overcrowding" in a two yards the animals were not comfortable. It was also informed that the mortality has increased (7-8 animals died in past one week). In charge of the project, Mr. Zulfiqar Narejo has been asked to explain the position and suggest remedies to avoid such incidents in the future.
11. A short meeting was also held with Director and Registrar IBA Sukkur, where upon future cooperation areas between SRSO and IBA were discussed.
12. The BoD meeting, field visit/inspection was quite fruitful. I am obliged to the BoD members for participation and SRSO management for the arrangements.

(Fazalullah Qureshi)
Vice Chairman – BoD
Islamabad
Dated: 4th July, 2012