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Insaf network pakistan

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Joint Network Meetings

Dastageer Legal Aid Center, Muzaffargarh, SYCOP

#### Introduction and Background

Under “Access to Justice for Vulnerable Populations” project, Dastageer Legal Aid Center (DLAC) has been established in District Muzaffargarh through the organization “SYCOP”, since February, 2014.

The stakeholders of the project include Rights-Based Organizations including NGOs/ CBOs, Judiciary, Bar, Law-enforcing agencies like police, government line departments including Social Welfare, Education and Health etc.

In order to apprise these departments about the project Joint Networking Meetings of INP in collaboration with DLAC has been planned in the district. The purpose of these meetings is to promote and support developing partnerships and expanding networks among Legal Aid Centers, NGOs, and government line ministries to improve the environment in which legal aid centers operate. District-level local government representatives will also be invited to these meetings to further promote information-sharing, collaboration, and government buy-in. The basic idea is to have collaboration and coordination with Rights based NGOs specifically working on Minorities, Persons with Disabilities and Survivor of GBVs and establishing networking with Justice Institutions for stronger referral mechanism.

#### First Joint Network Meeting (Oct-Dec 2014)

In the quarter Oct-Dec 2014 a preliminary meeting was conducted with major stakeholders by visiting their offices in Muzaffargarh district. The stakeholders were identified through Referral Directory of the district which included; President and Members of District Bar Association, Social Welfare Department, Rights based NGOs/local CBOs etc. The meeting was arranged by DLAC Sanjog and included team from INP, Center Coordinator and Counselor. Following agenda points were discussed:

* Information about Access to Justice Project
* Facilities provided through DLACs and progress till date
* Role of stakeholders during the project
* Support of stakeholder for DLACs
* Sharing information for next meeting that will be a joint meeting at DLAC office

or other venue

#### Rights Based Organizations (RBOs)

1. **World Vision**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

1. Aurangzeb Khan, Area Development Manager, Punjab
2. Tariq, Project Manager
3. Tanzeela Altaf, Project Coordinator

World Vision is an international organization whose work has one main goal; the sustained well-being of children, especially the most vulnerable. Currently the organization is working through multi-sectoral approach of Development (transforming communities), Relief (responding to disasters especially earthquake afflicted areas and flood emergencies in Muzaffargarh) and Advocacy (seeking global change through empowering communities to know and speak for their rights at local, national and international levels). The team of World Vision was explained about the Access to Justice Project, its scope and the workings of legal aid center. The organization’s team appreciated the efforts to improve the access of vulnerable people towards channels of justice. On discussing the forums available in the district, it was pointed that District Vigilance Committee is currently inactive, therefore the government departments cannot get an update from the various NGOs/ CBOs working in the area. The organization assured of its complete support towards DLAC and SYCOP implementing it in the district.

1. **Shani She Male organization**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

1. Shahana Abbas Shani

An organization working for the protection of rights of transgender in Muzaffargarh, registered in 2011, is a part of “Ittehad Barae Haqooq-e-Khawaja Sira in Pakistan”. The organization shared some its achievements being an organized under a larger group:

* CNICs by NADRA with specification as “Transgender Male”, “Transgender Female” or “Khunsa-e-mushkil
* Capacity development trainings of transgenders on vocational skills
* Advocacy meetings, awareness seminars etc.,

A copy of newsletter was also shared whereby news across the globe has also been shared.

The focal person of the organization related that the transgender are denied police protection, employment opportunities, their due share in inheritance and access to health care and justice system. They were assured of legal assistance and aid through DLAC Muzaffargarh.

**MOJAZ Foundation**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

* 1. Rana Zahoor-ul-Hassan, Livelihood Coordinator

The vision of Mojaz Foundation is to promote socio-economic empowerment through inclusive right based approach. The major work includes agriculture, livelihood, microfinance, women empowerment, humanitarian response especially during emergencies and disasters and working with persons with disabilities. Currently in District Muzaffargarh, Mojaz aims at mainstreaming people with special needs through provision of assistive devices and enterprise development training for their economic development besides initiating several activities and engagement with the district government to ensure inclusion and accessibility of PWD. The organization was forthcoming in its collaboration on work with PWDs where a strong referral mechanism may co-exist between Mojaz and Dastageer Legal Aid Center.

**Idara Falah O Bahbood (IFB)**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

1. Fayaz Ahmad Khan

An organization registered in 2002 working for peace and development of the society at large, is creating awareness about basic human rights and duties. The organization is mainly focused on women, children and youth. The work on children includes; Child rights, educational rights, protection and sports activities. The organization has also established elementary level school for children and works on mother and child healthcare. The organization has showed willingness to coordinate and collaborate with DLAC and has assured of its complete support in this regard.

1. **Madni Women Development Organization (MINDO)**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

1. Rani Waheeda Malik

MINDO, a women concern network has been working in the district Muzaffargarh since 2003, with personal dedication of its founder, Rani Waheeda Malik. The organization’s focus is violence against women, provision of free legal support etc. After 2009 when the women councilors were no longer active, the organization through its forum and Women Concern Network (WCN) project, outreached to women, whether teachers, lawyers, doctors and housewives. Recently the local schools were visited where the problems of school teachers were discussed and then MINDO took these issues to the highest forum including local MPAs. She narrated recent cases of a rape of 70 years old woman and physical abuse of 19 years old married girl by her in-laws. The Chairperson of the organization assured DLAC of its support and mutual cooperation as she will be referring cases to the center for legal aid.

1. **District Coordination Council (DCC) of NGOs**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

1. Rashid Ahmad Khan Sherwani, Chairman DCC
2. Hafiz Akbar Naqash, Chairman AFS

District Coordination Council of NGOs is an association/ Council that oversees the work of various NGOs of the district Muzaffargarh taking measures to advise and strengthen them. Both the focal persons have a long-term association, experience and expertise of social work in Muzaffargarh and therefore are part of every NGO meeting providing advice and guidance.

#### Government Institutions

1. **Social Welfare Department**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

1. Khalid Ahmad, DO
2. Chaudhry Azhar Yousaf, DDO
3. Chaudhry Saleem, Sanatzar Manager

The officers were debriefed about the project and a short written progress (single page) on DLAC activities and the provision of legal aid. DO and DDO, Social Welfare already have affiliation with the activities of the organization SYCOP and have attended awareness seminar of DLAC. The officer assured their full cooperation in the providing support for the center. A visit of Sanatzar was also provided, whereby there were classes of all the vocational training courses were in-progress including stitching, cooking and computer courses.

1. **District Public Prosecutor**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

1. Rana Samar, District Public Prosecutor

According to DPP, Rana Samar, role of prosecution department is very important and in most of the cases the department conducts the trial as well. If the victim is poor, then, the department is even involved in getting FIR registered and getting investigation done.

1. **Senior Civil & family Judge**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

* 1. Jamshed Anwar, Civil & Family Judge

The Senior Civil & Family Judge was debriefed about the project and progress of DLAC. The issue of activation of District Legal Empowerment Committee (DLEC) under Law & Justice Commission was discussed whereby the District & Session Judge is the Chairman of the committee. He was appreciative of the project and showed an interest in the website, noting its address with a confirmation to visit it later-on.

1. **District Bar**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

1. Rao Asif, Secretary Bar
2. Sardar Manzoor Khan, Senior Advocate

The Secretary Bar showed an interest in the project and its cause to help the poor and the marginalized group. He gave his assurance to support DLAC at all levels.

1. **Law Enforcing Agency**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

1. Rai Zamir-ul-Haq, DPO

The meeting with the District Police Officer was brief as he is a busy person. However he had been in the seminar of DLAC through PILER and a poster of the center was also pasted in and around the office premises of DPO.

While appreciating the project, he assured of his full support.

1. **Women Protection Center**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

1. Abida Rehman, Superintendent

Women protection centers established in various districts of Punjab are being looked after by Director Planning. The centers have a panel of 10 lawyers appointed by the President Bar Council to facilitate the women of the center in legal proceedings. The center has a psychologist and a female doctor who visit the center. There is an advisory committee consisting of 10 members; DPO, MS DHQ, President Bar, Wife of DCO, 2 NGOs, 2 Mill-owners. Security is provided including CCTV cameras that are functional. There are budgetary problems including Rs. 100/person/ day (for all 3 meals) and Rs. 10, 000/ year for purchasing clothes for the women staying over there.

Recently the center staff have had their capacity built in terms of development of standard operating procedures, trainings in managing center etc. A locked complaint box is placed inside the center where the women can put in their complaints and the DO has the keys to open it. Mumkin Alliance, SPO and Aurat Foundation have facilitated the center in either the capacity building or provision of equipment etc.