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Insaf network pakistan

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Joint Network Meetings

Dastageer Legal Aid Center, Khanewal, EHD

#### Introduction and Background

Under “Access to Justice for Vulnerable Populations” project, Dastageer Legal Aid Center (DLAC) has been established in District Khanewal through the organization “EHD”, 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 Lahore 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. **WWF (World Wildlife Fund)**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

1. Dr. Mohammad Haseeb
2. Rafaqat Hussain, Crop Management
3. Afshan Safir, Crop Management
4. Wasim, Technical Recommendations for Renewable Energy
5. Mohammad Qasim
6. Mohammad Zeeshan (Admin & Finance)

A project “Green skills for Rural Development is being implemented by WWF through funding provided by GIZ. The major focus is on capacity building of rural youth to work as a change agents in the field of sustainable crop production, livestock management and renewable energy. The change agents will in turn train on the same aspects. This will lead to at least 30 per cent reduction in input costs such as reduced use of chemical fertilizer, pesticides and irrigation water for crop production.

1. **Pakistan Lions Youth Council (PLYC)**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

1. Dr. Qaiser Javied
2. Zahid Bashir

Pakistan Lions Youth Council (PLYC) is a non-governmental organization that is dedicated to the mission of promoting youth development, the welfare of women and human rights.

The organization is currently part of project “Right of Expression, Association, Assembly and Thought”, working on religious freedom. PLYC is also the support organization of DLAC Khanewal, therefore a strong referral mechanism exist between the two.

1. **Sada-e-Umeed (Call for Hope)**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

* 1. Amir Younis, Executive Secretary/ Focal Person DLAC

**Sada-e-Umeed** (call of hope) is a center for children with disabilities in Khanewal, a Christian colony founded in 1970. The organization runs a primary school and three centers for handicapped children in the Punjab province. The primary school was formed for special children, dropouts, overage youths and slow learners. The organization is currently facing lack of funds, hence only one center is operational. In physical rehabilitation, the organization involves the women of the families (mothers) and their moto is “special child with special needs”. The organization’s center has equipment for physiotherapy as well. Sada-e-Umeed is also support organization of DLAC, therefore linkage among the two is strong.

#### Government Institutions

1. **Women Protection Center**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

1. Fauzia Barkat Hashmi, Superintendent

The capacity of current Women Protection Center is for 20 people and there are 4 residential rooms. 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. Aurat foundation, Shirkat Gah, PRSP and MDM have supported the centers in capacity building and development of standard operating procedures, trainings in managing center etc

1. **District Bar Association**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

1. Mohammad Yousaf Kharal, President

The President Bar was briefed about the project and given an update on DLAC activities. He was very cooperative and progressive towards the DLAC and access to justice project team. On the subject of District Legal Empowerment Committee, Khanewal the President Bar informed that it is activated and in working order. A notification issued by the District and Sessions Judge, Khanewal, dated 23/11/ 2012 was shown whereby the list of Committee members was given. He further informed that the committee was providing legal aid to cases referred by the Jail Management. Discussing the Free Legal Aid Rules, he said the main issue is with the implementation.

He further informed that at present >600 lawyers are registered with the Bar, including 35 female lawyers. However only 5 of the female lawyers are currently actively practicing.

During the meeting panel lawyers, Qazi Iftikhar Ahmad and Sajid Mehmood were also present.

1. **Social Welfare Department**

The meeting was convened with the following personnel:

* 1. Ghazi Tahir, Assistant Welfare Officer

The officer was very well informed about the persons with disability

#### Future Recommended Actions: