

EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF



CONDUCTED BY:

SuRF
SUSTAINABLE
RESOURCE
FOUNDATION

ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN

MSI MANAGEMENT
SYSTEMS
INTERNATIONAL

WASHINGTON, D.C. USA



**Health
Communication
Resources**

PERTH, AUSTRALIA

ACKNOWLEDGMENT



We would like to take this opportunity to immensely thank the TVO Board of Governors, and the Chairperson, TVO Board, Mr. Muhammad Azam Khan for their kind help and guidance. Benign intelligence of TVO Vice Chairperson, Prof. Khawaja Masud, his decades of experience, mentor-like qualities available even remotely and his sense of the objective reality gave us the boost to work harder during evaluation.

At TVO management level, we are indebted to Mr. Iqbal Jafar, the TVO Chief Executive without whose pioneering efforts and professional interest this evaluation would just not happen. Mr. Jafar's poignant obsession with truth-seeking and objectivity, personal integrity and utter regard for fairplay, and his appreciation of evaluation as a programme support tool are some of the factors that have proved very encouraging.

Mr. Farooq Khan, the TVO Deputy Chief Executive was always there for us in difficult times. His competence, pleasant nature and his ever-readiness to help us solve any problem assured us about TVO's seriousness with evaluation. His training, experience and background in monitoring and evaluation were great resources.

Ms. Nazia Seher and Raza-ul-Haq, Programme Coordinator and Manager, M&E provided us with all possible help and information about their respective departments. Mr. Arif Javed, and Mr. Abdullah Saeed of Finance and Administration spared no effort to facilitate our work. Ms. Fozia Shoaib and Ms. Misbah Naz were quick to react to any request. All TVO field officers were a joy to work with and a treasure to cherish.

We are thankful to community for being what they are; responsive, proactive and always a formidable ally.

We would like to express our appreciation for the European Community (EC) for their interest and help in evaluation. Special thanks go to Ms. Madeline Wright for extending us help in understanding Rural Social Development Programme (RSDP), and its relationship with TVO as a major RSDP ally.

We are especially obliged to MSI, Washington, DC for sending Ms. Jennifer Ulman to Pakistan, and to HCR, Perth, Australia for making Dr. Ross James available to us online for evaluation. Both the firms and their representatives provided us the opportunity to work through various areas of evaluation resulting in synergy and mutual reinforcement.

Sustainable Resource Foundation (SuRF), Islamabad, Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION

TVO is a national support agency providing financial and technical assistance to NGOs/CBOs in Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan, and the United States of America, established TVO as an indigenous grant making organization under the Special Development Fund (SDF) agreement signed on February 26, 1990. The SDF was set up to tap the potential of NGOs in the development process and develop a mechanism for strengthening the contribution of NGOs towards a broader goal of improving the quality of life of the neglected segments of the Pakistani population. Under this agreement, the US Government provided an endowment fund of Rs. 520 million. TVO became fully operational in 1992 with skeletal staff at its Islamabad Head Office, and soon after started providing financial support to NGOs for developing and strengthening their capacity to deliver services to the poor.

In 1993, TVO established three Regional Offices at Multan, Hyderabad and Quetta. However, outreach of project funding remained limited to a few well-established NGOs in these regions. Therefore, in accordance with TVO's mandate to reach out to the CBOs of remote and less privileged areas, the policy was revised accordingly. During 1995 TVO expanded its outreach by opening up 9 more Regional Offices. Again in 1998, when EC signed an agreement with the TVO to support five years Rural Social Development Program (RSDP), eight more Regional Offices were added. Since its inception, TVO has grown into a very large organization operating with 20 Regional Offices nationwide and a staff of over 130 persons. Meantime, the TVO's capacity and pace of funding to the NGOs has increased significantly. To-date, TVO has been able to provide funding for over 800 projects with a disbursement of over Rs. 750 million benefitting over 5 million people nationwide.

The TVO policy and organizational structure has undergone various changes as the objective realities demanded, and as per need of the time. Initially TVO began funding large NGO whereas now it particularly provides support, with its expanded outreach to grassroots organizations located in remote and neglected areas. It has also created a network of over 350 CBOs; one in each rural and semi urban tehsil of Pakistan for promoting socio-economic development and disseminating relevant information at the grassroots level.

Program Focus

TVO provides financial support for NGO projects in the following programme areas:

1. Primary Education
2. Primary Healthcare
3. Poverty Alleviation
4. Rehabilitation of the Disabled

Capacity building of NGOs is also undertaken by the TVO. This capacity building raises the level of expertise within the NGOs/CBOs to manage and deliver their services to the community in a more efficient and organized manner.

OBJECTIVES OF EVALUATION

Over the past 12 years, TVO has grown into a very large organization with an expanded network of 20 Regional offices and more than 350 CBOs nationwide. Over a period of 10 years TVO has supported over 800 projects with a significant amount of disbursements, and large beneficiary base. It has also contributed towards capacity building of NGOs.

The objectives of this evaluation are:

1. To assess the performance of the programme since its inception or for a cut-off period that is representative. This is to be mutually agreed between TVO and the consultants (keeping this view TVO and the consultants decided that the investigation period should range from July, 1999 to June 30, 2003).
2. To focus on assessment of the way in which the multi-sectoral projects have been implemented and the outcome that has been achieved.
3. To identify lessons learnt and document best practices from the supported projects and give recommendations to the TVO management for improving its grant making process and policy in line with its mandate.
4. To assess the effects of the TVO programme funding on the growth of NGO sector in the country.
5. To assess the efforts of the NGOs to sustain the projects after TVO funding comes to an end.
6. To assess the role of the TVO in strengthening NGOs capacity to implement projects.

During the evaluation, the consultants will take into account:

1. Assessment of outcomes that may have happened at the household level of beneficiaries; similarly at user level in service provision outlets.
2. Evaluation of issues pertaining to the relevance, performance and success of TVO.
3. Progress towards overall mandate/ goal, objectives, mission of the organization.
4. Some assessment of the success and benefit of regional offices, including performance, outreach, among others.
5. Interviews with key stakeholders and TVO partners including donors.
6. Grant effectiveness in terms of small projects versus larger projects, mid-level NGOs versus smaller NGOs and CBOs, sectoral effectiveness regarding community, household and capacity of the implementing organization
7. Recommendations for enhancing organizational performance and success and addressing challenges encountered.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology was a combination of quantitative and qualitative research techniques. This combination gave us the opportunity to utilize special investigation instruments like key informants' interviews (KIIs), individual in-depth interviews (IDIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and a variety of public consultations.

The methodology had various operational steps:

1. Literature Review

The team conducted literature review by critically examining the organization's project documents, its charter, periodic evaluation reports, internal and external evaluation reports, and other documents that seemed relevant during the review. The consultants who conducted this review had relevant expertise.

This review provided us with a basic but necessary background, and helped the team progress to later steps in research.

2. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

The team initiated a string of interviews with the TVO's decision-makers, Rural Social Development Program (RSDP) coordinator, a few members of the TVO Board and donor community representatives. These interviews helped the consultants enrich themselves with both institutional and individual memory that proved helpful in seeing some issues in clarity. The KIIs equipped the team also with information that is usually not found in records.

3. Sample Frame

The consultants and TVO decided that a four year period was sufficiently representative to warrant an objective evaluation. Thus the 4-year period between July 1, 1999 and June 30, 2003 was chosen as the time-frame for evaluation.

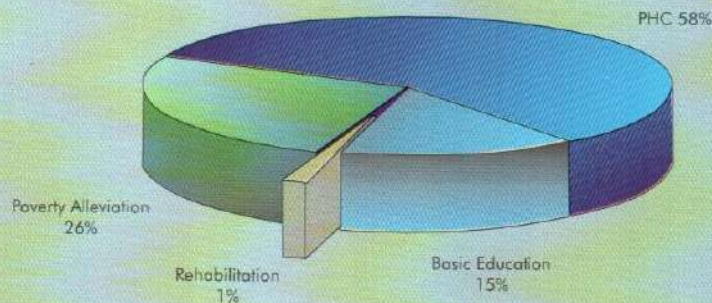
The total number of NGOs/CBOs that received assistance during this period was 601.

Sampling was a two-stage affair; firstly purposive and then random. Purposive sampling was to ensure that all four focused areas (PHC), Basic Education, Poverty Alleviation and Rehabilitation of the Disabled (RHD) came up for evaluation, and also to ensure that all geographical areas were covered. A 10 per cent computerized, and thrice-drawn random sample churned out a number of 68 organizations.



METHODOLOGY.....contd

Sample Distribution by Sector



4. Training and Orientation of Field Staff

The consultants' core team provided necessary orientation, briefing and training necessary for conducting focused field inquiries. Training and orientation sessions were conducted in Islamabad and the provincial capitals.

5. Development and Pretesting of Questionnaires

The consultants designed interview questionnaires and the focus group discussion guides. These questionnaires and guides were field-tested in order to check cultural appropriateness, understanding of language, duration taken to complete one questionnaire and the technical aspects like the nature of questions (open ended versus closed questions, leading questions, among others).

The changes that cropped up during the pretests were incorporated into the questionnaires and guides before the field teams used the guides.

6. Data Collection and Analysis

The investigators in the field conducted interviews, focus group discussions and public consultations. The TVO field staff kept themselves confined only to providing logistic support and were never involved in any data collection exercise in the field. Soon after the data was collected, it was despatched to Islamabad for immediate data entry. Analysis of the data began once all data has been collected, entered and cleaned by the experts. Since data catered both to quantitative and qualitative forms, the analysts made use of computer software like SPSS (version 11) for quantitative analysis, and Ethnograph, in addition to manual analysis, for qualitative research.

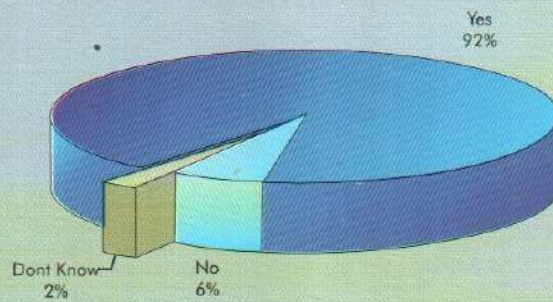
7. Report Writing

Two reports were to be produced after analysis; one for the dissemination seminar, and another more comprehensive copy with all annexes. While the first one has been produced, the other will be ready in a week.

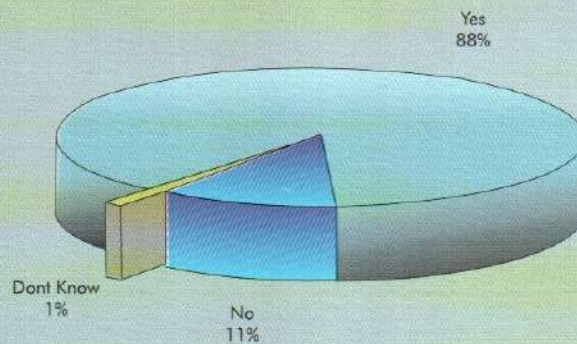
MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

.....beginning with the graphs below

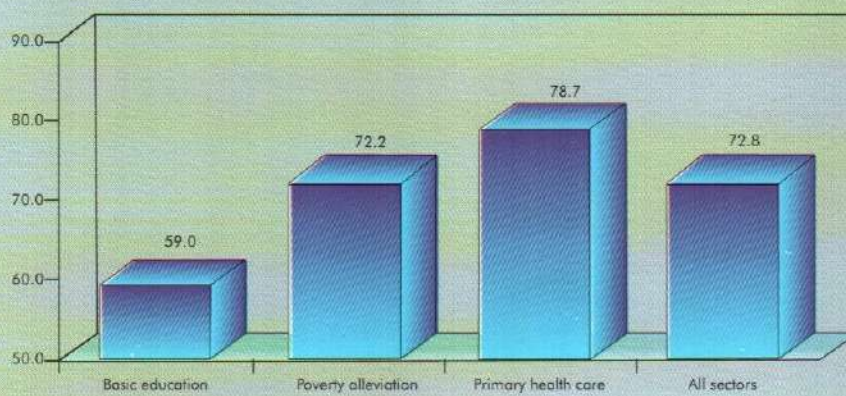
Community Participation



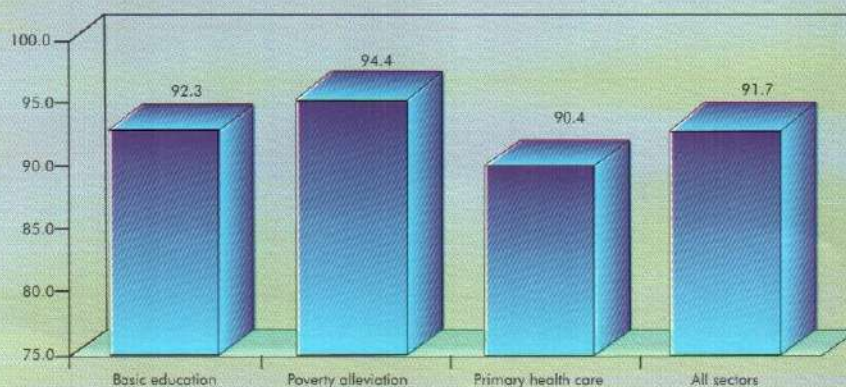
Programme Addressing the Needs



Project Sustainable by Sector



Community Participation by Sector





PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

Out of 601 projects, 382 belonged to Primary Health Care sector, which also incorporates Water & Sanitation projects. Approximately 10% or 38 projects underwent an evaluation by external national and international consultants. From this sample, it can be said that PHC projects are on the whole, highly successful in accomplishing their objectives and completing the tasks outlined in their initial proposals to TVO.

Issue: Length of Programs

1. From the sample taken, most PHC Centers are funded for a one-year period, with a few running for 1.5 years.
2. It takes a minimum of 3 months, and usually around 6 months to get the clinic up and running (i.e. renovations of building, hiring staff, gathering equipment and supplies).
3. On average, clinics only have approximately 6-9 months to implement their program and build their rapport within the community.
4. NGO does not have enough time to create awareness in the community in order to increase the number of patients.
5. NGO staff feel that they do not have enough time to "prove themselves" to TVO before their grant is finished.

Conclusions:

Grantees need more time to establish a rapport in the community in order to increase the number of patients attended at the clinic. NGO only has approximately six months to build awareness, gain community involvement and acquire specific numbers of patients as outlined in their individual work-plans. Due to the lack of transportation and minimal number of NGO workers, it is difficult to travel throughout the community, which is sometimes up to 40 kilometers from the clinic site, to alert population of their health services.

Recommendations:

TVO should consider allowing a 3 to 6-month period for the NGO to "set-up shop" in addition to the one year of funding. If more time is given to build the rapport of the NGO within the community, then the grantee will have a fair amount of time to provide a strong case for additional funding once their one year+ funding comes to an end.

Issue: Promoting the Sustainability of PHC Clinics in Rural Villages

1. Many of the TVO-funded health clinics close following their one-year of funding.
2. NGO leadership often not delegating responsibility to other staff members.
3. There is already one NGO currently funded by TVO who is providing training for the future sustainability of rural CBO/NGOs.

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

Conclusions:

Sustaining an organization through independent funding and the community is a difficult task. Many NGOs get into the habit of relying on other sources for funding and do not pay particular attention to how they might sustain themselves for long-term success. It is also quite difficult for rural NGOs in poverty stricken areas to become more future-oriented in their thinking process when the community is often concerned about their daily survival.

Furthermore, although the NGO incorporated a means of creating sustainability in their proposal, it is often the case that specific actions for sustainability of projects are not thought about until after the project is up and running.

Recommendations:

As noted in the "Overall Recommendations section of this report, The Health & Nutrition Development Society (HANDS) is an NGO who has been awarded a 3-year contract by TVO to train community leaders in health relation issues, project management and advocacy. It is recommended that HANDS, with the assistance of TVO regional officers, be utilized to provide training in each region of the country for 1-2 members of each CBO.

Issue: **Continuous Monitoring of Projects**

1. NGOs do not have an adequate system for continued monitoring of projects.
2. TVO has not provided training to NGOs on "how to" monitor projects.
3. TVO does not have a monitoring system in place for their NGOs currently.

Conclusions:

Although TVO has a strong evaluation section that conducts quarterly evaluations, the concept of on-going monitoring is lacking. Time has not yet been taken to provide on-going (weekly, monthly) monitoring of projects. Perhaps it is an assumption that NGOs should be able to monitor their own projects without TVO assistance. However, it was learned during this evaluation that NGO managers and leaders lack the knowledge and skills on how to include such monitoring into their programs.

Recommendations:

TVO could make monitoring a required component of the proposal. However, proposal reviewers would need to be sure that the monitoring process suggested by the NGO coincides with the sustainability component. More specifically, the NGO should provide clear statements as to how continued monitoring of their programs will lead to a stronger likelihood of sustainability of programs.

In addition to the above, it is also recommended that TVO regional officers and perhaps the M&E professionals from TVO HQ attend skills-building training on the use of and

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

Overall Recommendations:

EMPLOY STANDARDIZATION FOR HEALTH CARE CLINICS: Conceptualizing a set of standards for the establishment of PHC clinics and centers would further strengthen TVO's image in the Health sector. It would provide NGO/CBOs necessary skills to manage and sustain the clinic, and furthermore build more credibility within the community.

There is a visible lack of organizational skill in many PHC clinics. This may lead the community members to repose lack of trust in the clinic's management by the community members. People living in rural areas typically do not seek medical assistance until it becomes somewhat of an emergency. Therefore it is necessary for the clinics to establish a healthy rapport with the villages to educate them about the services provided and possible preventative care of common infections or diseases that are prevalent in such areas. This is what is labeled as outreach in the development field and is a necessary factor for all programs. Since there are many health issues that overlap within rural villages throughout Pakistan, TVO can develop standards for NGO/CBO leaders (i.e. management training, educational seminars, etc...). This would lead to not only a more sustainable environment for the community, but would also enhance TVO's image countrywide.

This suggestion is not to take away from the NGO/CBO's creative ideas outlined in their individual proposals, but rather build on and expand their ideas to enhance the likelihood of long-term survival.

Training for Local CBOs/NGOs:

The Health & Nutrition Development Society (HANDS) is an NGO which has been awarded a 3-year contract by TVO to train community leaders in health related issues, project management and advocacy. It is recommended that HANDS trainers work with the above-mentioned Health Care Professional (HCP) and Sr. ROs to build the knowledge, skills and abilities of both AROs and NGOs throughout the country. HANDS has already developed training curriculum for community midwives and health attendants in villages in Karachi, Hala and Thatta.

Build Collaboration among CBOs/NGOs Regionally:

There is a wealth of knowledge and resources available among the 601 projects that have been implemented by TVO grantees. TVO could organize regional meetings per sector for the CBOs to share what they learned and help each other with future planning. This would be especially helpful should TVO decide to implement the recommendation to standardize PHC clinics country-wide.

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

Teambuilding Seminar: The purpose of this report is to provide an programme evaluation of TVO-funded programs. During this process, there was a wide-spread feeling among the TVO employees that strategic decision-making was vertical rather than horizontal thus disallowing open discussion. This management style is a product of the larger Pakistani society and culture, which trickles down onto the regional offices of TVO and their grantees. Although this approach may work well in many organizations, it is much less likely to succeed within smaller NGOs or COs.

It is important for TVO representatives, especially Regional Officers (Ros) and Assistant Regional Officers (AROs) to maintain a relationship with the NGO leaders and to stay involved with the projects throughout their life cycle. It is recommended that TVO headquarters initiate a staff retreat where all members of TVO can contribute to selected topics to build a more collaborative, team environment. The ROs can then do similar teambuilding exercises wit their grantees in the field to enhance the community atmosphere and encourage the sharing of ideas from project to project, as mentioned in the previous recommendation.

Enforce Qualifiers for NGOs/CBOs: It seems as though the regional or head offices of TVO have not enforced some of the usual requirements in proposals. The following elements were frequently not included in the project scope:

- a) Holistic approach to address the problem identified
- b) Management strategy (How will the NGO be run?)
- c) Outreach and/or Advocacy
- d) Clearly defined 'target community'
- e) Means of sustainability.

NGOs must feel obliged to meet the above criteria in addition to clearly defined goals and meaningful cost proposal. Only after these criteria are clearly laid out, can TVO make a sound decision on whether or not to fund the project.

TVO will need to decide how much time and training they want to invest in rural programs. So far, it seems that TVO has taken a very hands-off approach entrusting the NGO to set its own guidelines and criteria for successfully completing and sustaining the project. This approach has led to the success of a little over half of the 607 NGOs funded by TVO. If TVO wants to increase this success rate, then the approach will need to be modified and involve more hands-on assistance from the regional officers, who will in turn need more training and assistance from TVO headquarters.

Although it sounds as if this approach would be costly, it would rather be a redistribution of spending. There would be a stronger focus on quality versus quantity of projects to increase the outreach and sustainability rate.

Donor Networking and Coordination: One of the weakest components of development work is coordination and networking among and between donors. It was observed that there are multiple donors implementing similar projects in and around the villages. It is therefore recommended that TVO meet with these donors to discuss the operations of local NGO programming in particular communities. This would assist everyone involved to: address interrelated problems within the community, listen to lessons learned from previous experiences, discuss standard NGO requirements for funding, share implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes, and to communicate creative means for future sustainability of projects.

BASIC EDUCATION



Basic Education (BE) happens to take the third most important place among the four major interventions of TVO.

Considering that the rural population has a major drop-out rate, and late-starters for school are quite a few in number, this sector assumes a critical importance. Its importance occupies new proportions when we realize that women happen to be heavily disadvantaged in this regard. Like Health, BE is a sector in which the demand would far outstrip any national input for a long time.

The following salient findings hold an important place in this evaluation:

1. Although the BE demand side holds number three place in the TVO scheme of things, it is a bit disheartening to see that the teaching atmosphere, quality of instruction and the interest of the students display a very low quality education. Except for the fact that any intervention in this regard would be welcome, there are hardly any quality differences in the TVO approach towards BE.
2. However, since TVO is the uncrowned queen for having reached the remotest possible areas, its BE interventions in such areas do carry a very "imitable" lead for other donors to follow.

BASIC EDUCATION.....contd

3. Since most of the schools follow the approved syllabus of the relevant textbook boards, it is easy for the graduates from TVO financed schools to merge into the mainstream education system.
4. Like all the textbook boards, TVO led projects also relegate the importance of mother tongue in the basic education interventions.
5. The TVO educating the girls is very commendable and can become a beacon of light for others.
6. Although functional literacy can sometimes be a real alternative for BE in certain cases, there is not much attention being paid to a more "applied" functional literacy.
7. The community involvement in BE, like most of the TVO projects, is very forthcoming and prevalent. However, this involvement of the community does have the potential to disavow the citizens from demanding this basic human right from the public sector.

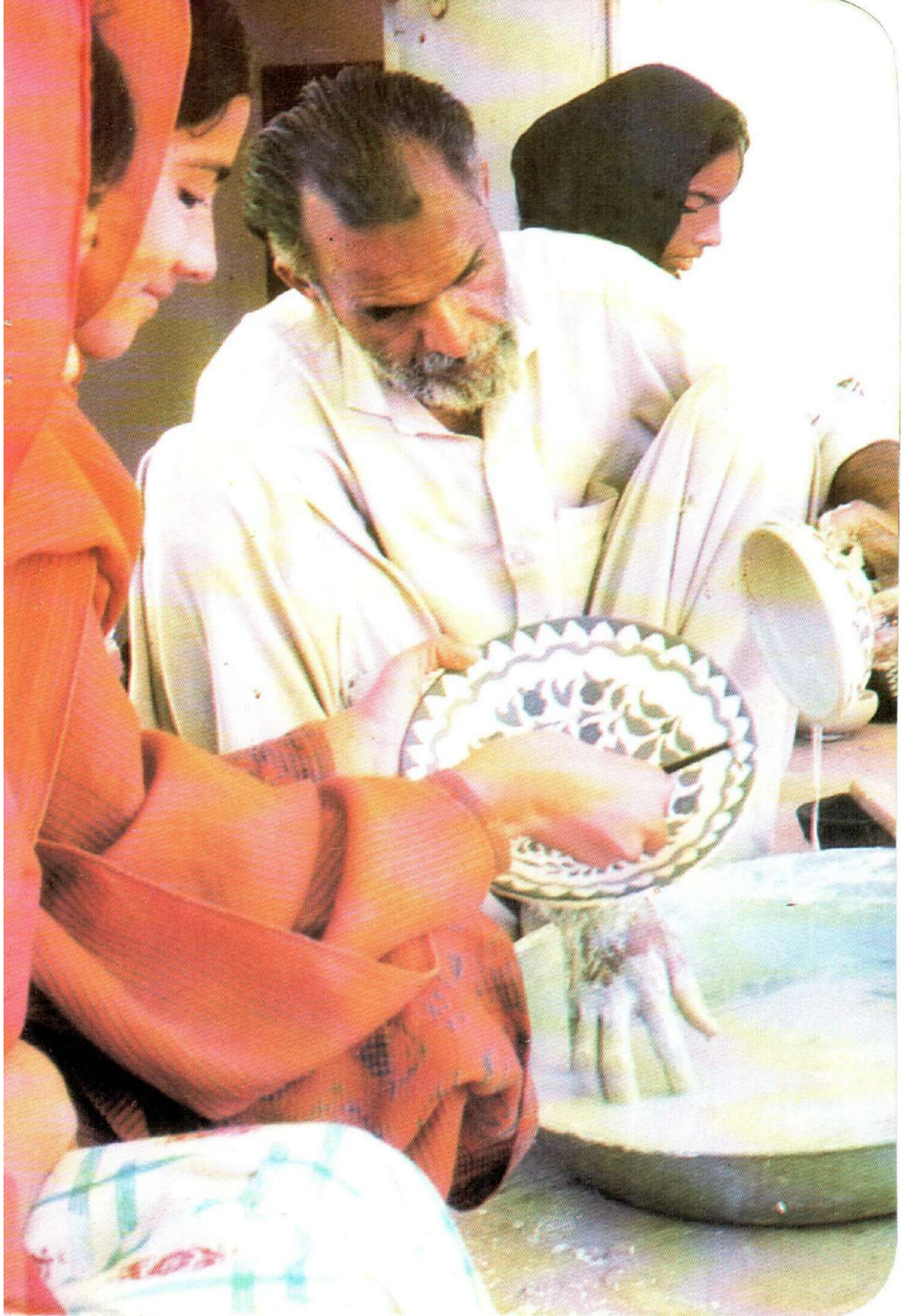
Conclusions:

1. Basic education is still taken as an activity that is more of a "scholastic" rather than a social need. No advocacy of the public/NGO sector has been able to "integrate" the fact in the community that education can not only provide knowledge, it is also an institution that can change lives, broaden mental horizons and promote all kinds of tolerance.
2. In a society where thousands of public schools are either understaffed, ill-equippeed or without a necessary civil infrastructure, the public officials are still pretty shy of allowing the hugely underutilized schools to be used by the private sector.
3. The NGOs/CBOs are rather reluctant to promote BE as a basic human right, and thus the attempts at advocacy of BE are as insignificant as are the government's mushroom BE schemes that surface with every new room under a new name.
4. The emphasis on education fluctuates in the NGO sector along with a shift in emphasis by the donor community.
5. During the evaluation, the consultants observed that there was an unpruned growth of "English medium public schools" even in slums or poor rural communities. This is reflective of the fact that English medium graduates from these schools would have not only a better "class", they would also outshine their peers in competing for jobs. This phenomenon is not confined to our sample size only, its existence in all communities in Pakistan reveals the seamy side of academic preferences all over the country for want of a national cohesive policy with the right kind of needs clearly spelt out.
6. Sustainability is a multi-tiered concept but unfortunately only the "financial side" of sustainability is interpreted as the ONLY viable sustainability. If sustainability is interpreted only from the fiscal angle, then the TVO BE interventions are also non-sustainable like other ventures. However, if sustainability is interpreted in its other haloes like change in attitude, improvement in basic thinking, and appreciation of self-esteem, then BE is sustainable..

BASIC EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS



1. TVO should insist that all NGOs/CBOs applying for funding must include an advocacy plan for BE in their proposals. This advocacy plan must position BE as a promoter of mental and social growth, abettor of social development and a catalyst for peace and harmony.
2. The TVO project appraisal process must take a much closer look compared to a perfunctory glance that has become the hall-mark of the project appraisal process. For instance, a real demographic profile of the target community (average age, sex distribution, household income and ability to "vouchsafe" community's promised financial inputs, social organograms) must appear in detail in the proposal appraisal.
3. Monitoring and Evaluation inputs also need to be straightened out and made more oriented towards introduction and appreciation of performance indicators. This would further energize the existing periodic and highly predictable and scheduled visits to project sites.
4. Promoting public, private partnership should now be part of TVO policy. It must be widely communicated that TVO financial and technical assistance to CBOs/NGOs is NOT and WILL NEVER BE the alternative of public sector inputs. There is a strong tendency in the NGO sector to steer away from the government by trying to supplant the public sector inputs and responsibilities.
5. TVO should increase the "life" of project cycle funding as per the BE project's life.





POVERTY ALLEVIATION

One of the biggest achievements of TVO as a funder has been its decision to stop microcredit scheme loans. Although microcredit has become a fashion statement and an "inalienable" part of poverty alleviation (PA), some of the leading exponents and practitioners of microcredit are being visited by an economic rethink.

Poverty Alleviation, a la TVO, as indicated earlier is not getting money at a cool 4% per annum and lending it out at 20 per cent to pocket a cool 16% profit. The consulting teams found out that TVO's PA schemes aim more at equity, a transfer of economic resources and an appreciation of real poverty that needs fiscal uplift of one kind or the other.

Here are some of the findings of the consultants' teams:

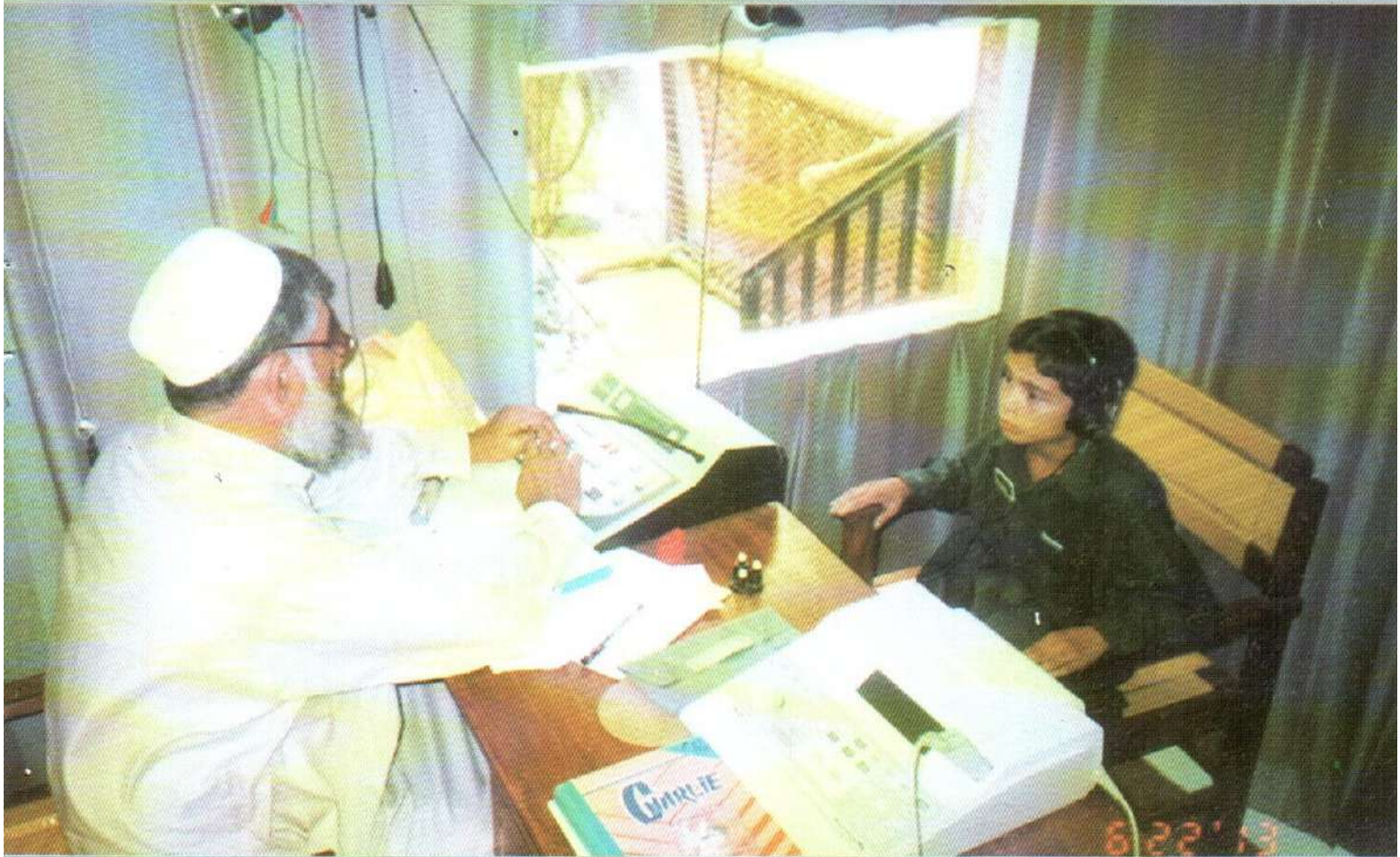
1. There is a vast array of PA projects in the TVO PA outreach ranging from livestock to agricultural small businesses to providing financial assistance to NGOs preparing able-bodied furniture repairmen in hot demand.
2. TVO has reached where no organization has been able to reach the very poor and truly disadvantaged ranging from the depths of the tribal areas to unreachable sandstorm-laden deserts of Thar and Balochistan. This unique quality of TVO far outshines its competitors, if any.
3. Gender equity, attempts at gender mainstreaming and raising awareness among women through providing economic opportunities is another outstanding achievement of the TVO PA schemes. In a society replete with a despondent and intrinsically male chauvinist feudal outlook supported by anti-women laws against women and minorities of this country, providing equal opportunity to women where they do not feel harassed is no mean feat.
5. Conducting HRD among budding women entrepreneurs through workshops on skill development, business ethics and marketing is a step in the right direction. It is the right strategy to "empower" women slowly and efficiently.
6. In addition to providing financial support to individuals and small groups, another TVO step towards PA is support of the local artisans in far flung areas. This attempt, the Teams found out, aims at saving artistic and cultural traditions that are dying out fast because of our love for the fast-growing consumer culture for "now."
7. The consultants found out through FGDs, public consultations and very carefully and discreetly conducted narrative analysis that the "poor" were almost enamored of TVO and a few individuals at TVO. The field officers of TVO were welcome at all places and the ROs and AROs mobile phones were ringing at all odd hours answering project related inquiries. It was very heartening to see poor community groups praying in earnest for TVO management, their uprightness and open door policy towards the community members.
8. Sustainability which is derisively defined sometimes as "go find another donor" would also be hard to defend financially in a country with a US\$34 billion loan, and where huge loan write-offs are a norm. We would suffice it to say that in most of the cases, money was well invested and played a major role in transferring economic resources to the poor who approach TVO without a "sifarish" usually.
9. The TVO Board of Directors, the CEO, senior management and others were usually found to be "pro-poor" both in the TVO Head Office and the field offices.

POVERTY ALLEVIATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The consultants' teams recommend the following actions for PA interventions.

1. TVO should increase the project cycle of PA interventions on merit; the merit being nature of the project, its pro-poor orientation and its immediate and long-term benefits to the community.
2. Although PA interventions ranked second in number of projects in the sample, there is still a hesitance on part of the community to apply for such assistance thinking these are loans that are to be paid back. The Tehsil Network (TN) and other forums must be utilized to communicate the availability of such resources.
3. HRD must be made an integral part of the TVO HRD input. Involvement of the TVO Finance Department into project appraisal team must be made mandatory. This would also bring in sound investment analysis from a financial point of view. Besides, the Finance Department must provide basic skills to those who win projects of poverty alleviation.
4. Projects proposals from far-flung areas, and projects initiated by women-managed NGOs must be given priority at all times. In case of technical assistance in proposal writing, TVO should make itself available to the poor citizens and women of Pakistan.
5. Poverty Alleviation has become synonymous with Khushhali Bank, Poverty Alleviation Fund and a host of other poverty alleviation microcredit schemes in the country. TVO should make its program sound and look different from these institutions' inputs.
6. Although TVO PA interventions are essentially transfer of economic resources, great care should be taken that TVO financial assistance to this sector does not degenerate into a philanthropic welfare exercise leading to a dependency complex.
7. TVO should make full use of the TN to make this assistance popular. Of course, more funding resources are required by TVO to further promote the usefulness of this intervention.
8. TVO must make available an expert on small business who can provide sound investment advice to the project proposers and winners.
9. Those who successfully complete a project should be given yet another opportunity to re-apply.
10. Scaling up of successful projects should be carefully looked into as a possibility for more financial input against more favorable returns.

REHABILITATION OF THE DISABLED



Since there were only 7 projects for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled in the period earmarked or evaluation, the random sample churned out only 1 project for evaluation. Unfortunately, this project had been funded long time ago so the Teams decided to visit two projects that are well and working; one was in Charsadda and the other was in Lahore. While the first project had deaf and dumb special children, the other was teaching blind children how to compete with those with a sight.

Findings

1. This is an area which finds very few sympathizers. One reason is our insularity towards children with special needs, and the second is that such projects are cost-intensive, need very patient persons as administrators and teachers, and the changing even parents' attitude toward these children, let alone society's, is a thoroughly uphill task.
2. The projects that the consultants visited were total success stories, beacon of light for the normal human beings and each child a sheer profile in courage. The administration was facing a difficult task of changing the opinion of the "normal lives" towards the special children.

Recommendations:

1. Such project should be encouraged and funds should not only be provided for hardware and software but also for advocacy among the normal for the rights of special children.
2. TVO should increase funding the number of such projects as they relate to the most disadvantaged in society who have nowhere to go and seek help, mostly not even their own homes!

TEHSIL NETWORK

Tehsil Network (TN) is basically an outreach medium to have access to the grassroots. TN boasts a network of TVO's contact NGOs/CBOs in almost each rural Tehsil of Pakistan, the number amounting to 370 member NGOs. Since these NGOs had been very carefully selected, they have a greater element of sustainability and resilience often required in organizations working against all odds. The member organizations demonstrably show commitment and sincerity with the cause. Some of these organizations are not the ones funded by TVO.

Starting in 2001, TN came up through an MoU between the NGO and TVO. The broad objectives of the TN are:

TVO will support the projects of TN member organization as per its funding policy.

TVO will arrange for information and training for the staff and volunteers of member organization for capacity building.

TN partners will assist TVO in delivery of development and information program at grassroots: TN partners will also assist TVO in identifying volunteers for such program.

TN member will serve as a link between TVO and the communities at grassroots.

In pursuance of all its objective, TN member will not only help and assist TVO but each others as well.

All members will be provided with a list of member with their contact address in the form of a TN directory.

TN meets at the regional offices on a rotation basis. The TN publishes a quarterly newsletter about the TN activities. So far, three such newsletters have been brought out.

The TVO Resource Center's Communication and Research program has been active in producing booklets videos, manuals and brochures on various activities including primary health care. These information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials aim at raising awareness among the communities. The TVO produced materials on PHC would be of tremendous help to the communities served by the TN.

TVO also entrusted Strengthening Participatory Organizations (SPO) with the responsibility to train all TN members in various project development, planning and management skills.

The TN members also arrange "exposure visits" to other regions where they have not gone before. The consultants were able to meet both male and female groups who were visiting Punjab, and NWFP. These members were very happy with such exposure visits and admitted to many misconceptions and misgivings about the other province's people. According to some NWFP groups visiting Punjab, "Now we see there also poor people in Punjab. We thought everybody in Punjab was rich." Likewise, a group of women NGO activists visited NWFP and talked at length about the Pathan hospitality, forthrightness and bravery.

Recommenrdations

1. There should be greater interaction among the citizens of each province. This will increase dialogue, promote understanding and build bridges between people of a variety of cultures and linguistic groups.



2. Such forums are very rare in Pakistan. They need to be strengthened and energized for their best inputs and outputs.
3. There are many projects looking up to such forums for help. One of such projects is ADB funded Access to Justice Program of Ministry of Law and Justice which needs cooperation of such NGOs to strengthen the demand side of the AJP for providing access to poor to justice.
4. Closer linkages between TVO and TN will be harbinger of good news. Like the exposure visits, there are perennial problems like the water rights dispute and other controversial development projects.
5. TN encourages dialogue, enriches cultural and ethnic diversity, and acts as a bridge between the people of different provinces. TVO must prepare a well thought-out and comprehensive program that would enrich others and ourselves through dialogue, a skill most of us have forgotten.

TVO MANAGEMENT AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

Although "program" evaluation was the only mandate available with the consultants' team, it was difficult to completely overlook the importance of management in decision-making that could improve or adversely impact the TVO program implementation. The consultants do not have a any pretense of full and unqualified information on management related issues. But it would also be dishonest and unethical not to share a few conclusions and recommendations with TVO that might be of help to the organization and management.

Conclusions

1. The field officers at the TVO regional offices are overworked, dangerously understaffed and lowly paid. TVO must look for some funding from the provincial governments and the federal government so that ROs'/AROs' problems are duly attended to.
2. There is a loud and resonant talk of vertical decision-making at the Head Office which duly impacts the regional offices and their performance. Whether it is a matter of certain individuals' frustrations or high hopes or is it a by-product of long centralized decision making is not for this consultants' team to decide.
3. There is a dangerous "expertise deficiency" at TVO in the wake of two vacancies at the Head Office. One vacant position is a Public Health specialist (preferably a woman professional) that has not been filled for a long period of time. Considering that PHC accounts for a major portion of TVO funding and geographical prevalence, it is a program deficiency needing serious attention. The other position is of the Basic Education specialist that needs to be filled soonest.
4. The EC/RSDP and TVO relationship over the years has been one of symbiosis, mutual learning and reinforcement. Since the RSDP ended end June, there will be a big program, HRD and financial gap. Since there is no certainty about the RSDP being extended, TVO would lose a great source of all-round "inspiration." Although TVO has assured both program and staff funding of EC assisted regional offices at least for a year, there IS a dire need for TVO to raise more funds indigenously and through bi/multilateral donors.
5. It became glaringly obvious during evaluation that TVO is basically a funding agency which has been funding CBOs/NGOs on need basis usually without fear or favor. Thus, TVO is no different from the other donors when it comes to wielding carrot and stick, and "absolving" itself of project failure or success when it suits them.

Recommendations

1. An Institutional Management Review (IMR) is the need of the day. This would not only dispassionately look at the style of management at TVO starting from the CEO to the Field Office, it would also critically review the "management culture" and dissect the management policies that have evolved over the years. The IMR may try to determine whether "permanent positions instead of usual contract positions" has led to premature burn-outs, sub-optimal performance or a smug complacency. The IMR would also dilate extensively on certain administrative issues that have been plaguing TVO for a long time.
2. The two experts' vacancies at TVO should be immediately filled so that two most important sectors of TVO activity receive a proper professional overseers.

TVO MANAGEMENT AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.....contd

3. Project appraisal and M&E regimes need strong HRD dollops, and a reorientation of approach. As a first step, the Finance Department of TVO should involve itself in project appraisals. It is to be made very clear that there is not a very healthy linkage between Project Appraisal and M&E. In order to develop synergy between the two, proper appraisals need to be conducted and M&E given an HRD shot in the arm soonest.
4. The MIS at TVO also needs a bigger HRD shot. The first technical assistance should go in updating the website and making it more user friendly.
5. TVO has so far been enjoying the "donors' exclusive outsider" role when it comes to program implementation. It is very easy for TVO to blame a project/an NGO/a CBO for a failure and take the success laurels all itself. Serious thought should be given to TVO being an implementer of at least one project each in each area in one region. Strong community interaction and supervision, and TVO's technical assistance coupled with community's proactive approach should be a harbinger of good replicable model projects for TVO.
6. TVO should look for other sources of funding in addition to the EC. Perhaps, EU, Brussels may help TVO find a few joint projects with European NGOs. However, TVO may have to brace itself up for this occasion.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall conclusions and recommendations contained in the paras below could both be overarching and focused program area specific. In certain cases, some of the critical recommendations from the main report have been culled and reproduced below along with some that could be totally new.

Conclusions

1. PHC projects are basically the most "wanted" list that carries the communities' top priority. The teams did see TVO-issued "standard medical equipment" in the Mother and Child Health Centers although in certain cases it was lying on the floor and had not been opened yet. In some cases, This calls for a relatively short period of time when there is a year or a year and a half project where six months are consumed in erecting a building, a few get wasted in the NGO in-fighting as the community which initially supported the MCH center gets dissatisfied.
2. There are NO standards for an MCH center; no civil structure standards, no minimum requirements and no competency based qualifications. The Teams found various levels of competence from place to place along with a varying degree of community support.
3. The "dependency complex" in PHC is slowly ushering in where the government centers are either inefficient or just not there. The NGO and Government are taken as independent entities usually at war with each other over one's suzerainty of services. Very soon, this complex may creep in other focused areas further eroding the people's confidence in the government owned and operated service delivery systems.
4. A bright aspect is that in certain cases the dependency complex is not only absent, it is providing lots of confidence to the people who pick up enough courage to talk to the Nazims and seem to have developed a taste fir the devolution.
5. There is a varying degree of social activism which is dependent on a number of factors from regional to cultural to ethnic. The need is to harness this activism to fire up that activism towards the right channel.

Recommendations

1. TVO has very judiciously avoided certain kinds of social communication in the past ten years. While basic job of NGOs is to advocate a rights-based approach, TVO, being the prime mover for a number of NGOs must be on the fore-front being an advocate for social exchange.
2. While advocating social change, TVO should also train the NGOs in fighting for their rights as consumers. This would lead to an activism that is an essential factor for a successful decentralized program.
3. TVO should use its success stories o market it niche for a place under the sun, a place it has studiously avoided so fa5r very diligently.





12 Park Road, F/10/3 Islamabad, Pakistan
Ph: +92(0)51 229 1533 - 210 2296 Fax: +92(0)51 210 2297
E-mail: <surf@isb.paknet.com.pk>