



South Asia Partnership-Pakistan

Building Bridges: Engaging Civil Society from Muslim States and Communities with the Multilateral Sphere

An Orientation for Pakistan Civil Society Organizations

Lahore, Pakistan - November 11, 2008

Report



Undertaken with the support of:



Table of Contents

Introduction and Objectives	3
Plenary Discussion	3
Presentation on Building Bridges Project and OIC: Plenary Discussion	5
Presentation on Building Bridges in the Context of Pakistani Civil Society	5
Working Groups	6
Summary and Conclusion.....	6
Accomplishment of the Orientation Meeting	7
Agenda for the December 2008 Meeting	7
Plan of Action (2 years)	8

List of Annexes

Annex 1-

Agenda Building Bridges VI: Engaging Civil Society for Muslims States and Communities with Multilateral Sphere: An Orientation

Annex 2-

Questions for Group Work

Annex 3-

List of Participants

Annex 4-

Documents Circulated

Introduction

The orientation is the sixth in a series of the project *Building Bridges Engaging Civil Society from Muslim Countries and Communities with the Multilateral Sphere*.¹ Henceforth, the Project aims at structuring the Muslim states and communities into global governance for potential advancement of democracy and human rights for Muslims everywhere in the world. Obviously, this objective could be achieved through multilateral patterns of OIC and UN. The Building Bridges Project (BB) was established to raise the voice and amplify the impact of Muslim majorities and minorities. This can only be feasible through mandating civil society organizations in OIC's 57 member-states for the global institutionalization of democracy and human rights regimes.

1. Objectives

The meeting was attended by participants from 40 different NGOs from all over the country and the objectives of the meeting were communicated through Presentation on ***Building Bridges in the Context of Pakistani Civil Society*** by Mohammad Tahseen.

The following were the objectives of the meeting:

- a) The Civil Society of Pakistan will enhance its knowledge about OIC and UN
- b) The Participants' brainstorming: how to enrich their cognizance about OIC and effective engagement with OIC? Identification of appropriate partners for *Building Bridges* alliance
- c) *Participants' Reflection*: on possible entry point into UN for CSOs from Muslim World
- d) The expansion of *Building Bridges Alliance partnership* throughout Pakistan

2. Presentation on BB Project and OIC: Plenary Discussion

Mohammad Tahseen welcomed the participants and thanked them for their interest in looking into OIC and finding ways to work with such bodies. This led to formal introduction of the participants.

After the presentation the following discussion took place:

The participants found the information very relevant and showed a keen interest in exploring ways to get actively engaged and know more about the working of the OIC and possibilities of influencing the agenda of the OIC. There was strong feeling aired by the participants of the relevance of the BB project especially when very little is known about

¹ Building Bridges: Engaging Civil Society from Muslim Countries and Communities with the Multilateral Sphere is designed, and implemented by civil society from the Muslim world. It is important to note that, while Forum international de Montreal (FIM) (<http://www.fimcivilsociety.org/>) initiated this Project, FIM's role is as a neutral founding Secretariat, convener, fundraiser, and facilitator. FIM brings to this Project its considerable experience in the area of civil society and multilateralism, international fundraising, and a strong commitment to human rights and the democratization of global governance. Building Bridges Project leadership however rests completely with NGOs from OIC countries and Muslim communities.

this important organization. Generally the participants found the information very useful and appreciated the initiatives taken up by the BB objectives. There were also some opinions that the CSOs of Pakistan should play a more proactive role in engaging with the OIC and its different endeavors. A lot of discussion took place in sharing general understanding about the OIC.

Some of the participants were of the view that OIC is considered a very “reactionary” organization given the nature of the membership and especially the leadership which is provided by the Governments whose human rights record within their countries is questionable. Also the very fact that since most of the Arab countries do not have democratic forms of governance, therefore we need to tread carefully. Not only that we may end up highly frustrated but may create problems for the civil society, whatever the nature, of these particular countries. Since in Pakistan almost all of the present CSOs advocate the right of people in governance and adhere to secular principles in our society the association with OIC may give different political signals in the society.



Therefore we need to be cautious in our engagement with the OIC. There was a unanimous agreement that any opportunities to interact with civil society organizations of the member countries will be very useful and we must work towards that. At the same time the participants felt the importance of being closely associated with the ‘happenings’ in the OIC.

There was some discussion on the role of Government of Pakistan (GOP) in the affairs of the OIC and it’s implications at the international level. The participants were dismayed to learn the role played by the GOP representative in Geneva as the OIC representative at the human rights forum in Geneva. However, the participants found the “Ten Year Programme of Action” of OIC and the Meeting of NGOs in Saly, Senegal during the 2008 OIC Summit useful as it provides some space for CSOs and also promises to open new vistas for Pakistani CSOs to look into these and formulate future course. The discussion in the plenary also took note of the following:



- a) Due to global politics of human rights especially for Muslim majorities and minorities, the civil society organizations are at the threshold of Building Bridges

through multilateral organizations like UN and OIC. Politically speaking, OIC is a very sensitive organization but through its “Ten Year Programme of Action” for global governance and human rights, we can achieve BB’s Project plans. Despite of its being led by rich Muslim governments of the world, OIC could be an insurmountable ‘future stage’ for issues of State supported terrorism; women, children and minorities’ rights’ and understanding global politics of human rights for Muslims all over the world.

- b) Keeping in view, OIC could lead Pakistan on global front through its human rights agenda for next 10 years. Simultaneously, we (as civil society members) have to discern its global, regional, national and provincial outreach and limitations.
- c) In order to advance the objectives of BB in Pakistan, we have to initiate the Steering Committee from national to local levels for performing dual tasks on country level. One is awareness program and another is its project implementation at all scales of society.
- d) Nonetheless, structuring OIC for civil society engagement inside and outside Pakistan is a question of our own assessment.
- e) Most importantly, how OIC could benefit Muslim societies through the international Building Bridges project as we must not forget our national and international engagements with secular civil society networks in Pakistan and other countries.
- f) As our purpose is to strengthen peoples’ to peoples’ contact through BB. After drift of four decades, manifold global/regional challenges brought organizational transformation of OIC. And provoked it for novel communication and dynamic leadership as multilateral body in significant zones of Post-globalization. Therefore, OIC must be weighed as ‘global talk table’ for deprived Muslim states and people of the world.
- g) As BB is global Project for voicing human rights issues of Muslims, we must know OIC’s potentiality, credibility and future dynamics as strategic organization.
- h) Critically questioning ourselves as civil society organizations, do we really need OIC as consultative platform for change in our countries? As it is Islamic organization for the betterment of Muslims, so this very name of Islam should not be confused with fundamentalism, extremism and radicalism. Rather, we should take it more as *voice of the people*; a way of *inflow* and *outflow* of information for us; and *means of engagement* with our global and regional dynamics in every sphere of life-that effect us in one way or the other.
- i) Simultaneously, we have to take OIC to grass root level in Pakistan and voices of our issues to international level. Our civil society need to interact with global civil society for understanding the global role of policy-making and decision-making for deprived nations like us.
- j) Ostensibly, we build a strategy for 2 years, where we engage country-level NGOs, chamber of commerce, trade/ local bodies and labor unions for constructive



workability of BB in Pakistan. Thereby, the Steering Committee has to strategize multi-dimensional tasks of information and communication; coordination and engagement and undertake achievable initiatives and interventions at varying levels from OIC stage of Pakistan.

3. Presentation

Building Bridges in the Context of Pakistani Civil Society

(Through the charters of civil society organizations presuming them as micro-legal regimes, because, they are aspired by international law of human rights. Subsequently, helpful to familiarize the public about democratic decision-making power shared both at government and public levels).

Working Groups

Around three groups were devised for the purpose of extracting shared views on five significant questions (see Annex -1 for questions)

- a) **Group 1:** For augmented engagement with OIC, we need regular interaction with existing structures and bodies at national level. Organize peoples' assemblies both at provincial and district levels for orientation of OIC among various sections of society and civil society organizations. Dissemination of information among SAP-PK/BB partners. Further translation and interpretation of disseminative material in local languages for improved understandability of OIC. Several media outlets and website visitation could be used as possible option for information dissemination purposes.



- b) **Group 2:** For establishment of Steering Committee, we can select volunteers not only from today's meeting but also from Media, Chamber of Commerce, elected local representatives and scholarly religious elements could be included as members of Steering Committee.



- c) **Group 3:** For Strategic development, initiate with MDGs, human rights, democratic governance, environment, humanitarian emergency crisis and peace-building

5. Summary and Conclusion

General Recommendations (GRs) of the meeting for the identification of appropriate partners, formation of CSOs network at OIC level and participation of CSOs in decision-making process within OIC should be encouraged.

Steering Committee should establish *Code of Networking for CSOs* and *TORs* for the members of Steering Committee. Further to undertake their tasks and identify local, national, regional and global like-minded people for the advancement of OIC objectives and programmes.

A **Pakistan Focal Person** should be appointed to coordinate with the Steering Committee, BB country partners and CSOs.



6. Accomplishment of the Orientation Meeting

- a) Establishment of Steering Committee
- b) Appointing 12-member Committee
- c) Appointing focal person for Pakistan
- d) Designing an Agenda for next meeting
- e) Preparing draft of peoples' communication of OIC member-states

7. Agenda of the Next Meeting

As compared to NGOs, Media embarked on OIC as '*prospect dialogue area for Muslim States*' on TV channels. Despite of being Muslim state, people have less information about OIC. For this reason, peoples' empowerment through 10 years OIC "Programme of Action" is a hope of this decade. However, being in the 'era of multilateralism', agenda of OIC should be pursued for building bridges among us.

- Work out a plan for production as well as translation of relevant material into local languages to attain pinnacle of awareness about OIC at country level
- How to develop Building Bridges Alliance Partners effective engagement on regular basis
- How to stipulate terms of engagement with government of Pakistan for the next one year
- What to reveal into TORs of Building Bridges Alliance Partners

8. Plan of Action (2 Years)

- a) People to people and civil society to civil society contact at all levels
- b) Outstanding coordination and information dissemination of Steering Committee for grand networking
- c) The members of Steering Committee should promote the objectives of OIC as representatives of SAP-PK/BB in their respective organizations
- d) Conducting regular sessions for *Program Review* of OIC from national to local levels
- e) Organize 'knowledge-sharing' and 'appraisal-programs' for global understanding of The Theory and Practice of Islam in all human spheres.
- f) Linking with the FIM Website and if need be develop a Pakistan Website.

Annex 1

Building Bridges: Engaging Civil Society from Muslim States and Communities with the Multilateral Sphere: An Orientation for Pakistan Civil Society

**Lahore, Pakistan - November 11, 2008
Hotel Ambassador**

Agenda:

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 10:00 | Welcome and Introductions
Mohammad Tahseen; Executive Director SAP Pakistan, and Chair of Building Bridges Steering Committee |
| 11:15 | Health Break |
| 11:45 | Presentation: Update on Civil Society engagement with the Organization of the Islamic Conference
Mohammad Tahseen |
| 12:30 | Questions and discussion |
| 12:00 | Civil Society Engagement with the United Nations: Possible Entry Points for CSOs from the Muslim world |
| 13:00 | Lunch |
| 14:00 | Working Groups

<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) How to increase awareness of, and engagement with the OIC and the UN at the country level;2) How to identify appropriate Alliance partners from the region;3) How to implement effective terms of engagement with the OIC. |
| 15:30 | Break |
| 16:00 | Workshop reports |
| 16:45 | Summary, next steps and closing remarks
Mohammad Tahseen |
| 17:15 | Media Brief |

Annex 2

Questions for Group Work:

- How to increase awareness of, and engagement with the OIC at Pakistan level?
- How to identify appropriate partners (NGOs, media, chamber of commerce and other CSOs) in Pakistan?
- Strategic areas of intervention with the OIC
- Major activities/programs for the next 2 years
- Should we have a steering committee, if yes identify volunteers?

Annex 3

List of Participants

1. **Name:** Ms. Shaista Khalid Jan
Designation: Executive Director
Organisation: Community Support Concern
Address: 319-4, D-1, Green Town, Lahore
Email: cscpk@brain.net.pk
Telephone: 042-5123623, 5116343
2. **Name:** Ms. Faiqa Arshad
Designation: Programme Officer
Organisation: Working Women Organization (WVO)
Address: 93-A, Nawab Town, Raiwind Road, Lahore
Email: wwo@brain.net.pk
Telephone: 042-5311319, 5313906, 0321-4446540
3. **Name:** Ms. Kishwar Sultana
Designation: Director
Organisation: Insan Foundation Trust
Address: 427-Tariq Block, Garden Town, Lahore
Email: kishwar@insan.org.pk
Telephone: 042-8270107, 5836203, 0300-8497443
4. **Name:** Ms. Shahtaj Kazilbash
Designation: Coordinator
Organisation: Joint Action Committee
Address: 131-E/1, Gulburg-III, Lahore
Email: aghs@brain.net.pk
Telephone: 042-5763234-5
5. **Name:** Mr. Nasir Suhail
Designation: Program Manager
Organisation: Interactive Resource Center
Address: 102, Nawab Town, Raiwind Road, Lahore
Email: nasir.nsn2000@gmail.com
Telephone: 042-5313038-9
6. **Name:** Mr. Nadeem Anthony
Designation: Media Officer
Organisation: AGHS
Address: 131-E/1, Gulberg-III, Lahore
Email: aghsnadeem@yahoo.com
Telephone: 042-5763234-5, 0300-4119484
7. **Name:** Ms. Nighat Hafeez
Designation: Senior Program Officer
Organisation: Shirkat Gah Women Resource Center
Address: 68, Tipu Block, New Garden Town, Lahore
Email: nighat@sgah.org.pk
Telephone: 042-5886267-8
8. **Name:** Ms. Ume-Laila Azhar
Designation: Manager
Organisation: Aurat Foundation
Address: 8-B, LDA Garden View Apartments, Lawrence Road, Lahore
Email: laila_syed@yahoo.com
Telephone: 042-6306534, 6367019
9. **Name:** Mr. Salman Abid
Designation: Regional Director
Organisation: Sustainable Participatory Organisation
Address: 55, Karim Block, Allama Iqbal Town, Lahore
Email: salmanabidpk@yahoo.com
Telephone: 0300-8429311
10. **Name:** Ms. Salma Liaqat
Designation: Programme Officer
Organisation: Working Women Organization (WVO)
Address: 93-A, Nawab Town, Raiwind Road, Lahore
Email: wwo@brain.net.pk
Telephone: 042-5311319, 5313906
11. **Name:** Ms. Asma Rehman Siddiqui
Designation: General Secretary
Organisation: Labour Resource Center
Address: H # 263, Muslimpur, G-T. Road, Baghbanpura, Lahore
Email: asma4668@yahoo.com

- Telephone:** 042-7042402, 0333-4288287
12. **Name:** Ms. Farida Tariq
Designation: Chief Executive Officer
Organisation: CWCD
Address: 148-P, Model Town Ext., Lahore
Email: faridatariq@cwcd.org.pk
Telephone: 042-5167135, 0322-4419595
 13. **Name:** Mr. Peter Jacob
Designation: Executive Secretary
Organisation: National Commission for Justice and Peace
Address: E-64/A, St. No. 8, Officers Colony, Walton Road, Lahore
Email: ncjppakistan@gmail.com
Telephone: 042-6668692
 14. **Name:** Mr. Younis Alam
Designation: Executive Director
Organisation: Minority Rights Commission
Address: H # E-7, St # 3, Fancy Park, Walton Road, Lahore
Email: mrcpk@hotmail.com
Telephone: 042-6112731, 0308-4589881
 15. **Name:** Ms. Sabiha Shaheen
Designation: Executive Director
Organisation: Bargad
Address: 1/1, Nazar Muhammad Plaza, Quaid-e-Azam Avenue, Rahwali, Gujranwala
Email: sabiha@bargad.org.pk
Telephone: 055-3864920, 0301-8435532
 16. **Name:** Mr. Niaz Ahmad Kathia
Designation: Executive Director
Organisation: Village Friends Organisation
Address: 156-A, Street 58, F-11/4, Islamabad
Email: village@brain.net.pk
Telephone: 051-2113136, 2104445, 2110750, 0333-5629255
 17. **Name:** Mr. Kamran Ahmad
Designation: Deputy Program Manager
Organisation: Omar Asghar Khan Development Foundation
Address: Kaghan Colony, Abbottabad
Email: kahmed@oakdf.org.pk
Telephone: 0992-385699, 0300-5634018
 18. **Name:** Ms. Samina Khan
Designation: Executive Director
Organisation: Sungi Development Foundation
Address: 2 C, Street 35, F-8/1, Islamabad
Email: samina.khan@sungi.org
Telephone: 051-2282481-2
 19. **Name:** Mr. Ajmal Malik
Designation: Chairman
Organisation: CHIP
Address: Plot # 05, Street # 9, G-8/2, Islamabad
Email: ajmal@chip-pk.org
Telephone: 051-2280151, 0300-5009458
 20. **Name:** Mr. Abdul Jabbar Bhatti
Designation: Assistant Manager
Organisation: SAFWCO
Address: House # C-415, Phase 2, Qasimabad, Hyderabad
Email: jabbar.bhatti@safwco.org
Telephone: 0222-650996, 0334-5995184
 21. **Name:** Mr. Mohammad Tariq Awan
Designation: Coordinator Punjab
Organisation: PILER
Address: 294-Rizwan Block, Awan Town, Multan Road, Lahore
Email: piler@brain.net.pk
Telephone: 0333-4252128
 22. **Name:** Mr. Ghaffar Malik
Designation: Executive Director
Organisation: Sindh development Society
Address: 13-49, Bhattai Nagar, Qasimabad, Hyderabad
Email: sdshyd@hotmail.com

- Telephone:** 022-2616784, 2613860, 0333-2604314
23. **Name:** Ms. Maryam Bibi
Designation: Chief Executive
Organisation: Khwendo kor
Address: H # 130, St. # 4, Sector-K-3, Phase-3, Hayatabad, Peshawar
Email: maryam_bibi53@yahoo.co.uk
Telephone: 091-5818589
24. **Name:** Mr. Mohammad Zia Ur Rehman
Designation: Provincial Coordinator
Organisation: Network for Community Empowerment
Address: 2440, N/8A, D-Block, Shamasabad Colony, Multan
Email: zia@awazcde.org.pk
Telephone: 061-4784606, 4577409,
25. **Name:** Mr. Rooh -ul- Amin
Designation: Provincial Coordinator
Organisation: Sarhad Coordinating Council NWFPC
Address: Village & P.O Shewa, Mohallah Shaheedabad, Parmoli Road, Swabi
Email: rooh.amin@gmail.com
Telephone: 0938-338727, 0300-9322612
26. **Name:** Mr. Lala Arshad Khaskheli
Designation: Provincial Coordinator
Organisation: Bhatt Shah Declaration Coordinating Council
Address: H # 6, VIP Road, Bhangwar Colony, Nawabshah
Email: ssswa_org@yahoo.com
Telephone: 0244-330489, 0300-3206672
27. **Name:** Ms. Nusrat Bano
Designation: Vice President
Organisation: Young Samaji Tanzim
Address: Bader Mohallah, Ward No.2, Town Johi, P.O Johi-Dadu
Email: yst_johi@yahoo.com
Telephone: 0229-740267, 0254010604
28. **Name:** Mr. Farooq Ahmad Khan
Designation: Executive Director
- Organisation:** Cholistan Development Council of Pakistan
Address: 5/A Block X, Model Town-C, Bahawalpur
Email: cdbcBahawalpur@gmail.com
Telephone: 062-28883045, 0300-9683545
29. **Name:** Ms. Amina Zaman
Designation: Executive Director
Organisation: Agency for Sustainable Development Pakistan
Address: P-57/6, Bilal Street, Civil Lines, Faisalabad
Email: agency4sdpak@yahoo.com
Telephone: 041-2622593, 0300-9665263
30. **Name:** Mr. Malik Ahmad Khan
Designation: President
Organisation: Awam Dost Foundation
Address: Rahimabad, Bhakkar
Email: awamdostbk@yahoo.com
Telephone: 0453-510250, 0333-8054080
31. **Name:** Mr. Shabbir Akbar
Designation: Program Officer
Organisation: Jobs Creating Development Society (JCDS)
Address: Opposite Petrol Pump, Near Saleem Sugar Mills, Charsadda
Email: jobscreators@yahoo.com
Telephone: 091-6513598, 6007331, 0345-9142154
32. **Name:** Mr. Umar Zada
Designation: President
Organisation: Social Awareness & Development Organization
Address: Officer Colony, Main Balambat Timargara, Lower Dir
Email: sadodir@gmail.com
Telephone: 0945-825128, 0301-8521842
33. **Name:** Ms. Nusrat Ara
Designation: Chairperson
Organisation: WDO Mardan
Address: H # 35, St. # 02, Phase-1, E-1, Hayatabad, Peshawar

- Email:** sappwr@sappk.org
Telephone: 091-5830382/5830302, 0300-9175956
34. **Name:** Ms. Shehnaz Sheedi
Designation: Program Officer
Organisation: SDGP Project Office, Sindh
Address: H # 50, Muslim Cooperative Housing Society, Hyderabad, Sindh
Email: sheedi_shahnaz@yahoo.com
Telephone: 022-2650243-4, 0333-2613278
35. **Name:** Mr. Sharfuddin Zehri
Designation: Chief Executive
Organisation: Poverty Alleviation Organization
Address: Mughalzai, Near Police line, Kalat,
Email: paokalat@gmail.com
Telephone: 0301-3719126, 0844-210007
36. **Name:** Mr. Javed Iqbal Bhatti
Designation: Executive Director
Organisation: Jaago Development Society
Address: House # 293, Ward # 3, Golarchi, Distt. Badin 72220
Email: jdspakistan@hotmail.com
Telephone: 0297-853455, 853269, 0345-3697100
37. **Name:** Ms. Shabnam Rashid
Designation: Coordinator Program SAP-PK
Address: HMT Building, Nasirabad, 2 km Raiwind Road, Lahore
Email: info@sappk.org
Telephone: 042-5311701-3, 5,6
38. **Name:** Mr. Abid Gill
Designation: Assistant E.S.
Organisation: NCJP
Address: E-64/A, St. No. 8, Officers Colony, Walton Road, Lahore
- Email:** ncjppakistan@gmail.com
Telephone: 042-6668692
39. **Name:** Mr. Mohammad Anwar
Designation: Co-Chairman
Organisation: s/c OIC, Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry
Address: 11-Shara-e-Awan Tijarat
Email: federal@brain.net.pk
Telephone: 111-222-499
40. **Name:** Mr. Mohammad Tahseen
Designation: Executive Director
Organisation: South Asia Partnership Pakistan
Address: HMT Building, Nasirabad, 2 km Raiwind Road, Lahore
Email: tahseen@sappk.org
Telephone: 042-5311701-3, 5, 6
41. **Name:** Mr. Abbas Ali Siddiqui
Designation: Programme Coordinator
Organisation: South Asia Partnership Pakistan
Address: HMT Building, Nasirabad, 2 km Raiwind Road, Lahore
Email: abbas@sappk.org
Telephone: 042-5311701-3, 5, 6,
42. **Name:** Mr. Anjum Shahzad Khan
Designation: Programme Officer
Organisation: South Asia Partnership Pakistan
Address: HMT Building, Nasirabad, 2 km Raiwind Road, Lahore
Email: info@sappk.org
Telephone: 042-5311701-3, 5, 6,
43. **Name:** Mr. Mahboob Ali
Designation: Programme Coordinator
Organisation: South Asia Partnership Pakistan
Address: HMT Building, Nasirabad, 2 km Raiwind Road, Lahore
Email: info@sappk.org
Telephone: 042-5311701-3, 5, 6,

Annex 4

Documents Circulated to Participants

1. Background to the Country-Level Meeting
2. The OIC – An Overview
3. Building Bridges: Engaging Civil Society from Muslim Countries and Communities with the Multilateral Sphere: Project Overview
4. The OIC Ten Year Strategic Programme of Action
5. Report on First Conference of Humanitarian Organizations in the OIC Member States, Dakar – Senegal, 7-9 March 2008
6. Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO) and its new Action Plan, Cooperation and Partnership