

**Environment Advocacy Initiative
Assessment**

IUCN Pakistan - Communications Unit

2001

IUCN Pakistan -Communication Unit: Environment Advocacy Initiative Assessment

The Ambit

NORAD and IUCN have collaborated on a wide variety of environmental activities since 1987. This collaboration included follow-up activities to UNCED, pollution levels assessment in the Kabul River, forestry technical advice to AKRSP, workshop on the proposed Indus Delta Biosphere Reserve, and development of a graduate environmental internship programme for University of Peshawar students. NORAD has also been the principal support of the IUCNP's longest running and pioneering Korangi Creek Project. In 1995, in recognition of the scale of collaboration between the two organisations, an 18-month Frame Agreement (NFA-I) was signed between NORAD and IUCNP covering four broad thematic areas: environmental advocacy, education, training, and legislation. The IUCNP Communications Unit (CU) was entrusted with the execution and delivery of the environmental advocacy component of the framework agreement. This trial phase enabled both organisations to assess durability of entering into a longer-term, programmatic support partnership. Success of this pilot phase led to the signing of the Second Frame Agreement in 1996 with the CU continuing to plan and deliver the environmental advocacy activities, as envisaged in the framework agreement. This agreement provided continued support to the trial phase thematic areas and spanned a period of three-year (NFA-II, from August 1996 to July 1999) as an important development NORAD/IUCNP partnership, and was subsequently extended for one year, to end in June 2000.

Introduction

The second NORAD framework time period is now complete, with the Environmental Advocacy work progressing on the third Framework agreement, for a period of three years (NFA-III, July 2000 to June 2003). Though IUCNP Communications Unit has regularly been developing and providing periodic progress reports of its NORAD Framework related activities and inputs achievements, CU now wishes to undertake a comprehensive exercise to assess a few 'key' Framework interventions' effect to date. This assessment would not only enable CU to understand the utility of these key interventions as they stand now, but would also be able to provide planning support to future design and implementation of such key interventions. Such an assessment would, not only feed into the currently under progress NFA III activity planning as valuable course correction and direction providing mechanism, but will also help CU in defining its long term strategic plan for its future scope of work and activity intervention design.

This assessment study therefore, by default, encompasses an assessment of what is, and what ought to be! In other words, not only that this assessment looks into the holistic utility of the CU-designed and implemented key interventions under the Framework, but also to investigate possibility and scope of future interventions. Though all of such possibilities may or may not be a part of the present framework activity input, they may form a part of the larger CU strategic plan, nevertheless. This document is assessment to that effect.

IUCNP-CU Environmental Advocacy Initiative: Key Interventions Assessment

Though there are a few Key CU interventions as defined under the NORAD Framework intervention RBM as they relate to Environmental Advocacy, following three key interventions were selected and highlighted for this assessment. (Further details of these interventions can be referred to in the CU-NFA RBMs, attached as Annexe 1 to this report). The Key interventions are Workshops for Environmental Journalist, Editorial Briefings to the Media, and Networking of Environmental Journalists (FEJP-Forum of Environmental Journalists, Pakistan). Utility assessment of these key interventions is one part of the overall study. The other part is the exploratory investigation of possible future CU strategic and operational intervention options.

Scope of Key Interventions' Assessment

The key intervention assessment in the report specifically assess the intervention utility of each intervention in five areas of: a) Efficiency; in terms of activity implementation progress and completion, b) Effectiveness; in terms of service provision to the audience, c) Relevance; in terms of past and future inputs

as they relate to present socio-environment conditions, d) Sustainability; in terms of possible ripple effect on partners' internalisation of the support, and e) Gender; in terms of integration of gender concerns into external support and internal working. Assessment of these broad areas relates to CU's programmatic and operational achievements in relation to the key interventions, broad identification of gaps and barriers wherever they may exist in relation to these intervention, and identification of programmatic and operational course correction options by way of general recommendations.

The Process

Preparation for this study started at CU' behest in the summer. A resource team was assembled to develop and execute the assessment related information acquisition and analysis plan. Consequently, starting with a kick-off meeting among the team members, the team then proceeded to develop a study implementation plan encompassing development of the study design and methodology, secondary information review, primary information acquisition tools and protocols, field research, the acquired data analysis and Reporting. This Implementation plan catered for not only both distinct parts of the study, but also variance of focus and scope in activities with the parts. Based on the plan, the team then carried out primary information collection in field according to the predefined norm, criteria and interview protocols. The acquired information was then analysed and synthesised against the pre-defined objective, and hence, has been reported against such.

The Methodology

A Study design was developed to assess select CU Environmental Advocacy interventions, in light of contextual background and framework for the study, based on available resources. In order to meet the overall objective of the study the research effort was broken into two distinct parts, assessment of intervention utility, and investigative analysis for future options. For both parts relating to CU initiatives such as journalist workshops, editorial briefings, and FEJP, and investigation, a representative and stratified sample size based on the intervention theme, location of intervention, gender, and the profile of the respondents was developed. (Details of the study methodology can be referred to in Annex 2 of this report). Interview protocols, and sequencing of interviews were then designed accordingly (Sample of Interview protocols may be referred to in Annex 3 of this report). A team of professionals then carried out the interviews with respondents based on the pre-defined criteria of time requirement, cost implications, and availability of human resources. (Details of the Assessment team, along with identified responsibilities, is attached as Annex 4 to the report). Information collected from respondents was then synthesised, reflected against the secondary information with baseline variables, and subsequently recorded. (List of people interviewed is attached as Annex 5 to this report) This report then presents the synthesised output of the information in a predefined reporting framework.

The Assessment Presentation

Assessment of each key intervention for each key assessment area (further refined in terms of self explanatory key assessment attributes), along with attribute specific gaps and barriers where ever observed or applicable, attribute specific general observations and recommendations for future course of action, are presented below. In order to make the assessment presentation more concise and coherent, each individual component assessment is presented in a tabular form with five major headings, followed by component assessment and ensuing recommendation. The assessment table headings, and their explanations are as follows.

Component Assessment Table Key

Title of the Table: Name of Key the Intervention

Area of Assessment: Components of key area assessment framework (Effectiveness, Efficiency, Relevance, Sustainability and Gender) as defined in the scope

Key Assessment Attributes: Selected attributes as they refine definition of key area of assessment, for each assessment area

Synopsis of Respondents Observations (Input oriented): Synopsis of respondents' feed back on the collective 'state' of the intervention as it stood when it happened

Synopsis of Respondents Observations(Outcome orientated) Synopsis of respondents' feed back on the collective 'state' of the intervention as it stands after iteration

Potential Gaps: Identification of existing or potential systemic gaps as in what is there and what could be, if any

Potential Barrier: Identification of existing or potential systemic barrier to reducing the gap, if any

Potential Mitigation: Identification of practical stand-alone mitigation for barrier reduction intervention, if any

An overall general assessment, and consequent recommendations, regarding the intervention for observations that are other than component intervention specific; are either generic to all interventions or relate to the CU capacity building initiatives as a whole, are reported following individual intervention' assessment. While assessing the various interventions, one needs to be cognisant of the fact that not all CU interventions are dependent solely on CU's input. As in case of working with partners in any other circumstances, there needs to be and there is a line, beyond which CU's initial input will have to be transformed into a sustainable outcome by the partners themselves. CU will however need to define that line for its single or collective inputs, and then assist its partners take over. This will be the step towards fruition of environmental advocacy interventions. The assessment is conducted in light of such a need.

Intervention: Journalists Workshops

Training Workshops Rationale and Objectives:

Outcome of the Journalist workshops, as defined in the NFA-CU RBM is expected to be frequent and better quality reporting of environmental issues in selected English, Urdu and regional press. This is to be achieved through training of journalists through technical workshops, and provision of information and guidance when required. Envisaged impact of this outcome, in the long run, is expected to be an increased awareness and public support for environment.

The IUCNP Communications Unit thus organised four training workshops for journalist during the period of 1996-1999, with a participation of approximately 55 journalist of English, Urdu, and regional languages (notably Sindhi) press. Approximately 15 percent of the participating journalists were women journalists. Details of the location and break-up of participation is provided in Annex 2 to this report.

Based on the predetermined sample, a total of 18 interview (Five females and 13 male respondents, for a 33 percent representation of the total attendance in all four workshops) were attempted to be conducted to obtain information from English, Urdu and Sindhi media. Ten interviews were able to be completed in the stipulated time frame for the information to be able to be utilised in the assessment (tough to track journalists, isn't it?) Information was thus obtained form the participants on their perceptions, and observations on various facets of the workshop, and on the developments since. Synthesis of the response, process of arriving at such as described above, is presented here for record.

Brief Profile of the Survey Respondents

Of the total number of journalist respondents interviewed for this study approximately 20 percent of them were females. A majority of total respondents have post graduate degrees in social sciences, with quite a few having a post graduate degree in Journalism. Average experience of these journalists is about 8-10 years in the field. Most of them have been associated with print media, and mostly Urdu language newspapers, with a couple of respondents engaged in English and Sindhi language newspapers. General area of writing interest of the respondents in environment so far has been nature related.

Journalists Workshops Assessment Matrix

| Sr. No | Area of Assessment / Key Assessment Attributes | Synopsis of Respondents Observations: Input oriented | Synopsis of Respondents Observations: Outcome Orientated | Potential Gaps | Potential Barriers | Potential Mitigation |
|----------|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| 1 | Efficiency | | | | | |
| | Preparation | Workshops were generally well organised, logistics were appropriate | With various activities happening simultaneously, few journalists could not make it to all events | Less information in various environmental issue due to less frequency | Scheduling of workshop timings in conflict with journalists' general work timing | Frequent but shorter issue specific seminars, perhaps in early afternoons |
| | Delivery | Focus on information provision , less focus on tools for environmental writing | Could not use information for much long due to less attention to training in communication s tools | Information about Tools for effective technical writing on environment | Non-availability of tools to assist environmental writing | Development of short and specified 'how-to' documents, environment writing short courses / training |
| 2 | Effectiveness | | | | | |
| | Design | Interaction opportunity for participants with resource persons | Development of contacts, and use for further information source | Follow-up activity with resource persons on specific issues | Non-availability / contact of Resource person for longer duration | Development/ of diverse range of issue based resource persons, with stand-by listing |
| | Information | Information provided generally issue specific only | Most information at very general level, need more detailed information to be able to write a 'piece' | Dearth of ready sources for information sources as resource | Resource contacts/ easy-to-use information not available when needed | Development and provision of issue specific information resource data base for journalistic reference |
| 3 | Relevance | | | | | |
| | Need | Addressed and provided information on issue on which there was little awareness before | Detailed information to extract periodic 'write-able' pieces on an issue, and information on issue linking environment and social development | Journalistic training workshops are time constrained to allow an in-depth discussion | Time constraints of journalists to be able to attend longer training/ meetings | Prepare and circulate periodic in - depth briefing notes on various issues for journalists, h identification of further reading. |

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| | Use | Technical issue based information provided | Reporting, especially in regional languages media, could not benefit as much because of highly 'technical' English language phrases | Interest (in some cases, demand by editors) is more towards writing material that is easier to read by general readership, and therefore easily sellable | Non-availability of simpler regional languages translation of complex environmental concepts | Advocate to senior media management on the utility of environment reporting, development of environmental brief in regional language, with illustration in the local context |
| 4 | Sustainability | | | | | |
| | Skills | Ability to discuss and impart technical improvement could not be ascertained, no particular skill were discussed or imparted in workshop | Though most reporters, though have post graduate degrees, they do not necessarily have effective communication writing skills. Hence could not use more of the provided information | Lack of Technical writing on environment, especially in regional languages | Reporting on environment is considered by the journalist and editors at par, or less, with 'event' reporting' as opposed to 'mainstreaming' | Development and delivery of 'hands-on' technical research and writing modules |
| | Sources/ Systems | Funding to host and support such events is momentarily available to CU, journalists have little funding to even attend such functions on their own | Journalists income mostly tied to readily 'sellable' human interest write-ups, not many journalist, other than English, can afford to write on environment on their own. | No particular requirement by Editors for minimum technical writing skills | Incentives, other than personal motivation are usually lacking for environmental reporting | Lobbying with editors to provide 'space' incentive for good environment writing, with concurrent CU technical support/ small incentives for improved writing |
| 5 | Gender | | | | | |
| | Integration in Design | Women journalist were especially invited, facilities and seating was sensitive for them to feel comfortable | With positive response from women journalist in initial meetings, subsequent improvement in participation | Attendance rate and ratio of women journalists has remained almost steady with no noticeable | With a minuscule number of women environmental journalists in the field, difficult to engage more | CU to actively encourage all media to find and nominate more women journalists in their system for all such |

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| | | | and comfort level | increase in such training events | and more women journalists is such activity | events |
| | Integration in Use | Information provided on issue was discussed in the gender perspective in some instances, with impacts discussion highlighting effects on women. | Not much of the information could be effectively utilised, as gender reporting new concept with little reporting/ writing guidance | Tools for incorporating gender in environmental reporting/ journalism , Understanding and requirement by editors is lacking | Little understanding of gender inclusive reporting , and non-availability of tools to assist writing | Development of tools/ and gender incorporation training / skills development in writing, approaching education institutions/ editors for inclusion in journalistic studies |

General Observation

Based on the responses of the journalist interviewed for this component of the CU intervention, it can be ascertained that the information provided on various environmental issues at the workshops was useful, especially to the local journalists. Some journalist, especially from English and Urdu were able to translate this information into a few environment related articles in the print media. These workshops were also useful to participants in identifying information resource persons for them to contact in case of further information requirement. The workshops also provided for practising environmental journalist an avenue for further networking. Also, not enough focus on imparting environmental reporting tools for Urdu and regional media, in terms of how to translate the information into an environmental 'write-up' for the local language media, could be generally accorded during these workshops. The workshops, did not really address technical writing skills enhancement of the participants. With various newspapers requiring different types of writing needs, communications skills through written material can sometimes make a difference between a moderately read and a widely read journalists. This could be a factor in terms of its contribution to the financial sustainability of the journalists.

General Recommendation

CU may wish to consider developing and operationalising a frame work for journalists training, (encompassing more frequent but shorter workshops/ seminars) for following areas of perhaps equal importance a) issue based briefings b) systematic selective skills development programme (both internal and external) c) shorter and easy language dossier in current environment issue, with attention to local language information, d) development and information transfer process of journalistic resource reference pool, e) enlistment of senior editorial staff support for preferential treatment for environmental reporting.

Intervention: Editorial Briefings

Editorial Briefing Rationale and Objectives:

Outcome of the Editorial briefing, as defined in the NFA-CU RBM is expected to be availability of more prominent space for environmental issue/ articles in the print media in selected English, Urdu and regional press. This is to be achieved through media briefing seminar on environmental issues with senior newspaper editorial staff, and provision of information and guidance when required. Envisaged impact of this outcome, in the long run, is expected to be an increased awareness and public support for environment.

The IUCNP Communications Unit thus organised three Media Briefings for senior editorial staff during the period of 1998-1999, with a participation of approximately 56 senior editors of English, Urdu, and regional languages press. This number of editorial staff attending these briefings is about the same number of journalist been trained through workshops. Approximately 20 percent of the participants were female editorial staff. Details of the location and break-up of participation is provided in Annex 2 to this report.

Similar to the journalists' interview sample size, a total of 19 interviews (catering for six female and 13 male interviews for a 33 percent of the total attendance in all three media briefings) were attempted to be conducted to obtain information from English, Urdu and Sindhi media. Nine interviews were able to be completed in the stipulated time frame for the information to be able to be utilised in the assessment (Senior editorial staff is still tougher to track!) Information was thus obtained from the participants on their perceptions, and observations on various facets of the workshop, and on the developments since. Synthesis of the response, process of arriving at such as described above, is presented here for record.

Brief Profile of the Survey Respondents

Of the total number of journalist respondents interviewed for this study approximately 20 percent of them were females. A majority of total respondents have post graduate degrees in social sciences, with quite a few having a post graduate degree in Journalism. Most of the respondents have an average experience of more the ten years, with recent (last four to five years) of experience as 'technical' editors in the print media. Most of these interviewed editors are associated with Urdu language newspapers, with a about 20 percent of respondents engaged in English, and approximately 30 percent in Sindhi language newspapers. General area of environment reporting in these newspapers is either under 'features', or as part of 'news' when environment aspects are involved.

Editorial Briefings Assessment Matrix

| Sr. No | Area of Assessment / Key Assessment Attributes | Synopsis of Respondents Observations: Input oriented | Synopsis of Respondents Observations: Outcome Orientated | Potential Gaps | Potential Barriers | Potential Mitigation |
|----------|--|---|--|--|--|--|
| 1 | Efficiency | | | | | |
| | | Workshops generally well organised, logistics were appropriate, more focus on 'general' environment information | Not all editors were able to make it for meetings because of conflicting time demands | Less 'value addition' on general information at briefings | Scheduling of briefing, and length, as practised is not conducive for a larger participation | Frequent but shorter issue specific seminars, perhaps in early afternoons |
| 2 | Effectiveness | | | | | |
| | | Interaction opportunity for participants with resource persons, information too general | Development of some understanding of issues, some use of CU as further information source by editors | Back-up information/ tools support to editors on specific issues, at times lacking | Resource contacts/ easy-to-use information not available when needed | Development/ of diverse range of issue based resource persons, with stand-by listing |
| 3 | Relevance | | | | | |
| | | Information on current environmental issues discussed | Not much later use of provided information, most editors generally aware of the issue | Description of translation of information into helping environmental reporting and reporters | Senior editors are usually time constrained to allow for collective in-depth discussions | Prepare and circulate periodic in depth briefing notes on various issues for senior editors, for assigning writing jobs to journalists |
| 4 | Sustainability | | | | | |
| | | Attending and hosting media briefings is not a large financial encumbrance | Interest of senior editors for a general information session lacks in absence of practical suggestions for environmental reporting improvement . | Market mechanism of environmental journalism were not addressed in details in the briefings | Little in-depth understanding of the media financial systems and practices | CU to develop detailed understanding of the prevailing media market mechanisms, and develop practical guidelines for senior editors for creating |

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| | | | | | | environmental reporting 'space' |
| 5 | Gender | | | | | |
| | | Women editors were invited, not real discussion of issues from gender perspective | Little follow-up by Editors in the gender incorporation in environmental journalism | Gender incorporation in work/reporting was not specifically discussed | Little understanding of gender issues, Editors are not clear about gender implications environmental journalism | CU to engage senior editors in gender incorporation in environment reporting, perhaps through short seminars |

General Observation

Based on the responses of the editors interviewed for this component of the CU intervention, it can be ascertained that the editorial briefing provided to senior editors were generally useful, and were well attended. Some senior editors were generally unable to recall details of the briefings (senior editors claim to attend too many meetings, hence the inability to recall details of briefings that happened some while ago), it was observed that the focus on briefing was on English print media. Also, the main thrust of the briefings was perceived to be on providing environment 'information' to the editors; part of the briefing that was found not to be particularly useful to senior editors as they were generally aware of the information. The part of the briefing that was considered useful by some editors related to linking of environmental reporting with 'mainstream' reporting. Consequent to the briefings, though the understanding of the requirement was developed by the editors, this part of the briefing could not really be converted into operations by the Editors mostly for reasons such as a) environmental reporting by most journalists is, scarce with varying quality, b) capacity to convert and 'sell' environmental information as daily interest story impacting human existence (as opposed to a technical subject) is almost non-existent c) financial rewards associated with environmental reporting (i.e., remuneration of journalists, revenues generation from print, etc.) are quite meagre, with costs of in-house investments in improving environmental reporting considered prohibitive, and d) general unavailability of ready information resources on current environment issue and moral support of environment related organisations' on sensitive issues.

General Recommendation

Perhaps, not much can be done by CU regarding the internal financial mechanism of the media, in terms of the how media manages their cost-pricing relationship, CU may however wish to consider developing and operationalising a framework for Editorial staff assistance in addressing some of the identified areas for improvement. This framework could include a) continuous and sustained engagement of editors, especially the Urdu and Sindhi press through joint journalist-editors interactive briefings/ seminars on how to further mainstream environment reporting, b) development of tools, both for journalist and editors, to help reorient current environment reporting practices (from event based-to human impact based) without compromising the publishing 'formats', c) detailed 'feature' oriented information on current environment issues, (while converting 'technical' language into plain language wherever possible) with an ancillary marketing strategy for editors to sell it to private sector for sponsorship, d) development of short-term measures/ incentives to 'cultivate' promising journalists in environmental reporting (supply driven mechanism).

Intervention: Forum For Environmental Journalist, Pakistan (FEJP)

FEJP Rationale and Objectives:

Outcome of an effort to establish a platform for journalists engaged in the environmental reporting activities, as defined in the NFA-CU RBM, is expected to be a functional and viable environmental journalist networks that would enable journalist to interact more frequently on a formal basis, and to be able to undertake environmental information related activities. Establishment of this forum would lead to a broader environmental reporting, contributing toward general environmental awareness and environmental reporting demand. This forum, in the long run, would also enable member journalists to substantiate their earnings by engaging environment awareness related activities.

The IUCNP Communications Unit thus organised preliminary meetings (three) of invited environmental journalist to discuss the idea. Journalists from various media, and language, attended the meeting, with an overall participation in all meeting of approximately 59 during the period of 1997-1998, approximately 20 percent of them was female journalist. Based on the discussing meeting, a Forum for environmental journalists FEJP was established in 1998, with election of the first office bearers, with one female environmental journalist elected as an office bearer. Details of the location and break-up of participation is provided in Annex 2 to this report.

Interviews of FEJP office bearer were conducted to obtain FEJP specific information. Also, information regarding the FEJP functioning was obtained from Environmental journalists, and editorial staff attending CU workshops, to get their feed back and cross referencing. This information as obtained as part of the other interviews conducted for other sections (Journalists workshops, Media briefing, Investigative report) of this study. Information was obtained from English, Urdu and Sindhi media journalists as it relates to FEJP. Synthesis of such direct, and cross referred responses, is presented here for record.

Brief Profile of the Survey Respondents

Of the total number of two FEJP bearers respondents interviewed for this study, one of them was the FEJP female office bearer. One of these respondents possesses post graduate degrees in Urdu. The other respondent's educational qualifications could not be ascertained. The respondents have an average experience of approximately 15 years or more in various capacities of environmental journalism. These respondents, however, did not have any specific experience relating to management and operations of a professional journalistic forum.

Briefings FEJP Assessment Matrix

| Sr. No | Area of Assessment / Key Assessment Attributes | Synopsis of Respondents Observations: Input oriented | Synopsis of Respondents Observations: Outcome Orientated | Potential Gaps | Potential Barriers | Potential Mitigation |
|----------|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| 1 | Efficiency | | | | | |
| | | Workshops were generally well organised, logistics were appropriate, with focus on the objective | Attendees were able to obtain follow-up information/ support by CU | Initial larger attendance reduced in subsequent meetings | Less frequency of in between meeting may have caused less attendance / interaction between attendees | With CU presently serving as Secretariat, periodic update (in-between meetings) to members may be helpful |
| 2 | Effectiveness | | | | | |
| | | Good interaction opportunity between participants and process facilitators, relevant information available | Were able to achieve objective as result | Further development and follow-up on objectives by members is slow | Intermittent, and at times long gap between forum meetings | As a short term measure, the Secretariat to engage members in discussing 'the next-steps' at first opportunity |
| 3 | Relevance | | | | | |
| | | Addressed and provided platform for an environmental journalists' need and a forum for further exposure | Journalists, other then the members (especially Urdu and Sindhi media) are interested in being part of the forum | Active pursuit of interested journalists by the forum is lacking | Understanding of respective roles and responsibilities among various members is not very clear | Forum to identify and seek a broader and diversified membership for better information exchange/ support and ownership |
| 4 | Sustainability | | | | | |
| | | Funding to host and support such events is momentarily available to the Secretariat, members have little access to funding to attend meetings. | The forum as a collective body has been unable to pursue further activities to the fullest mainly because of resource constraints | Members and office bearers are finding it tough to allocate time and resources for the Forum activities on honorary basis | Opportunity cost for members/ officers bearers of the forum is high, also resources to carryout secretariat functions are meagre | CU to assist Secretariat in developing a Capital and Operational expenses enhancement framework, and a cost defraying incentives programme |

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| 5 | Gender | | | | | |
| | | Women journalist were especially invited, facilities and seating was sensitive for them to feel comfortable | Women journalist are represented in the general membership and the elected officers of the forum | Attendance rate and ratio of women journalists has decreased in forum meetings | Women journalist find it difficult to support their participation in forum activities at their expense | CU, as a short term, may wish to support the forum secretariat in providing financial subsidy for women journalists' participation in the forum meetings |
| | | | | | | |

General Observation

Based on the responses of the FEJP office bearers and the environmental journalists interviewed, it appears that though there was enough interest and need for such a Forum at a national level, there appears to be certain slack period in taking the forum to the next logical step of practical operations, once it was formed. It is perhaps caused by the fact that most forum members, though have the will, lack the requisite financial, operational and management capacity, at present, to undertake further initiatives on their own. Also, with the day to day activities of the journalistic, who are more liable to secure journalistic work for their existence, time required to devote to such an activity becomes much greater than the opportunity cost for Forum activities, and hence the dormancy. Also, with the change in the politico-economic environment in the country of the past two to three years or so, the need of environmental journalism to be equated with social development, with human interest perspective has not really been addressed, hence a present lack of broad based support from other journalists to the Forum. Though there is much interest in similar kind of forums in the provinces, similar circumstances may await them in near future.

General Recommendation

CU may wish to consider assisting the present FEJP through a two-tiered approach. As a short term intervention, CU may assist FEJP in developing and securing funding for FEJP through smaller environmental issue related projects, that may help environmental journalists in securing some finances for its operations. Such a project may assist its members in procuring token income as an incentive to further efforts to this initiatives, plus help develop their environmental writing skills. As a long term strategy, CU may assist FEJP in developing, operationalising and helping in securing funding for a FEJP long term programme for environmental advocacy to assist FEJP become self sustainable. Such a programme needs to include financial, operational, and managerial capacity development of the FEJP members. CU may be then also be to withdraw its secretarial support to this initiative, once this intervention becomes sustainable through FEJP self financing.

Exploratory Investigation for future CU Communications Related Options

Rationale and Objective

In tandem with the assessment of various CU Interventions under the framework agreement, i.e. Journalistic workshops, editorial briefings, FEJP, etc., it was also felt useful to inquire from the peers in the community about the current state-of-the-environmental reporting conditions as prevailing in the journalistic community in particular, and the country in general. It was also considered useful to seek such peers' input and guidance on the prevalent needs and requirement of the media community, which the CU could then try to address as priority based on its capacity and mandate. Such information would be helpful while developing a larger CU intervention strategy of the future.

Exploratory investigation was thus conducted with a wide range of senior professionals engaged in print, electronic, and visual media. Professionals belonging to academia were also included in this exploration. Presented below is a synopsis of the gathered information that provides a general overview in key areas of a) the present conditions and shortcomings for environmental communications as they prevail in the country at the moment, b) the possible present and future environmental communication requirement and direction, and c) the peers' perception on what could be done to help improve the overall environmental scenario through a collective environmental communications undertakings.

Presentation of Information

Presentation of the information synthesis is in two parts. The first part is the summary of collective responses from for information obtained for the key areas listed above. The second part of information presentation is a general observation, and general recommendation as derived from it. (Objectivity usually is exercised while drawing conclusions based on mostly subjective information. In drawing inference from the conclusion, one must however be cognizant of the fact that interpretations to qualitative data are at times subjective and hence susceptible to possible biases.)

Part 1

Brief Profile of the Survey Respondents

A total of 15 senior professional were interviewed for this exploratory study, of which two (approximately 15 percent of the interviewees) were female professionals. Sixty percent of the interviewed professional belonged to print media, one interviewee (or about 7 percent of the total interviewees) was from the electronic media, 15 percent of the interviewees were from journalistic institutions, and the rest, about 22 percent of the interviewees belonged to Academia. Coverage of investigative study was at a national scale, with most exploratory interviews taking place in Sindh and the NWFP. A majority of the media interviewees (about 66 percent were senior editors of their respective publications, and all interviewees of journalistic institutions and academia were the heads of their respective professional set-ups. Most coverage of the print media for exploratory interviewees (about 75 percent) was English language, with the rest being Urdu and Sindhi.

Present conditions and shortcomings for environmental communications

Information obtained for his part of the exploratory study pertained to the key areas of

- Availability of Institutional, programmatic, and financial structures for environmental journalism
- Availability of skill development opportunities/ facilities for journalists

Summary Information of Responses

Financial and Institutional structures of print media, in general, are not as vibrant as they ought to be. The Newspaper industry though is growing with occasional new newspapers starting up frequently. There does not appear to be much government pressure on industry regulation, where the industry generally practices self restrain and self-censorship. The English media is better off in terms of financial stability and access to

advertisements. As most newspaper advertising revenues are through government advertisements, newspapers are at times dependant on government revenues for liquidity. Urdu and Sindhi media is financially restrained with Sindhi media at a very initial stage of viability. Entry of journalist into print and electronic is usually through personal contacts, and as a favour to the journalist, rather than systemic requirement. Few women journalists enter environmental journalism field. Also, there appears to be a large gap in the wage structures between that of an aspiring journalist, and the senior journalists and the newspaper management, which at times is considered prohibitive for the economic survival of the entrant journalists. Therefore, most journalists, who are involved in news reporting or feature writing, are more inclined to write about 'sellable' items such as social and economic stories which are more read and better paid. They, hence are not really 'pushed' to write on environment, which appears to be a technical subject to write on; a subject with most journalist are not familiar with. Media coverage, therefore is mostly of political, social and economical news, with not enough coverage of environmental issues through environmental reporting. English language newspapers, however, do cover environmental news especially when involved by national and local NGOs in the issues of environmental concerns.

Most journalists entering the journalistic field these days lack requisite skills and journalistic attitude. And when they do manage to secure a newspaper job, they get underpaid jobs and generally remain so, mostly because of such lack of professional skills. There is no real teaching or training academy for aspiring journalist, except of the academic institutions which provide fresh graduates the industry, and that also with minimum skills. Most fresh graduate then need to get on the job, hands-on experience and training to develop further skills and expertise to make room for themselves in the industry, if they can. Though English media requires an additional skill of knowing and writing better English, these skills are not thoroughly taught to the journalists at the higher academic level. On the other hand, there are not enough resources or capacity available within the media, especially the print media to help train journalist for future development. PTV Academy does provide some training to its staff, for the visual production purposes, and that too at a limited scale. Professional skills development opportunities are relevantly better in English newspapers, than Urdu or Sindhi, as with relatively better finances English newspapers are more willing to provide opening and space for skilled and knowledgeable fresh English newspapers journalist.

Possible future requirement of environmental communications

Information obtained for his part of the exploratory study pertained to the key areas of

- Need and Scope for environmental communication
- Systemic avenues for environmental communicators promotion

Summary Information of Responses

There is evidence that environmental reporting is getting more space in the print media, especially the English language. This space is not correspondingly visible in the Urdu or the Sindhi media. Main reason for this space in reporting is that most environment issues are now beginning to impact daily lives, especially in the urban areas or larger cities where such environmental issues are now being understood by readership as human interest issues. Environmental reporting, however has not caught up with this understanding as yet where environment reporting is mostly confined to technicalities and specifics of the science of the issue, as opposed to presenting this information as human interest and human impacting events. Beginning of this kind of reporting, then again is visible more so in English language newspapers than in Urdu and Sindhi. This perhaps is due to the facts that a) not much of the scientific information on environmental issues is available in regional languages, b) capacity of journalists to take environmental information and convert and present it as human interest information for wider audience and acceptance is rudimentary c) the remuneration structure of journalists does not allow them much incentive for them to invest in this field on their own and d) a longer term institutional support structure to facilitate such developments is lacking.

Yet, on the other hand with the subject of environment becoming mainstream, albeit more so through social-angle reporting of environmental disasters that happened in the last few years in the country and around the region, the need for skilled and knowledgeable journalists to be able to report on environment as human and social interest stories is there. These skilled journalists need to be able to take environment related information and relate to its social, cultural, economic, etc, effects as they impact living conditions in the urban and rural areas of the country. This requirement would generally be true for print and visual media. Organisation such as the Press Forum and the Sindh Academy (for Sindhi language) do provide

some such support, this support is however is to a little extent and not institutionalised. There is perhaps however going to be an added dimension to the environmental journalism requirement in the near future as more in -roads will be made by the information technology in terms of electronic transfer of information which could be print, visual, and multi-media based. Which also mean that information transfer time will be much more faster then the traditional print media newspapers and magazine, for it to be relevant and updated. This would require a different set of systems, sources and skills for environmental journalist for requisite understanding of issues, with availability of resources for reference, which in most cases does not exist at the moment.

Peers' perception of possible undertakings to support overall environmental communications improvement

Information obtained for his part of the exploratory study pertained to the key areas of

- Identification of possibilities for improving the overall conditions through supply driven measures
- Identification of institutional possibilities as demand driven measures

Various divers and simultaneous measures are required to help improve the overall conditions of the journalistic field, especially of the environmental journalism, for it to be able to effectively play its role in environmental information and analysis provision to the public at large. This information needs to be presented both as information of science in a readily understandable manner, and as information of environment as it interacts with and effects the general living conditions. This requires a concerted effort to improve skills, sources, and systems, and at all levels, for the media to be able to undertake meaningful environmental communication. These measure include, but are not limited to, the following,

- Academic institutions that formally teach journalism need to develop a shared understanding of the programme needs with the industry, with concurrent content teaching and skills developments methodology to prepare demand driven journalist possessing good language, writing and analytical tools and skills . Environmental journalism to be a conscious part of the general curriculum
- Refresher training opportunities in Academia, and elsewhere, to journalists of acquire or enhance their technical and environmental writing skills need to be provided
- Methods and tools to help enable journalist integrate environment reporting into mainstream human interest stories be developed and be trained for
- Specialised environmental information resources, with easy to use environmental reference information be developed and made accessible, especially in the Urdu and the Sindhi language. This information resource to be electronically accessible, with a ready references of resource person for further detailed information
- Vibrant peer support networks for fresh and in-service environmental journalists be established.
- Media management to provide financial and social incentives and support to journalists for environmental reporting, while establishing a concept of 'mentors' in support of fresh journalists
- Management structure, especially of print media, to designate distinct career path for environmental journalism, with investments in journalists for improvements of their skills and knowledge
- Creation of environmental journalists' Trust Fund to support eligible journalists as a financial fall-back.
- Regional media be proactively supported to reduce the environmental reporting gaps and increase wider environmental information sharing

Part 2

General Observation

Based on the assessment of responses of professionals and representatives of various institutions and journalist organisations regarding the prevailing conditions of the journalistic community, it can be inferred

that media's performance is quite hampered by the present institutional, financial and technical set-ups. Support structures and systems to allow environmental journalists to better perform in environmental communication, especially in the print media, are quite preliminary in most cases. Also, with limited training and learning avenues to acquire professional skills by environmental journalists to be able to report on environmental issues, environmental communication has not had the opportunity to have a larger exposure. With simultaneous non-conducive incentives regime as generally practised by media management's, the drive for aspiring journalists to performance according to the expectation is lacking. The Academic and professional training opportunities for environmental communication are rudimentary, with opportunities for development of requisite skills and resources for environmental communication almost non-existent. With increased requirement on the media to report on environmental issue as human interest issues, and with evolution of communication reporting medium, this gap perhaps is going to be more pronounced.

General Recommendation

CU cannot solve all Media problems by itself. It can, however attempt to help alleviate the problems where it can, based on its resources and mandate. CU therefore may wish to consider a short term (3-5) years intervention strategy with the media to assist environmental communication enhancement. This strategy may include the following aspects, a) lobby with senior media management to enable them to provide 'space' and 'room' for environmental journalism in their respective products b) lobby and assist in development of a career incentives programme for environmental journalism in conjunction with media management, c) develop and impart training to environmental journalists in environmental communications tools and methods, d) assist academic and training institutes in revising their curricula to focus on demand oriented journalism e) strengthen environmental journalist information exchange forums to become self-sustaining and f) develop information and reference resources for environmental communication. CU may itself need to strengthen its capacity (includes systems, sources, and skills) to be able to operationalise this strategy, perhaps on a prioritised basis. This intervention, perhaps would be significant in improving the overall environmental reporting needs in general.