



**LINKAGES  
WITH ACADEMIA**



Pakistan now operates in a globalized environment characterized by the rapid growth of a knowledge-based society. Institutions of higher education, both national and international, are increasingly playing a central role in providing the youth of today and tomorrow with a global outlook and global capacities.

It is imperative for civil society to build and strengthen linkages with academic institutions for various types of activities including increased faculty and student exchange, increased foreign student enrolment, the development of joint research programs and co-sponsored seminars/conferences. In short, linkages are all about developing global scholastic partnerships and capabilities.

## INTERNSHIP AND VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Given the importance of these linkages, SDPI has been actively involved with universities, both within Pakistan and abroad. SDPI offers regular internships to fresh Masters degree holders and to students on the verge of completing their post-graduate studies. The purpose is to expose youth to practical situations, build their knowledge base, impart skills and train them to become useful members of society.

*"The internship with SDPI gave me an idea of what it's like to do research. I had not realized how much time it takes. I did not have extensive experience with primary source documents before coming here, even though we are taught research methodology at the University. I also discovered that I like writing."  
- An intern from Arid Agriculture University*

SDPI has an institutional collaboration with the Department of Agricultural Economics at the Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi. This year, four B.Sc (Honor.) Agri. Economics students (3 females and 1 male) interned with SDPI from this University. SDPI has also trained two students from Lahore University of Management Sciences in carrying out their research.

The McCulloch Center for Global Initiatives at the Mount Holyoke College, USA also requested SDPI to place interns and volunteers from their college at SDPI. So this year, a sophomore with a double major in Economics and Mathematics spent her summer break with SDPI. The goal was to give the student a chance to see how SDPI works as an organization, and also give her the opportunity to act as a research assistant to support the work of the Institute:

*"My field trip to Sargodha, despite the security concerns, was a great success as quite a number of farmers showed up, expressed their views and actively took part in all the group discussions. I got to see how work at the grassroot level is carried out and was able to interact with the farmers."  
- Volunteer from Mount Holyoke College, USA*

In total, ten interns and four volunteers worked with SDPI during their spring/summer break.

## Establishing Research Partnerships

SDPI also provides space to local and foreign scholars to interact with SDPI staff and pursue their research programs. SDPI is leading the NCCR Pakistan Research Group which is a partner of the Swiss National Center for Competence in Research North-South (NCCR). One of the NCCR North-South objectives is to strengthen development-oriented research capacities in the South and the North. Under this partnership, SDPI supervises the research work and facilitates the field work of Master and PhD students from the University of Faisalabad and University of Zurich.

## International Placements

Other professional development activities at SDPI include special assignments, internal and external attachments, including international placements. As part of the NCCR North-South Transversal Package (TP) 2 *From Vulnerability to Resilience*, an SDPI Research Fellow became affiliated as a visiting scholar at the Institute for Social Studies (ISS), The Hague, Netherlands to work on a paper on exploring the role of social capital for vulnerability and resilience.

## Student and Faculty Orientations

Several local universities sent their students and faculty members for orientations during which we shared SDPI's ongoing projects, as well as projects linked with specific programs of interest to the students on their request.

An orientation session with students and faculty members of Development Studies

Department, Iqra University was held at SDPI during which a lecture on *Environment and Sustainable Development* was also given. Following this orientation, the university has now offered to have a more formal collaboration especially for SDPI's Internship Program.

Orientations were given to various delegations and students from the LUMS Lahore, Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi, Faisalabad University, Fatima Jinnah Women University in collaboration with MinFAL and Mohammed Ali Jinnah University to name a few.

## Co-sponsored Seminars

SDPI's Advocacy Unit was actively involved in networking with local universities for organizing joint seminars. Their efforts bore fruit when an SDPI-UNDP-Preston University joint seminar on World Environment Day was held at Preston University titled *Safe Drinking Water for Every Pakistani*.

During the year, contacts were also made with the following national universities to explore opportunities and potential areas for mutual benefit between these universities and SDPI. Students and faculty members were also invited to SDPI weekly seminars:

- Baharia University, Islamabad, Pakistan
- Barani University, Islamabad, Pakistan
- Hamdard University, Islamabad, Pakistan
- National University of Science and Technology, Islamabad, Pakistan
- Mohammad Ali Jinnah University, Islamabad, Pakistan
- Greenwich University, Islamabad, Pakistan
- Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan

## Academic Lectures and Curriculum Development

SDPI researchers also delivered lectures at various local and international universities e.g.:

- Delivered a lecture on *Political Economy of Earthquake Rehabilitation* organized by Preston University, Islamabad, Pakistan.
- A presentation on *Gendered Employment in Pakistan's Textile and Clothing Industry* was given during the Nurturing Minds series at the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Islamabad, Pakistan.
- Abstract on *Gender, Employment and Equity: Effects of Foreign Direct Investment in Rural Indonesia* was accepted for presentation at the annual conference of Verein für Socialpolitik, Research Committee Development Economics, Germany. The paper was presented at the Georg-August University Göttingen.
- Delivered a seminar on *Rethinking Security* at the Department of Defence and Strategic Studies, Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

- A project proposal for writing a textbook on Health Economics for university graduates based on evidence from Pakistan covering theoretical and empirical underpinnings is also being developed for submission to the Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan in collaboration with a reputed university.

## Policy Advice

SDPI Research Fellows are also on the following Boards:

- 2002-present, Member, Board of Studies, Women's Studies Center, University of Peshawar, Peshawar, Pakistan
- 2003-present, Member, Board of Studies, Environmental Sciences Department, University of Peshawar, Peshawar, Pakistan
- 2005-present, Member, Board of Governors, Center for Excellence in Women's Studies, Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan
- 2006-present, Member, Senate, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE)

