

# Media Dialogue

## **HIV and AIDS in Pakistan A situational Analysis**

Karachi 27<sup>th</sup> December 2005

Organized by:  
**Pakistan National AIDS Consortium**  
**Delegation of European Commission**  
**Pakistan Press Foundation**



## Second Media Seminar

### HIV and AIDs in Pakistan

#### A Situational Analysis

27<sup>th</sup> December 2005, Karachi

The second seminar of the series which was organized by Pakistan National AIDS Consortium and European commission was held in Karachi. The title of the seminar was: ' HIV and AIDS in Pakistan, A situational analysis' Karachi was selected because according to the recent findings HIV epidemic has reached concentrated epidemic level in IDUs in Karachi and it has become imperative to deal with the situation in more comprehensive way. The seminar was organized in collaboration with Pakistan Press Foundation.

Four member delegation, which consisted of Raja Khalid Mehmood President PNAC, Mr. Qadeer Baig National Manager PNAC, Aftab Ahmed Awan Communication Officer PNAC and Mr. Shahzad Badar, Media Advisor Delegation of the European Commission went to Karachi 26<sup>th</sup> of December to arrange and conduct a seminar for media personnel. Preliminary meetings were held with editors of news papers, on the evening of 26<sup>th</sup> December to discuss the arrangements of the seminar.

The seminar started on 3.00 pm. Aftab Ahmed Awan conducted the proceedings of the seminar. Raja Khalid Mehmood President PNAC welcomed the guests and introduced them the objectives of the seminar. He also discussed the facts and figures of HIV & AIDS in Pakistan. He expressed his opinion that media can play a very important role in informing people about the modes of transmission of the epidemic and about the ways and means of prevention and cure. He was followed by Mr. Owais Aslam Ali General Secretary Pakistan Press Foundation. Pakistan Press foundation were the co-hosts of the seminar and Mr. Owais also welcomed the guests. He discussed the role which media can play. He expressed the opinion media should also play the role of accountability. He said that NGOs and government should be held accountable for their performance. He also expressed the opinion the media should be involved in the strategy and plan development stages so that media feels ownership of the issue and contribute more positively in the fight against the epidemic

The second session, which was titled 'community Voices' was the most important and interesting session of the seminar. In this session members of the vulnerable groups were invited to voice their opinions and discuss their problems. These included Mr. Fareed Ahmed (Person Living with HIV and AIDS), Sumabl (Transgender), and Sonu (Peer Educator among Female Sex Workers). All the participants were accompanied by the representatives of the NGOs which are working with them. The session proved very successful and productive and many issues of serious importance were raised. The representatives of the vulnerable groups expressed their point of view very explicitly. The journalists took keen interest in the session.

The third session was a situational analysis of HIV and AIDS in Pakistan, which was presented by Dr. Sikandar Sohani. In the presentation different aspects of the HIV and AIDS epidemic were discussed in detail.

Afterwards Mr. Qadeer Baig discussed the concept of increased vulnerability to HIV and AIDS. He invited the participants to discuss different aspects of the issue and to give recommendations for pre-empting the spread of HIV and AIDS in the area.

The seminar was attended by a very large number of media representatives. It was also attended by partner NGOs. The seminar proved very successful. It was widely covered in print and electronic media..

### **Outcomes/Learning**

Better understanding among journalists of the issues related with HIV and AIDS.

Enhancement of Public Private Partnership.

Increased level of trust between Media and NGOs

Increased visibility of PNAC and EC

Participation of the people living at the core of the problems, vulnerable groups

Assessment of the requirements and problems of the vulnerable and marginalized groups

### **Next steps/follow up**

It was felt that journalists are often very skeptical about the intentions and role of NGOs and only frequent interaction and discussion can clear these misconceptions. It was also an observation that government department in Sindh are not very willing to cooperate with civil society organizations like PNAC and the reluctance was evident because of the absence of Provincial Manager SACP and Secretary health, who did not come in spite of clear confirmations earlier. Perhaps we need to take confidence building measures to increase the cooperation. Media should not only be invited to seminars but also needs to given first hand experience of the on ground situation



President PNAC, National Manager PNAC, General Secretary PPF and Dr. Sikandar



Seminar Being covered by local television networks



Representatives of the Vulnerable Groups discussing their problems



Participants of the Seminar



Participants of the seminar



The representatives of media