

Knowledge Exchange Exploratory Visit
November 13 - December 5, 2012: Visit Report

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ACRONYMS

AKU	Aga Khan University
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHS	Community Health Sciences
CHSCR	Centre of Health and Social Care Research
HANDS	Health and Nutrition Development Society
ME&R	Monitoring Evaluation and Research
MRDO	Marvi Rural Development Organisation
SAFWCO	Sindh Agricultural & Forestry Workers Coordinating Organisation
SCF	Sindh Community Foundation
SLCS	Sarangaa Literary & Cultural Society
SHU	Sheffield Hallam University
SALU	Shah Abdul Latif University
TSV	The Sand Voices
UK	United Kingdom
SRDO	Social Research and Development Organisation
US	University of Sindh
VC	Vice Chancellor

BACKGROUND

The Global Forum for Health Research, in 1999 recognised that there is 10/90 gap between the developing and developed countries in health research¹. In the fourth report of the Forum acknowledged that despite over three decades of efforts to build up capacity, during which thousands of scientists from developing countries have been trained, results have been very disappointing in many countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan². It has been identified that a large numbers of trained scientists are not working in their countries of origin and many countries cannot call upon the necessary human and financial resources to tackle the key health problems affecting their people. The Global Forum call upon a determined joint effort for research collaborations between developed and developing countries to work collaboratively for exchanging research results, ideas, knowledge and skills.

In Pakistan, research has remained a low priority area in all fields and often viewed as expenditure rather than an investment. During 1994 to 2000 approximately \$1.5m (£826,000) was available to the Pakistan Medical Research Council (PMRC), less than half of the amount was disbursed because of a lack of good research proposals³. Current status of health research in Pakistan is individual-based, fragmented, uncoordinated, of poor quality and largely irrelevant to the health policy and planning needs of the country⁴.

The Centre of Health and Social Care Research is a part of Faculty of Health and Wellbeing, Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) United Kingdom (UK). The centre undertakes high quality, strategic, applied research and related education in order to enable a step change in the way research is delivered and services are designed; and to foster knowledge transfer that will improve the quality and effectiveness of health care design and delivery at national and international level. Hence, the development of international research collaboration between the Centre and different academic and non-academic institutions of Pakistan would be an excellent opportunity to improve research co-operation with knowledge exchange activities among partners. Initially, the collaboration will prepare joint research proposals and undertake research in priority areas but intended to extend the scope of its activities such as faculty exchange and collaborative programme development.

¹ Global Forum for Health Research (1999). *The 10/90 report on health research-1999*. Geneva: Global Forum for Health Research.

² Global Forum for Health Research (2004). *The 10/90 report on health research 2003-2004*. Geneva: Global forum for Health Research

³ Sadana, et al. (2004). Importance of health research in South Asia. *BMJ*, 328:826-30.

⁴ Akhtar & Khan (2010). *Health Research Capacity in Pakistan*. Cairo: WHO.

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The British Council provided Knowledge Exploratory visit grant to develop strategic institution to institution partnership through introducing international research collaboration (IRC) between academic and non-academic institutions in the UK and Pakistan. The collaboration aimed at developing knowledge exchange mechanisms and facilitating transfer of research ideas, results and skills between partners by developing joint research proposals, strengthening institutional research capacity and systematic human resource development. Initially the collaboration will undertake research-cooperation with knowledge exchange activities, further scope of collaboration will be extended to other activities such as faculty exchange, curriculum and programme development.

Purpose of Visit

Sadiq Bhanbhro travelled to Pakistan, to explore and identify academic and non- academic partners working in the areas of health sciences in Pakistan; to develop opportunities for research collaboration.

Scope of Work

The scope of work for the visit included:

- Conduct meetings and site visits of potential partners
- Review the opportunities and challenges for health science research development
- Identify collaborative research ideas and skills transferring opportunities
- Strengthen partnerships and networking in health science research
- Produce a visit report
- Brief/Debrief the SHU, if requested
- Initial plan of future activities

ACTIVITIES

Sadiq Bhanbhro met and held discussions to address items on the scope of work with various academic and non-academic institutions staff members, including representatives of Aga Khan University (AKU), University of Sindh (US), Shah Abdul Latif University (SALU), Health and Nutrition Development Society (HANDS), The Sand Voices (TSV), Social Research and Development Organisation (SRDO), Collective for Social Science Research, Marvi Rural Development Organisation (MRDO), Aahung and Evolve. The schedule of meetings and site visits can be seen in Annex 1. Individual, group meetings and site visits were held, followed by three participatory half day workshops at Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukkur. The discussions and workshops were based on the notion of 'knowledge exchange'⁵ given by Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (UK) and perspectives on current health related problems and gaps and what were their perceived research priority areas for possible collaboration.

Findings

The collaborators confirmed the profile of their respective organisations, their current research capacity. Majority of institutions showed interest to be part of the collaboration except MRDO, SAFWCO and Aahung. The key areas of possible research and knowledge exchange collaboration and support that were identified during the discussions and workshops are following:

1. Capacity Building

- Institutional research capacity building (doing and implementing research)
- Participatory Action Research Methodologies
- Qualitative & quantitative data collection and analysis
- Publication writing
- Methodologies for human resource development for health and well-being
- Methodologies to influence change
- Measuring the impact of change interventions

⁵ 'Within a modern, knowledge driven economy, knowledge exchange is about transferring good ideas, research results and skills between universities, other research organisations, business and the wider community to enable innovative new products and services to be developed'

2. Clinical and Public Health

- Social determinants of health
- Social exclusion and health of socially excluded people
- Impact of violence on health
- Daily lives of women, social determinants of health and empowerment for health
- Maternal and Child Health (Nutrition and Child Survival)
- Gender-based violence as a public health problem
- Mental health of marginalised communities
- Reproductive & sexual health
- Health inequalities/inequities
- Malnutrition
- Access to health care services

3. Policy & Advocacy

- Health policy development
- Developing evidence literacy in researchers and policy makers
- Use of evidence in policy
- Evidence-based advocacy
- Community engagement in policy making process
- Raising community awareness about rights

Opportunities & Challenges

In recent year Pakistan Higher Education Commission (HEC) has took some initiatives to promote research in Pakistan; such as research support scheme, which provides research; travel and publication grants to faculty members of HEC recognised institutions. NGOs do undertake baseline surveys, small research projects and they have baseline data sets. However, these data sets are under-utilised and the organisation lack capacity to analyse and use data systematically for policy making. The representatives of different institutions identified that lack of expertise in ethical review, health economics, epidemiology, anthropology, new methodologies and health policy and the shortage of staff with statistical, analytical, and managerial skills are major challenges. This severely limits the ability to formulate research

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proposals or oversee complex research projects. These skills are also relevant to functions that need to be upgraded within the region's health systems—for example, disease surveillance, health and management information systems, quality assurance, or vital registration systems.

Next Steps

Activity	Responsible party	Timeline	Comments
Creating an e-group of collaboration	SHU representative - Sadiq Bhanbhro (SB)	January, 25 2013	SHU representative will create an e-group and send invitation to focal person of all collaborators. All partners will be required to join the group for future communication.
Creating collaboration group page on social networking websites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn	SHU representative - SB	January, 31 2013	SHU representative will establish group on social networking sites and inform all partners.
Priority setting exercise using modified Delphi version	SHU representative - SB	February 20, 2013	SB will ask all collaborators through e-group to identify their 5-10 research priorities then they will be asked to rank them.
Putting together brief profiles of collaborative organizations	University of Sindh and Sindh Community Foundation focal persons	February 28, 2013	US & SCF representatives will collect brief profiles from all partner organizations, put together and share with partners.
Preparing joint proposal	All member of collaboration	March 31, 2013	SHU representative will coordinate and all partners will contribute in the development of the proposal.
Searching for funding streams	All collaborators	February 28, 2013	All partners will search for funding streams in line with research priorities and share through e-group. SB will make list of potential funding streams.
Skype meeting	All collaborators	Quarterly	SB will coordinate meetings.
Information sharing	All collaborators	on-going	All partners will share relevant information through e-group.

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Collaborators

- Ms. Kausar S Khan - Department of Community Health Science, AKU
- Dr. Sajid Soofi - Department of Pediatrics, AKU
- Dr. Najuma Phulpoto - Department of Sociology, SALU
- Professor Ishaq Sameejo - SCLS.
- Mr. Rafiq Wassan - Department of Archeology & Anthropology, US
- Mr. Pasand Ali Khoso - Department of Sociology, US
- Dr. Zeeshan Shaik - Assistant Professor, Isra University
- Ms. Rubina Jaffari - General Manager ME&R, HANDS
- Mr. Khurram Sial - TSV
- Dr. Ayesha Aziz - Evolve
- Mr. Ishaq Palh - SRDO
- Mr. Javed Soz Halai - SCF

Annex 1. Schedule of appointments

Date	Time	Name	Designation & organisation
Thursday, Nov 15, 2012	1:00 - 2 pm	Dr. Parveen Shah	VC, SALU
	2:30 - 3:30pm	Dr. Najma Phulpoto	Professor, SALU
	3:45 - 4:45pm	Mr. Irshad Wassan	Lecturer, SALU
Friday, Nov 16, 2012	9:00 - 12:00 noon	Mr. Ishaq Palh Mr. Nadir Kerio Mr. Ilayas Tumrani & other team members	Executive Director, SRDO Chairman, SRDO General Secretary, SRDO
	1:30 - 3:00 pm	Projects site visit	SRDO
Monday, Nov 19, 2012	10:00 - 1:00 pm	Ms. Sughra Solangi & her team members	Chief Executive Officer, MRDO
	1:30 - 4:00 pm	Offices and projects site visit	MRDO
Tuesday, Nov 20, 2012	10:00 - 1:00 pm	Participatory workshop	SALU, SRDO & MRDO representatives
Wednesday, Nov 21, 2012 travelled to Hyderabad			
Thursday, Nov 22, 2012	9:00 - 10 am	Professor Ishaq Sameejo	President, SLCS
	10:30 - 1:30	Professor Mukhtiar Qazi	Chairman, Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, US
		Mr. Rafiq Wassan	Lecturer, US
		Mr. Hanif Laghari	Assistant Professor, US
		Mr. Manik Shar	Lecturer, US
		Professor Lala Bux	Visiting Professor, US
		Mr. Muhbat Ali Shah	Lecturer, US
	2:00 - 3:30 pm	Mr. Aijaz Wassan Mr. Pasand Ali Khoso	Associate Professor, US Lecturer, US
4:30 - 5:30 University visit			

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Friday, Nov 23, 2012	11:00 - 12.15 pm	Professor Khalida Tahirani	Dean Faculty of Social Sciences, US
	4:00 - 5:00 pm	Professor Nazeer Ahmed Mughal	VC, US
Monday, Nov 26, 2012	9:30 - 10:30 am	Mr. Rafiq Tunio	Programme Manager, SAFWCO
	10:30 - 12:00	Project site visit	
	1:00 - 2:00 pm	Professor Ghulam Qadir Qazi	VC, Isra University
	2:10 - 3:00 pm	Dr. Zeeshan Shaikh	Assistant Professor, Isra University
	3:00 - 3:30 pm Isra University campus visit		
Tuesday, Nov 27, 2012	10:00 - 1:00 pm	Participatory workshop	Representatives of US, SLCS, SCF & Isra University
	Tuesday, Nov 27, 2012 afternoon travelled to Karachi		
Wednesday, Nov 28, 2012	11:00 - 12:30	Dr. Ayesha Aziz	Programme Manager, Aahung & Coordinator, Evolve
	1:15 - 1:40 pm	Ms. Aziza Burfat	Data Manager, Aahung
	3:00 - 4:40 pm	Mr. Haris Gazdar	Senior Researcher, Collective for Social Science Research
Thursday Nov 29, 2012	9:30 - 11:00 am	Ms. Kausar S Khan	Associate Professor, AKU
	11:00 - 12:00 AKU site visit		
	1:30 to 3:00 pm	Dr. Noshad Khan Mr. Imtiaz Hussain Mr. Ali Turab Shah	Research Supervisor, AKU Senior Social Scientist, AKU Social Scientist, AKU
Friday, Nov 30, 2012	12:30 - 2:30 pm	Dr. Sajid Soofi Dr. Atif Ali Mr. Imtiaz Hussain	Associate Professor, AKU Senior Instructor, AKU Social Scientist, AKU
Monday, Dec 03, 2012	9:15 - 11:00 am	Dr. Tanveer Shaikh Mr. Lutuf Mangrio Ms. Rubina Jaffari	CEO, HANDS Manager, HANDS General Manager, HANDS
	1:30 - 2:40 pm	Mr. Yaqoob Wassan Mr. Khurram Sial	Chairperson, TSV Finance Secretary, TSV
Tuesday, Dec 04, 2012	10:00 - 1:00 pm	Participatory workshop	Representatives of AKU, Evolve, HANDS, TSV