

2020

SPARC ANNUAL REPORT



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ABOUT SPARC

SPARC is registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860 since December 1992 as non-governmental organization. It is SPARC's belief that child rights are human rights. This means that child rights envisages a broad range of rights issues, which amongst others in the context of Pakistan, include child labor, violence against children, children on the move and education. SPARC has been creating awareness about the UNCRC and lobbying for implementation of its provisions. SPARC works at the national level, with offices in several major cities. On a global level, it has consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the UN Department of Public Information (DPI).

SPARC strives to create awareness, promote and protect children. SPARC's primary activity in the early years was training and awareness generation. This was viewed as the need of the time as there was little or no public disclosure on the condition and

needs of children in Pakistan. To this was added the felt need of related activity of training, orientations, capacity building, however it became clear that the bottom line was service delivery which remained a neglected area.

SPARC hence planned and conducted strategic interventions for children who are in contact or conflict with the law, bonded child laborers, children living/ and or working on streets and children living in emergency/disaster hit areas. In the event of a natural or man-made disaster that displaces or affects children, basic humanitarian aid including food and non food items and safe play areas are provided. Early recovery interventions consist of rehabilitation of damaged schools and aid for seriously affected families whereas children on streets are catered through street children centers.

Year 2020 at a Glance



Support to Needy
Population during
Covid

Year 2020 proved to be a challenging year to the whole country when pandemic i.e. Covid-19 struck and normal life was brought to a halt. The country coped bravely with the situation and SPARC also tried out to reach out to vulnerable populations as and when allowed during the lockdown.

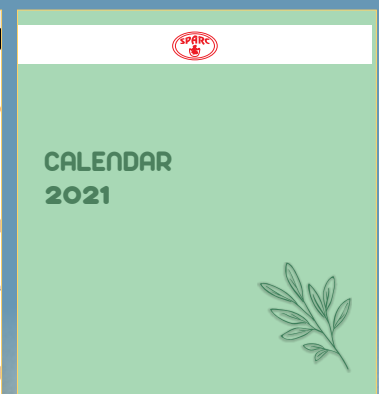
THE STATE OF PAKISTAN'S CHILDREN

The State of Pakistan's Children (SOPC) is being published by SPARC since 1997. Owing to Covid 19 situation, SOPC 2019 report was virtually launched and dissemination of its hard copies were carried out to stakeholders including parliamentarians, UN bodies, officials from Government departments, members from civil society organizations, advocates, and academia and media personnel, Ministry of Human Rights, National Commission on the Rights of Children provincial Child Welfare and Protection Bureaus.



AWARENESS RAISING

SPARC produces a monthly e-newsletter covering major national, international and news related to our work. Similarly, table calendars and diaries on climate change were printed with key statistics on child welfare.



VISION

A world in which children are valued and empowered and their rights promoted and protected.

MISSION

To promote and protect the rights of children and to empower them using international standards as a yardstick through advocacy supported by research, awareness raising, service delivery, and human and institutional development.





SAVING FUTURE GENERATIONS FROM HARMS OF TOBACCO

SPARC activities under tobacco control were completed in Multan whereas interventions continued in Karachi and Islamabad. The project campaigned on drawing attention towards trends of tobacco consumption and demands of civil society from the government to impose taxation as nearly 1200 children take up smoking in the country everyday. Pakistan spends around PKR140 billion on health burden caused by tobacco and heavy taxation on tobacco products will not only help reduce its consumption but also decrease its accessibility to minors who are seen as potential consumers. Awareness raising was carried out through consultations with media, FBR representatives and district government tobacco control cells. TV packages were aired and articles were published in newspapers.



CHILDREN ON THE MOVE

SPARC reaches out to children who migrate to pursue better life opportunities, look for work or education or to escape exploitative or abusive situation at home, children who live and/or work in the streets. SPARC provide protection services including birth registration, non-formal education, enrolment in schools, reunification with families, health services etc whereby 113 children were enrolled in schools and 311 were provided with uniforms. 160 children were provided life skill based education and 27 children were facilitated through referrals to government hospitals. Health and hygiene kits were provided to more than 160 children during Covid. In addition to this SPARC is working with teachers and parents on positive disciplining to reduce the incidents of corporal punishment in schools.



SPARC distributed food items among the people living in the slums of Islamabad. Around 100 health and hygiene kits were distributed among the Meherabadi community. Islamic Help collaborated with SPARC to distribute food items among deprived communities in Karachi.

CHILD RIGHTS GOVERNANCE

SPARC made efforts to address the vulnerabilities of children. SPARC conducted consultations with stakeholders on child friendly budget to address needs of children, engaged civil society for a more pro-active National Commission on the Rights of the Child (NCRC), held trainings of NGOs and CBOs and celebrated international day of the girl child, world day against child labor, street children day amongst others.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD CELEBRATED BY SPARC

SPARC organized events at several locations to celebrate the International Day of the Girl Child (IDGC, October 11) on the theme 'Our Voice, Our Equal Future'. Senior management from SPARC, field-level representatives, and local government officials, all of whom stressed on acknowledging and mainstreaming girls' voices and talents.



In Karachi, these events were held at Rasheedabad, Baldia Town and Memon Goth, in collaboration with Mehran Awareness and Development Organisation. In Islamabad, children in Meherabadi slum areas enhanced awareness of child rights whilst providing a platform for girls from marginalized locations to express their skills and abilities. There were at least 200 participants in various interactive and enjoyable activities.



CLIMATE CHANGE & AWARENESS ACTIVITIES



Awareness sessions on climate preservation were conducted with school children at Islamabad including Model School for Girls, F-7/1 and SAYA School, MairaAkoo. The students were educated about the importance of saving the earth by planting trees and the need to understand their role in mitigating the emergency situation caused by climate change, locally and globally. The sessions included practical application of these ideas through the actual plantation of trees by students themselves.

CELEBRATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

SPARC celebrated international human rights day on December 9 at Karachi. This event gathered senior level duty bearers who discussed the need of increased investment on children in the light of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and COVID-19. Parliamentarians, government officials, child rights activists, and senior journalists also attended the event. The participants were in harmony that considering the current challenges, Pakistan needs to increase resource allocation for children at every possible level.



ACCESS TO JUSTICE

During November 2019- February 2020, SPARC Karachi implemented a project on social, economic reintegration and rehabilitation of young prisoners (males, females) in selected prisons of Sindh (Malir Prison, Correctional Facility, Women Prison, and the adjoining Youthful Offenders Industrial School Karachi). The intervention catered to 120 youth behind bars through specialized programs and integrated 3-month economic, psychological and social rehabilitation program.

LEGAL AID TO NEEDY PRISONERS IN TIMES OF COVID

In line of guidance of Government of Pakistan to reach out to vulnerable population in times of Covid, SPARC provided legal aid to 65 male prisoners in seven different jails of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to reduce overcrowding in jails. It was found that female prisoners across various jails had legal assistance available to them.

STREET CHILDREN AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTERS

SPARC street children centers in Multan, Rawalpindi, Peshawar and Hyderabad reached out to most vulnerable children during Covid times. Year 2020 also marked the completion of street children center project where more than 3,000 children were reached through provision of nutrition, education, mainstreaming in schools, recreational facilities and access to health care.

SPARC vocational training centers in above mentioned areas also completed their overall target of a three year project and successfully concluded after training 25000 girls on various vocational traits.

UNIVERSAL CHILDREN'S DAY



Universal Children's Day was celebrated by SPARC throughout the country in the form of various activities and events, especially at its various centres for street children and life skills based education centers. These activities often spanned a number of days close to the actual occasion.

NETWORKING

SPARC attended networking meetings with Pakistan Center for Philanthropy, National Commission on Rights of the Child, NADRA, Ministry of Health, civil society, parliamentarians and various law makers. Owing to Covid, both physical meetings and hybrid mode was adopted. Students from various universities offered social work services to the children in slums under our supervision.

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