

BEDARI IN 2009-10

Narrative and Financial Report
From January 2009 to June 2010

All that we could do during this period to improve the lot of women and girls in Pakistan...and how we did it

House No 657, Street 75, I-8/3, Islamabad, Pakistan.
Ph/Fax: +92 51 486 2880, Email: bedari@bedari.org.pk,
Web: www.bedari.org.pk



FOREWORD

Bedari has completed its 20 years, and is moving forward with each passing year in its struggle to support women suffering violence, abuse and discrimination. Bedari has successfully ventured out of Islamabad by executing projects in Muzaffarabad, Mansehra and Chakwal. It has established its sub-office in Chakwal, and is in the process of establishing another sub-office in Attock. It plans to expand further into South Punjab in the near future.

We gladly submit this annual report cherishing our success in getting laws on sexual harassment approved by the parliament. The struggle that started by 6 NGOs by forming an alliance AASHA way back in 2001 has finally borne fruit. AASHA or Alliance against Sexual Harassment at Workplace continued working diligently for nearly 10 years to get these laws enacted. The number of AASHA members grew with the passage of time, and the Code of Conduct developed by AASHA was warmly received and implemented by various companies voluntarily.

Finally in March 2010, the law, after several reviews and revisions, was approved by both the houses of the parliament and it became an Act. It strengthened our faith in democratic system as our struggle met with success when we had people's elected representatives in the parliament working no more under the shadow of a dictator.

We thank all the friends, supporters, staff and volunteers of Bedari who made it possible for us to continue with our struggle in all these years. We would like to mention two people here namely Dr. Fouzia Saeed – the Founder of Bedari, and Mr. Saleem Malik under whose able guidance, Bedari has managed to expand and reach out to hundreds of more women facing violence, abuse and discrimination. Mr. Malik served Bedari as volunteer and later as Executive Director for over four years. We wish him all the best for his future, and believe that he would be always available to provide guidance and advice to us.

Another important development is the change of financial year. Earlier Bedari's financial year started from 1st January and ended at 31st December. As per the advice from auditors, and finance team, the financial year has been changed. Now it starts from 1st July and ends on 30th June coinciding with the national financial year.

I would like to end this note with a firm commitment on behalf of all the volunteers, supporters, friends and staff of Bedari that we would continue to pursue our objectives with even greater enthusiasm in the coming years.

Anbreen Ajajib

Executive Director

INTRODUCTION TO BEDARI

Bedari had a long journey behind it when it saw the dawn of the year 2009. Bedari's journey had started in 1991, when a group of young professionals established it as a support group for Pakistani women facing violence. Their commitment and hard-work resulted in a landmark community conference on violence against women, and establishment of Pakistan's first crisis center for women survivors of violence. Bedari was registered in 1992. Since then, there was no looking back.

Bedari continued to grow with the passage of time while more and more volunteers joined in. On average, it has supported over 1000 women and girl survivors of violence, annually. The support included psychological counseling, free legal aid and referral to other services such as medical and shelter homes.

It has expanded its scope geographically; Bedari has been providing direct support to women in Chakwal, Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Through its volunteers, it has provided support to women in other districts including Bhakkar, Multan, Khanewal, Sialkot, Muzaffarabad, Mardan, and Peshawar.

Bedari not only stepped out of its geographic boundaries, but also touched subjects other than violence against women. Earlier it focused on providing support to women who had already faced violence and needed support for their rehabilitation. While continuing with its support for violence survivors, Bedari ventured out to identify and obliterate the causes of violence against women.

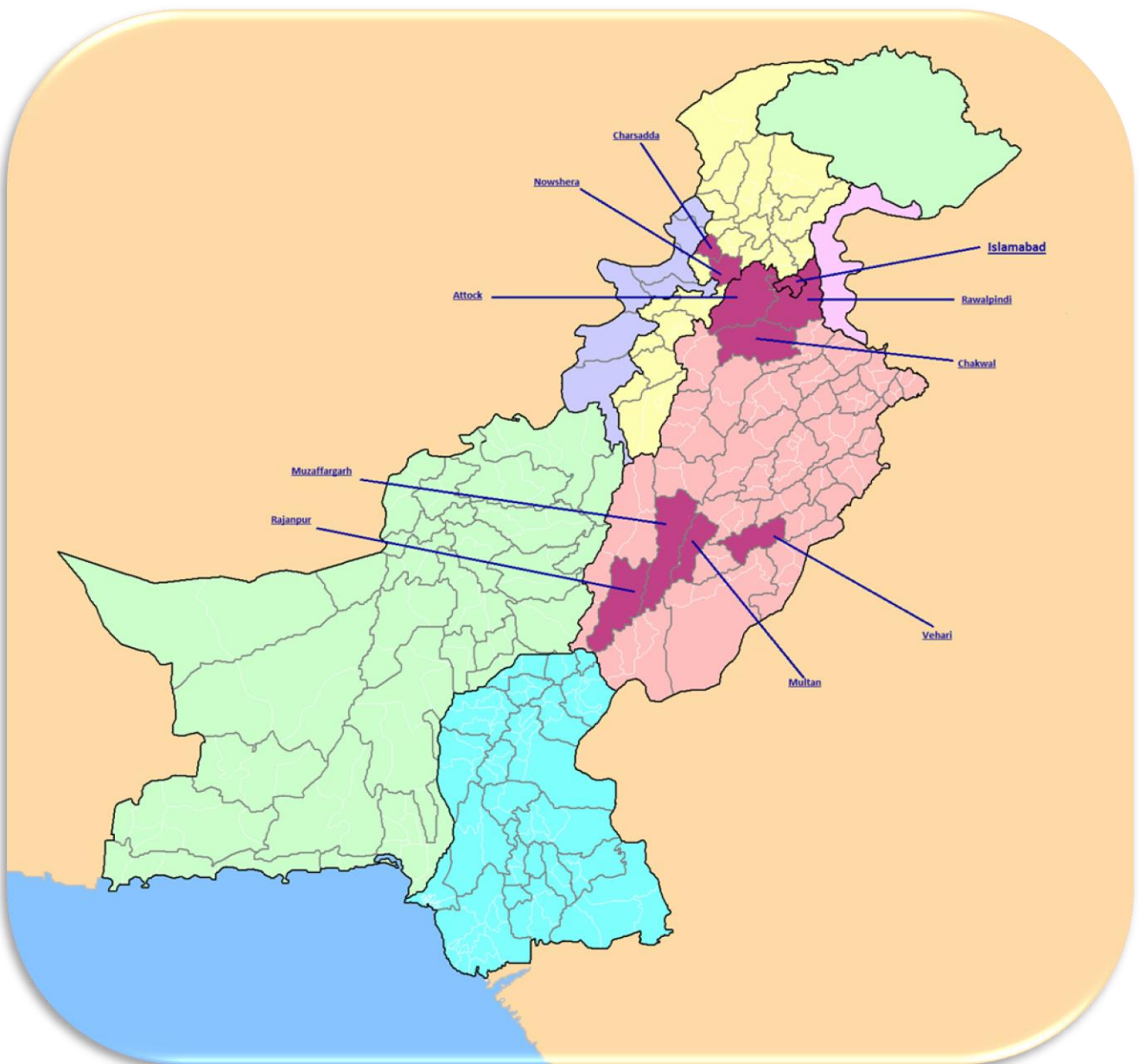
Bedari continued with its efforts for the promotion and protection of women's and girls' rights on its own, but also made alliances with other organizations that were working on the similar issues. It helped in strengthening the voice for change and raising the demand for a better and safer world for women and girls in particular and for the society as whole in general.

Another important initiative was establishing a Helpline on HIV & AIDS. It is a toll-free helpline that provides authentic information about HIV & AIDS to callers with respect and confidentiality.

BEDARI'S OUTREACH

Bedari has its presence in the following districts:

- Islamabad
- Rawalpindi
- Chakwal
- Attock
- Charsadda
- Nowshera
- Muzaffargarh
- Multan
- Vehari
- Rajanpur



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PERIOD 2009-10

LAWS ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT

It was a remarkable period that made us all [all the AASHA members] proud, as we saw the laws on curbing sexual harassment enacted. Formulation of laws on sexual harassment was completed. The drafts were vetted (and re-vetted) by relevant ministries and approved by the cabinet for presentation in the parliament. The bills were approved by the parliament, unanimously, and signed by the President of Pakistan in 2010. It was a great achievement for us all.

It was a very tough job to make people in general and policy makers in particular realize that sexual harassment was a serious issue in Pakistan. Most of the women suffered in silence, and would not speak up because it carries stigma. This led to non-reporting of such cases, and consequently to the perception that it was not an issue at all.

AASHA made excellent efforts to highlight this issue, and encouraged women to speak up so that it could be projected as a serious problem in the society. These efforts bore fruit, and women started talking about this issue openly. Finally, it was acknowledged as a problem, and the efforts for enactment of a law were started.

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

Bedari had realized that economic empowerment was very important for making women independent. They could not take their own decisions as long as they depended on men for their financial needs. Bedari negotiated with various donors and finally succeeded in establishing a Vocational Training Center for Women in Chakwal. Bedari has made sure that the women are equipped with skills that challenge traditional gender roles. So Bedari introduced driving, computer literacy and repairing home appliances in its training programs.

CHANGE OF BEDARI'S FINANCIAL YEAR

Previously, Bedari's financial year started from January and ended in December. It did not correspond with the national financial year, which had created some problems for the financial team. This issue was raised in General Body Meeting as well as Board of Directors' meeting. Finally, it was decided that Bedari would change its financial year and harmonize it with the National Financial year. So Bedari arranged a separate audit for the first 6 months of the year 2009. From then onwards, Bedari financial year would start from 1st July, and end at 30th June. That is why this report covers 1.5 years, instead of usual one year duration.

CHANGE IN MANAGEMENT

Mr. Saleem Malik, who served Bedari as Executive Director from 2006 to 2010, resigned from his post in June 2010. Mr. Malik had played instrumental role in reinvigorating this organization. It was as if he started from scratches, and built an organization that is present in Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa, south Punjab, and north Punjab. It was a tremendous effort. Bedari wishes him a bright future and prays for his success.

Miss Anbreen Ajaib has replaced Mr. Malik as Executive Director. She has long association with Bedari as she joined Bedari as a volunteer when she was a student of Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad. She has continued to work with Bedari in various capacities. Before taking up the responsibilities of Executive Director, she was working with Bedari as HR and Training Manager.

BEDARI IN ALLIANCES & NETWORKS

Bedari is member of the following alliances and networks:

- Alliance against Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (AASHA)
- Insani Huqooq Ittehad (Human Rights Network)
- Ending Violence against Women (EVAW)
- Child Rights Movement (CRM)

BEDARI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Name	Designation	Profession
Dr Zaigham Habib	Chairperson	Development Professional
Azhar Saeed	Member	Development Professional/Consultant
Afsheen Qambrani	Member	Teacher
Ghulam Fatima	Member	Lady Health Worker
Saima Kiani	Member	Teacher
Dr. Arshad Waheed	Member	Development Professional
Uzma Saeed	Member	Development Professional

BEDARI'S PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT (CURRENT AND RECENT PAST)

Bedari had many partners in its development program.

- United Nations Development Program, Pakistan (UNDP Pakistan)
- Church World Service Pakistan/Afghanistan (CWS P/A)
- Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, USA (UUSC USA)
- International Child Development Initiatives, The Netherlands (ICDI)
- UN Women Pakistan
- Save the Children Sweden
- Athens Network for Collaborating Experts, Greece (ANCE)
- Girls Education International (GEI USA)
- Women's Islamic Initiative in Spirituality and Equity USA (WISE USA)
- Urgent Action Fund (UAF)

BEDARI ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The core issue being addressed by Bedari is violence against women. Bedari had started with a community conference on violence against women in 1991. It was first-of-its-kind conference in Pakistan. Since then, Bedari has continued to provide support to women who face violence. Bedari feels that violence against women is endemic in Pakistan and needs serious thought and efforts of the people. Bedari is not only focusing on providing support to the violence survivor women, but also works on understanding the reasons of violence against women and focuses on addressing this issue from all angles.

CRISIS INTERVENTION PROGRAM (CIP)

This is the oldest program being run by Bedari since the very inception of the organization. On average, Bedari has provided psychological counseling and legal aid to over 1000 women per year.

Bedari received following types of cases:

- Domestic Violence
- Sexual Abuse & Rape
- Harassment at workplace
- Cases related to Family Laws

Bedari's volunteers including psychologists and lawyers provided them support as per their needs. CIP received 42 cases in this period at its Islamabad office. Out of these, 25 women received legal aid, 15 received psychological counseling, and two were referred for shelter.

At our Chakwal office, Bedari received 130 cases of women victims of violence. It provided psychological counseling to 59 women, and legal support to 71 women.

ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN CHAKWAL

Bedari, with the help of UNDP, is running a project in district Chakwal. The project aims at addressing the issue of violence against women in the district. The primary objectives of the project are:

- to establish sustainable institutional structure for addressing 'Violence against Women' in all four tehsils of district Chakwal

JAMILA GETS HER DAUGHTER BACK

Jamila is a 24-year old married woman with two daughters. Her husband Bilal works as a cobbler in the city. She spent the first six months of marriage happily with her husband but that changed when her mother-in-law started threatening her with a divorce if she did not bear a male child within a year. She got pregnant soon after but when she asked her husband to take her for a medical check-up, he began to physically abuse her. The abuse became a regular practice when she gave birth to a daughter.

Her brother-in-law was an addict and also used to beat her whenever her husband refused to give him money for drugs. After the birth of her second daughter, they threw her out of the house without her daughters. Family pressure forced her to go back to her husband to live a "respectable life. Jamila became so frustrated that she tried to self-immolate with petrol but a neighbor saved her in time.

On 20th April 2009, Jamila was badly beaten by her in-laws again. A neighbor came to her rescue and called her mother. She was allowed to leave with her mother but her younger daughter Asma was kept back.

One day, Jamila found out about Bedari's Crisis Intervention Centre in Chakwal from a neighbour. With Bedari's help, she filed a case for her daughter's custody which was resolved in her favour in a day. She says, "I had lost hope but am happy to get my daughter back with support from Bedari". Jamila is planning on filing another case for maintenance money from her husband with Bedari's help.

Bedari in 2009-10

- to build the capacity of local groups of police, journalist, lawyers and councilors, to end Violence against Women
- to establish a national level Resource Center for supporting the efforts to end Violence against Women

The project was started with consultations with different groups of men and women from rural and urban areas of the district to know the need for such a project. Bedari would organize events to highlight the issue of violence against women. Furthermore, it would engage specific groups of the community to sensitize them on the issue. It would hold consultations and sensitization workshops with media persons, police officials, teachers, lawyers, doctors and local politicians. This would help in creating an environment in which violence against women is seen as a crime, not as a routine happening. Furthermore, Bedari has extended its crisis intervention program to the district as well.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTER FOR WOMEN

Bedari has been running two Crisis Intervention Centers for women who face violence. These centers have resolved many cases successfully. However, it became evident during Bedari's work that women need to be economically independent. Only then, they can take their lives in their own hands. This realization led to the establishment of Bedari Vocational Training Center for Women in its Chakwal Office.

Bedari provides trainings in various fields including:

- Repairing home appliances (washing machines, refrigerators etc)
- Beautician
- Computer (Operation, Maintenance, Networking, Internet)
- Woodwork (Decoration Pieces)
- Driving (Car, Van and Pickup)



In the year 2009, Bedari established the Training Center, hired trainers, and started the first session of trainings by admitting 45 women and girls to these courses. It has provided loans to 5 women for establishing their own businesses.

ADVOCACY & AWARENESS RAISING

As violence against women remains a pandemic in our society, it is necessary to bring about a change in the mindsets, thinking and attitudes of the people in general towards the status of women. Bedari runs awareness raising campaigns, holds conferences, walks and rallies, and organizes street theater performances in remote villages. Thus, Bedari reaches out to the grassroots level to convey its message to masses.

COMMUNITY SESSIONS/SEMINARS/RADIO PROGRAMS

Bedari organized many community sessions, and seminars to raise awareness on various issues especially on violence and discrimination against women and children, domestic violence and sexual harassment. It conducted one seminar and two community sessions on **domestic violence** in each of the following districts:

- Attock
- Jhelum
- Chakwal

Furthermore, it held seminars in Talagang, Kalar Kahar, Choa Saidan Shah and Chakwal city on important occasions like International Women's Day, and 16 Days of Activism Campaign to End Violence against Women. Radio programs from local FM radio were another important way to reach out to masses especially the illiterate people. Bedari broadcast radio programs throughout the year generating healthy discussions on women's and children's issues.

Bedari campaigned for peace after the suicide bombing occurred in Chakwal city. It held seminars, theater performances (see details under Bedari Theater), and banner campaign on this issue. Bedari made people realize that whenever peace is disturbed in any community, it is the women and children who suffer the most.

Another important issue was **sexual harassment** of women in public places as well as work place. Bedari, on the one hand, lobbied with the parliamentarians under the banner of AASHA, and on the other hand, continued with raising awareness among masses on the issue.



BEDARI THEATER

Theater is the most significant tool for raising awareness in the communities on different issues. Bedari theater team continued to produce and perform plays to highlight different problems faced by women in Pakistani society. Following are some of the issues on which Bedari theater team performed plays:

- Sexual harassment at workplace
- Violence against Women
- Child Marriages
- Girls' Education
- Health and Personal Hygiene
- Bio Security
- Domestic Violence
- Religious Intolerance and Violence

ON RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

Religious intolerance became a serious issue for the people of Chakwal in 2009. The district had to bear a suicide bombing in a religious gathering and a few other incidents in which religious and sectarian minorities were attacked.

Bedari rose to the occasion and started a Campaign for Peace in the district. It developed a play titled '*Fasad Nahi, Aman*' (Peace, Not War) and performed it in many communities in the district. The play received a lot of applause from the masses. It focused on sectarian harmony, and the negative impact of the religious intolerance on various segments of the society especially women and children.



ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Bedari developed another play focusing on domestic violence for 16 Days of Activism Campaign. Bedari Theater Team performed this play titled '*Larai Larai Maaf Karo*' (No More Fighting) in 40 communities in districts Chakwal, Attock, and Jhelum.

The play conveys the message that domestic violence is not an internal or personal matter. It affects the whole community, and the community needs to take action if there is any incident of domestic violence in the community. Furthermore, it represented the negative impact of domestic violence on children.



BEDARI IN NETWORKS & ALLIANCES



CHILD RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Child Rights Movement (CRM) is a coalition of more than 20 NGOs and individuals working jointly for the protection and promotion of children's rights in Pakistan. In the year 2009, Bedari was assigned the responsibilities of running the secretariat of CRM for one year by the CRM members unanimously. Bedari has been organizing the meetings of CRM, and coordinating with various members for smooth flow of information, and effective response to the incidents of child rights violations.

AASHA



Bedari is a member of Alliance against Sexual Harassment at Workplace (AASHA). The alliance was created to make joint efforts to introduce legislation for protecting women from sexual harassment at workplace.

AASHA successfully drafted a bill on sexual harassment at workplace, and shared it with the relevant ministry. The year 2009 was fortunate for women in Pakistan as the law on sexual harassment at public places, and another law on sexual harassment at workplaces were approved and presented in the parliament. In the year 2010, these laws were approved, and signed by the President of Pakistan. Now, AASHA has started a campaign for the

implementation of these laws.

It would make workplaces and public places safer for women, which would result in more women joining the workforce of Pakistan. It would not only bring benefits for the national economy, but also would help women in getting self-reliance and financial independence. Working women would be in a better position to protect them from violence.

INSANI HUQOOQ ITTEHAD (IHI – HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK)

Insani Huqooq Ittehad or IHI is a network of a large number of NGOs working for human rights of various segments of the society including women, children, and religious minorities. IHI takes joint stand on various human rights issues. If the government plans to introduce a law or any administrative measures which may violate a certain segment of the society, all the IHI members would make joint efforts to put pressure on the government to withdraw such laws or amend them. Bedari is an active member of the forum.

BEDARI ON GIRLS' EDUCATION

Violence and discrimination against women can be attributed to many factors, but the most important among them is lack of education. Education can empower women by enabling them to:

- understand the world they live in
- understand the laws of the land on different issues,
- take up jobs and earn a living for themselves

Another important aspect of girls education is the famous saying, "if you educate a girl, you educate the family". This led to the beginning of a new program "Girls' Post Primary Level Education".

It is with the belief that post primary level education for girls has the potential to save her from early marriage, giving her awareness to use family planning and maintain good health. The minimum of secondary level education for girls has the potential to bring them out of poverty. It can help her in having a better understanding of the world around her. It enables her to take up the responsibilities of married life. She can take up small scale jobs to earn a living for herself, which reduces her dependence on her male relatives for her survival.

GHULAM FATIMA IS BACK INTO SCHOOL

Ghulam Fatima belongs to a remote village Sarkalan in the sub-district Kallar Kahar, District Chakwal. She had studied up to 8th grade, but then her father died, and it became impossible for her to continue. As her mother started taking up small jobs to earn a few bucks to support her children, Ghulam Fatima had to stay at home and do the daily chores of a house wife. However, she made it sure that her younger sister Maafia goes to school. As Bedari team came to know about this story, it decided to ensure that both Maafia and Fatima could go to school. Bedari, in partnership with Girls Education International, has provided financial assistance to both the sisters.. Though Fatima is a bit overage, but feels happy and is trying to perform better than her much younger classmates.

GIRLS' POST PRIMARY LEVEL EDUCATION

Bedari selects those girls who have studied up to primary level, and then stopped going to school for being unable to meet the extra cost on her secondary education. Bedari connects such girls with donors/sponsors who pay for these girls' educational expenses. Most of the donors provide such assistance through Bedari.

The two major sponsors of this program are ANCE (Athens Network of Collaborating Experts) and GEI (Girls Education International). With their help, Bedari has been sending 51 girls to schools from three villages of district Chakwal – Ransial, Sarkalan and Laphi.

Bedari is actively publicizing this program within Pakistan as well as in developed countries where there is a sizeable Pakistani community to get more donors for this program.



BEDARI ON HIV & AIDS



HIV & AIDS is a serious problem being faced by the humanity. In the recent past, Pakistan has seen a rise in the number of HIV positives persons, particularly in the high risk groups. Women, due to their disadvantageous position in the society, are much more vulnerable to HIV & AIDS. They are at high risk because they are not the decision makers in any sphere of their lives including sexual relations. So there is a serious chance of contracting this deadly disease for no fault of theirs. In such a situation, it was imperative for Bedari to take notice of this problem and address it in the best possible manner.

We cannot save one segment of the society from HIV & AIDS, while leaving the rest of the society alone. We need to have an all inclusive approach and focus on the opinion makers of the society in changing people's perception about this issue.

HIV & AIDS HELPLINE

Though many organizations and government departments were working to raise awareness about HIV & AIDS through different means, still there were a lot of people who needed information but hesitated to ask questions in face to face meetings with experts. HIV & AIDS is perceived to be a sex related disease – a taboo subject.

In this scenario, Bedari felt that anonymity would help people especially women and youth in overcoming their hesitation in asking questions about HIV & AIDS. With this in mind, Bedari established a toll-free helpline with the help of National Aids Control Program, Ministry of Health to provide authentic information on HIV & AIDS, Pakistan so that people do not have to rely on unauthentic information. The counselors or experts do not ask questions regarding the identity or location of the caller. They just answer their questions and provide them information regarding medical tests and treatment of HIV & AIDS.

COMMON QUERIES AT HELPLINE

People asked questions about various aspects of HIV & AIDS. Following is the list of frequently asked questions:

- What is HIV & AIDS?
- How does it spread?
- Can I eat with an AIDS patient?
- Can I shake hands with an AIDS patient?
- What is the treatment for HIV & AIDS?
- Where shall I go for a test?
- How many people are suffering from AIDS in Pakistan?
- I had unsafe sex, what should I do now?

COUNSELORS

Bedari hired counselors who were given rigorous training on HIV & AIDS related matters. The training not only provided them with authentic information, but also equipped them with handling different types of callers. Initially there were only two counselors – one male, one female. Later, Bedari hired counselors who could communicate in Punjabi and Pashto languages, so that callers from the rural areas of Punjab and NWFP could be entertained.

CALLERS

On average, Bedari entertained around 100 calls per day. Initially, the calls were taken from Monday to Friday, but, seeing the public interest, Helpline was kept open on Saturdays as well. Bedari received 28745 calls during the reporting period from all over the country. Out of these, only 3032 callers were female.

CAPACITY BUILDING & TRAINING PROGRAM:

Training and capacity building of community members and development professionals is another important program of Bedari. The trainings for community members are free of cost. Bedari bears the cost of such trainings, while the trainings for development professionals are charged. These trainings generate some funds to meet Bedari's expenses on community trainings.

Bedari conducted trainings on the following subjects:

- Women in Management
- Gender Mainstreaming in Project Cycle Management
- Engendering Work Environment
- ToT on Gender Training with Communities
- Theater for Development
- HIV & AIDS Training
- Project Management
- Self Growth
- Life Skills
- Communication Skills



These trainings were attended by 870 persons including women and youth. Gender and management trainings were attended by staff of other organizations or departments, while trainings on life skills, self growth and communication were attended by youth groups.

BEDARI FINANCES

Bedari hires an external auditor approved by the general body of the organization. The auditor holds an audit, and prepares an Audit Report. This year, the approved auditors were Anjum Asim and Company. The Audit Report for the reporting period is annexed with this report.