



Organisational Profile of HELP Foundation (2023)

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Organisational Background

In 1973, a disastrous flood in the Indus River caused enormous damages in District Rajanpur and massively affected the socioeconomic fabric of the local Riverine communities, villages on the river bank and vicinities of populous areas. The immediate catastrophe after the secession of East Pakistan caused an enormous challenge for flood-affected communities. A group of young people from Kot Mithan town organised themselves and started rescue and relief work with the help of local philanthropy and support. After the floods, the young people strengthened the platform and kept working for the welfare of the local communities. The volunteer group remained informal till 1976, when they registered as an organisation under the Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration & Control) Ordinance, 1961 (XLVI of 1961). They named the organisation as *Anjuman-Al-Islah* (organisation for social reform). The organisation remained a self-help group for promoting education, social awareness, raising voices against injustice, and promoting volunteerism and charity among the local communities. In 2006 the senior organisation office holders decided to hand over the organisation to youth to continue the work. The young people held an assembly of the members in 2007 and decided to change the organisation from a welfare to a rights-based entity significantly. They also renamed the organisation in 2008 to mark a departure from charity and welfare orientation and named it "Human Empowerment to Lead & Progress Foundation." The acronym "HELP Foundation" became widespread; the communities, Government, private businesses, philanthropists and donors know the organisation as HELP Foundation.

From the beginning in 1973 till to date, the organisation remained focused on working with the communities to reduce human losses, sufferings and livelihoods of the disaster-prone communities. The organisation is intrinsically committed to the vulnerable communities' humanitarian, recovery, rehabilitation and development processes and has contributed significantly to positive changes in the lives of vulnerable people.

Today HELP Foundation is a credible name in serving vulnerable and marginalised communities through a rights-based approach. It has completed more than 60 projects (humanitarian and development) with the financial & technical support of more than ten international and national donors like (in alphabetic order) the Christian Study Center (CSC), Concern Worldwide, ESRA, European Commission

(Local Delegation), Literacy Department of the Punjab Government, NCHD, Oxfam GB, Oxfam Germany, Oxfam Hongkong, Oxfam Novib, Plan Pakistan, RTI, Save the Children, START Network, UK Aid, and USAID. Moreover, it has received in-kind and cash support from private businesses and philanthropists for emergency responses. The details of the projects implemented by the HELP Foundation are available upon request.

Organisational Philosophy

HELP Foundation is a rights-based organisation. We believe in the equality of human beings irrespective of citizenship status, social, economic, ethnic, physical level (disability/ability), age, religion or sexual orientation. We organise citizens in viable social organisations to claim their rights in line with the Constitution of Pakistan (1973). Besides organising citizens, we also contribute and develop the capacity of the duty-bearers to meet their obligations under Pakistan's policies, procedures and laws. Participation, Accountability, Non-Discrimination and Equality, Empowerment and Legality are our working principles. The community-based approach and working with the Government and other stakeholders enabled HELP Foundation to deliver humanitarian and development assistance since 2007.

Our **vision** is a Pakistani society where the inalienable human rights of every citizen, refugee, and stateless person are secure, and the State of Pakistan has the capacity and political will to deliver its obligations under the Constitution of Pakistan and ratified international covenants.

Our **Overall Objective** is to reduce human losses and suffering, besides strengthening the livelihoods of communities living in the disaster-prone areas of Pakistan.

To achieve the Overall Objective, HELP Foundation has four **Primary Strategies**. The strategies include (1) organising the communities, (2) establishing and strengthening platforms for primary stakeholders (mainly Government, private businesses and local communities) to hold dialogue and develop a shared understanding about issues and challenges (policy level dialogues), (3) capacity building, (4) piloting for potential scale-ups and linkages with market and Government. We ensure that all our programmes include these primary strategies.

HELP Foundation has an integrated Programme under the Overall Objective. The programme components are the following:

Climate Change and Resilience

Our Climate Change and Resilience Programme assists local communities living in disaster-prone areas to adapt their lives and livelihoods to the changing climate and protect against increasing risks of disaster caused by climate change. We also strive to ensure that communities become more educated, aware of and resilient to the plan able and unplanned climate shocks. Under the Climate Change and Resilience Programme, HELP Foundation responds to humanitarian crises and contributes toward recovery and rehabilitation efforts besides strengthening people's livelihoods. We are implementing our four core organisational strategies under the Climate Change and Resilience Programme.

Agriculture, Food and Water Programme

HELP Foundation has an integrated Agriculture, Food and Water Programme in which we work with the local communities to strengthen their agricultural and water management practices, improve the marketing of farm products, and enhance food security and access to safe drinking water.

Governance and Controls

HELP Foundation is a registered organisation under the Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration & Control) Ordinance, 1961 (XLVI of 1961) through the Social Welfare Department, Govt. of Punjab. The statutory documents are available upon request.

The Executive Body of seven members and the General Body of 20 persons supervises the organisation. The Executive Body (Board of Management) comprises the President, Vice President-I, Vice President-II, General Secretary, Joint Secretary, Finance Secretary, and Information Secretary. The General Body appoints the Executive Body, and Executive Body appoints the President and other office bearers. HELP Foundation holds elections for the office bearers' rotation every three years. The details of the Executive Body and General Body are available upon request.

Organisational Administrative Controls and Procedures

The General Body approves a manual for the Financial and Administrative Operations, which applies to every professional proceeding of the organisation. A copy of the latest Manual is available upon request.

On the board's behalf, the President heads the organisation symbolically. Besides Programme Team, the organisation also has (1) MEAL Department, (2) Admin & Human Resources, (3) Finance, and (4) Logistics & Procurement teams. Manager Programmes is the overall management head of the organisation and supervise all teams. The Manager Programmes works under the board's direction and the advice of the President.

HELP Foundation has adopted a 3-dimension internal control system, i.e. Programme Monitoring & Evaluation, Administrative Controls and Financial Controls.

Programme Monitoring & Evaluation department consists of a Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability & Learning (MEAL) team. The team continuously monitors the projects' progress, effectiveness and impact. HELP Foundation also has an organisational culture to continually assess and improve the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of the interventions in day-to-day operations.

Administrative controls check the optimum utilisation of organisational and donor resources to ensure effective and result-oriented utilisation.

On the side of **financial control**, a committee consisting of the Finance Manager, Manager Programmes and the relevant Project Manager regularly checks and takes corrective actions in financial matters. Moreover, HELP Foundation has a well-reputed Chartered Accountant Firm to advise on control-related issues.

In addition to the above, the community representatives (women and men) promote a culture of mutual accountability, transparency and openness in the internal control system.

Significant Achievements

The following are some of the significant achievements of the HELP Foundation:

Community-Based Early Warning

HELP Foundation has gradually evolved a Community-Based Early Warning System for floods and hill torrents. We have standardised the steps based on lessons learned and best practices. Under the system, we facilitate linkages between community forums and relevant Government authorities for the information flow. Moreover, we also build the capacity of the local communities to understand the technicalities of the early warning data and disseminate it through their networks at the local levels. The early warning systems established a decade ago are still functioning well and have reduced the suffering and loss of livelihood assets among flood-prone communities. HELP Foundation has already extended the technical know-how to other organisations working in disaster-prone communities and is willing to train and provide assistance/advice to other organisations upon request.

Urban Heatwave Response Model

HELP Foundation started responding to the Heatwave phenomenon in urban areas. Heatwaves are extremely dangerous for labourers and people working in the sun during the summer. The critical challenge is the size and scope of the humanitarian response in a setting where people have little community coherence. In partnership with Rescue 1122, we have developed a response model to effectively reach thousands of people for protective measures and reduce deaths significantly. HELP Foundation is extending the tacit knowledge and expertise to other organisations and is willing to assist the organisations interested in working on Heatwave response in major urban areas of Pakistan.

We also collaborated with Doaba Foundation and Laar Humanitarian & Development Programme (LHDP) and prepared a joint Heatwave Programme Strategy (2023-2025)¹.

Farmer Associations

In District Rajanpur, HELP Foundation established three Farmer Associations under EC-Food Facility Programme implemented from 2010 to 2011. Even after 12 years, the Farmer Associations are active and passionately involved in their respective member communities' agricultural prosperity, food and nutrition promotion, and food rights. They meet monthly, as they were doing during the project period. The

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/hnpftprw>

Associations supervise Farm Service Centers with farm machinery available for all members of their respective community-based Farmer Groups. The three Associations have 800 active small farmers and have links with the Government's subsidy schemes and other capacity-building initiatives. HELP Foundation welcomes further inquiries regarding the associations and will be helping other organisations to connect with the Associations directly.

Farm Service Centres and Farm Machinery Pools

HELP Foundation founded the Farm Service Centres in partnership with the local communities and Farmer Associations. All the communities are living in flood-prone areas. The Centres have farm machinery pools and provide the latest farm machinery to the member farmers on a user-fee basis. Despite numerous floods, the communities maintained them, and Centres have been functional for the last 12 years.

The Centres provide low-cost doorstep agricultural services to their member communities. Based on experience, Farmer Associations are gradually evolving and developing different business models. They rent machinery at reduced rates compared to market rates to members of the Farmer Association. Apart from this, during peak harvesting season, they rent machinery to the non-members on market rates and earn some income which Farmer Associations use to strengthen the capacity of the Centres. The Farmer Services Centres transformed into the collective Farmer's Enterprises as the legitimate, responsible small business for the well-being of the small farmers of their respective areas.

Community-Based Lentils Value Chain

HELP Foundation collaborated with small farmers, promoted Mungbean cultivation in flood-prone areas after harvesting wheat and worked on its value chain. The objective is to ensure that nutritious food for people experiencing poverty is available in the market at affordable prices. The communities established a Mungbean collection and marketing system and promoted its cultivation by small farmers, collecting produce from the farmers, storing centrally, marketing on behalf of farmers and distributing the returns to farmers. We also encourage people to keep adequate stock of lentils for their consumption from the crop. Small farmers' associations supervise the whole process. Small farmers have increased their bargaining power by establishing this system through collective marketing and

storage. Apart from this, they have significantly contributed to local and national food security & nutrition as well. Additionally, this system has reinforced their livelihood opportunities for smallholders by promoting Mungbean cultivation as a primary minor crop, increasing its production and strengthening its value chain.

Small Business Recovery Grants

HELP Foundation provided small business and enterprise recovery small grants among the flood-affected communities. Besides small grants, the organisation offered advice and market linkages and helped the businesses reestablish themselves after the floods. We have tracked the grant recipients over the last 15 years, and 65% of the recipients are still engaged in successful businesses and have gradually evolved their small enterprises. We learnt that providing small grants to flood-affected businesses is crucial, but success also requires giving advice and market-related connections (references) and accompanying them during the initial year of recovery.

Interest-Free Microfinance Services for Agriculture

HELP Foundation is gradually developing its Interest-free Microfinance Programme focusing on small farmers, mainly living in disaster-prone areas, to reduce food insecurity. For microfinance intervention, HELP Foundation has completed its ten years of experience working primarily with poor and marginalised women and men, small farmers, sharecroppers, landless agricultural labour, unemployed & unskilled youth, widows, and women-headed households at the grass root level. Considering our excellent experience in microfinance with farmers-managed systems, HELP Foundation has recently handed over its entire programme to local Farmer Associations to enhance small farmers' ownership and community-managed system for agricultural credit facilities.

Contact Us

You can contact us via letter, telephone call or email. Our contact details are the following:

HELP Foundation

Atta Street, Akber Abad, Kot Mithan Sharif, District Rajanpur, Pakistan

+92 604-317-806 & +92-333-944-6363

jamshaid@helpfoundation-pakistan.org