

My SAP notes

“If you are a young person in Pakistan and want to do a Social Action Project in your community you have to realise that it is a lot of hard work and that you will face criticism from people around you, and your capabilities will be challenged. But you will get through this, if you remain motivated, persistent and practice tolerance. Believe in yourself!”

Khalil Haider

Active Citizens

Things to remember

What I would have done differently



Harmonising education

Theme: Interfaith Harmony; Human Rights
City, Province: Bahawalpur, Punjab
Project Duration: 9 weeks



“One day, I will become a pilot and fly my mom around the world.”

Baadal, 6 year old Hindu student.

Problem

Maqbool Colony is a multicultural area of Bahawalpur that consists of a large Muslim population and a smaller Hindu community. Like in many areas of Pakistan, these two faith groups unfortunately do not interact frequently, which results in hostile relationships driven by misunderstanding and mistrust. A Hindu religious leader from Bahawalpur said that one of the

bullied and do not feel welcome in the Islamic schools, and in some extreme cases, the teachers refuse to teach them. This means that there are not that many Hindu children that are educated which makes their unemployment more likely.

Planning

After meeting with the Hindu religious leader, five of us decided

been deprived of an education to return to school and follow their dreams of getting jobs.

During the planning stage we used to meet every day. My role as a leader meant that I had to ensure everybody had a clear understanding of what tasks they were responsible for and what needed to be organised in order to achieve our goal. We didn't

in bringing the communities together without financial resources.

Action

We organised six meetings with different representatives of both communities, in which we talked about the problem of the Hindu children not attending any schools. First, we had a meeting with a Hindu religious leader, which was followed by a meeting with a local shop owner who had good connections amongst the Hindu community. They both helped us to bring together parents of 15 Hindu families,

which enabled us to talk to them about the importance of allowing their children to return to school.

Then, we had a meeting with the Principal of an Islamic school, who supported our idea and organised a meeting with teachers speaking to them about supporting the children on their return to school. The last meeting we had was with Hindu children. We explained to them why it is important to continue their education, be ambitious and follow their dreams. The children enjoyed our interactive charts and our fun way of explaining the importance of education.

It wasn't easy to bring the Muslim and Hindu representatives together; there was a communication gap and they were unsure as to how the meeting would progress. Once they were all together though, it was great to see people listening to each other and understanding that the issues were caused by a lack of cooperation between the two faith communities.

Impact

After conducting six meetings with various representatives from the Hindu and Muslim communities, out of the 25 children we worked with, 12 re-enrolled in school. Overall, we have worked with over 50 adults, who as a result of our Social Action Project were more tolerant of each other's faith and came together to help children follow their own aspirations.



biggest problems caused by the lack of intercultural harmony is that Hindu children do not attend local schools that are attended by Muslims. The children are often

to help the Muslim and Hindu communities to come together as one and to overcome their differences. One of our main tasks was to help children who have

have any financial support; however, by collaborating with a respected Hindu religious leader and the principal of an Islamic school, we managed to succeed

Profile of the **Active Citizen**

Name: **Subhana Salamat**

Age: **21**

Gender: **Female**

Useful skills gained through Active Citizens programme:

- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Planning

Proudest moment:

I was really proud when the Hindu parents agreed to send their children to school again. I couldn't stop smiling when I saw a group of Hindu children wearing their school uniforms, on their way to school holding hands.

Partner organisation: **AWAZ Community Development Services**

“Patience is the game. If at first the community does not take you seriously, understand who the decision makers are and work with them as they are the ones who will lead you on to long term change.”

Subhana Salamat

My SAP notes

Active Citizens

Things to remember

What I would have done differently



Keeping the peace

Theme: Mediation; Human Rights; Community Safety
City, Province: Swat Valley, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
Project Duration: 8 months

“I will now use conflict resolution skills to resolve the smallest of issues in our day-to-day lives; thank you Nasra!”

A community member with family dispute.

Problem

Like in many areas of Pakistan, Swat Valley is a hot bed of conflict between tribes, communities and amongst family members. One of the key conflicts that stood out for me was domestic violence experienced by women, who were regularly beaten up by their husbands. Another very serious conflict, common in our community, is a dispute between family members who fight over finances or land. Unfortunately,

Planning

A group of us decided to address this problem by bringing together those people who were involved in conflict and teaching them to resolve their problems using conflict resolution skills. This would help them to communicate and interact with each other with respect and an open mind. We also wanted communities to be aware of domestic violence and help men and women challenge this unacceptable behaviour.

what. Each of us had a clear role within the group; we worked together as a team and made sure everyone participated.

We also approached teachers for help, who gave us very useful advice on how to engage with the community and the tribal leaders. They allowed us to use the school facilities for planning and assisted us financially as well.

of domestic violence and separated them into women's and men's groups. Each group took part in a discussion on domestic violence, which was led by one of our Active Citizen members. With their help, both groups identified which issues they were experiencing and agreed to do something about it. Once we knew what the issues were, we approached their community leader to bring the family members together and help them listen to each other. We gave the community leaders some tips on mediation and, together with their knowledge and experience, they were able to help the families resolve their problems. We applied the same approach to

family disputes regarding land or property issues. Planning is the most important thing. It has helped us to identify what resources we had available and how to use them well. Also, the networks and personal links of our group members helped us to identify the families who were experiencing conflict. Through our Social Action Project we collaborated with various groups, namely tribal leaders, families involved in conflict, teachers from our University and the SPADO organisation, who linked us with the Active Citizens programme.

The women would not have opened up about the domestic violence they were experiencing

if we had not separated the groups. At the beginning they didn't trust us and were hesitant but we reassured them that all we wanted was to support and help them, which eventually worked.

At the beginning, female members of the SAP group needed to get a written permission from our university teachers to leave the campus and work in the community. They were very reluctant at the beginning, as we needed to follow the culture and the rules of specific tribal communities, but our determination and persistence finally won them over.

Impact

We helped to resolve nine family conflicts, which in turn meant we helped nine communities. The resolved disputes varied from cases of domestic violence to a fight between two brothers over the inheritance of family property.



these family disputes can last for years and often result in violence or murder.

Our group consisted of 15 University students from different parts of Swat Valley. We would meet every day for an hour and decide who is going to organise

Action

First we brought together families who were involved in some form



Profile of the **Active Citizen**

Name: **Nasrah Khan**

Age: **23**

Gender: **Female**

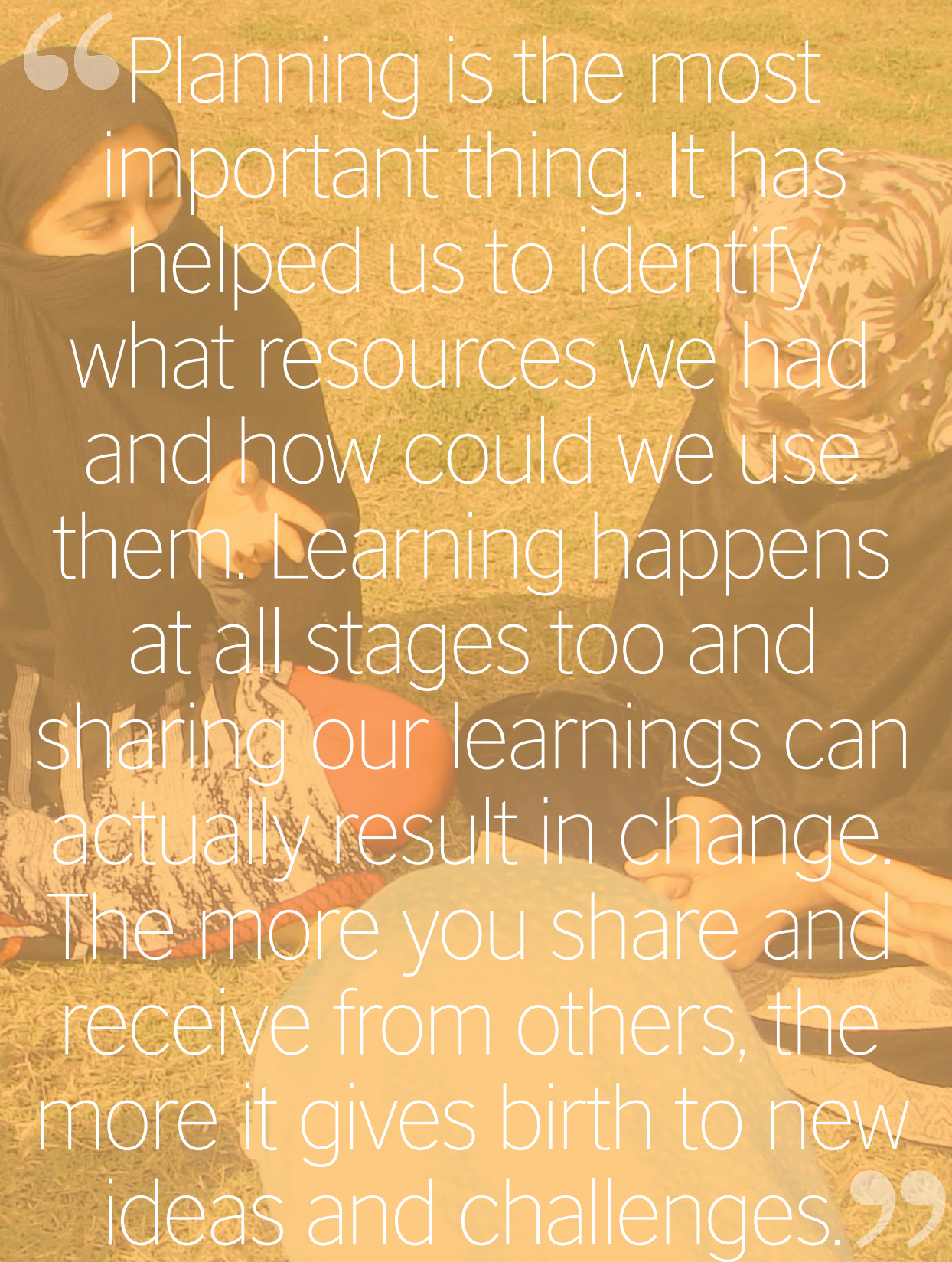
Useful skills gained through Active Citizens programme:

- Leadership
- Communication

Proudest moment:

The whole team worked very hard, and we were very excited to see our photo and an article about us in our university newspaper. I was particularly pleased that we were able to help one family, that was fighting over land for over ten years.

Partner organisation: **Sustainable Peace and Development Organization (SPADO)**



“Planning is the most important thing. It has helped us to identify what resources we had and how could we use them. Learning happens at all stages too and sharing our learnings can actually result in change. The more you share and receive from others, the more it gives birth to new ideas and challenges.”

Nasrah Khan

My SAP notes

Active Citizens

Things to remember

What I would have done differently



Getting the picture

Theme: Arts and Sports; Human Rights
City, Province: Multan, Punjab
Project Duration: 1.5 years



“Very educational and motivating.
Such wonderful work.
An eye opener.”

A member of community visiting the photography exhibition.

Problem

I live in the province of Punjab, in Multan. In our area, the biggest problem is the divide between the rich and the poor. In the richer areas, people do not always treat the poor with enough respect or treat them as equals. The lack of compassion is troubling and creates a lot of tension.

power to show wealthy people in the city what they did not see themselves the lives of poor people outside the city. My aim was to get people thinking about their apathetic behaviour and to inspire them to change the way they think and talk about poor people. I brought together a group of 15 young people and we

Action

Our group of young photographers then went out to different areas and took pictures that illustrated the problems and feeling of those living in downtrodden communities. After extensive shortlisting we set up exhibitions at the University. During the weekends we would

women, especially, do not want to be photographed and finding good locations was difficult. We took a long time to plan the photo shoots but often, many of the photos we took were not good enough to be used for the exhibitions. However, we remained motivated. Many

organisations from Punjab, the Women's Rights Association (WRA) and my university were all very interested in our project and helped us.

People from the city were very moved by the exhibitions and many people showed their

support; nobody was offended. They were in fact so impressed that many gave donations to support our project and communities highlighted in our pictures.

Impact

Our group reached more than 1,000 people just with our exhibitions and educated them about the huge economic divides in our society and problems these cause. Young people who visited the exhibition were so inspired that they decided to take up photography projects themselves. Now there are more than 200 young people in Multan who have started their own projects.



Planning

I understand the power of pictures and their ability to bring to surface things that we often do not notice. I decided to use this

met as a study circle on weekends to discuss the problems. We brainstormed ideas about how we could use photos to exhibit harsh realities and what could be done to help people.

continue meeting and discuss problems that we could further highlight through our photos.

Photography is sometimes problematic in the rural areas;

Profile of the **Active Citizen**

Name: **Aneeq Inam**

Age: **20**

Gender: **Male**

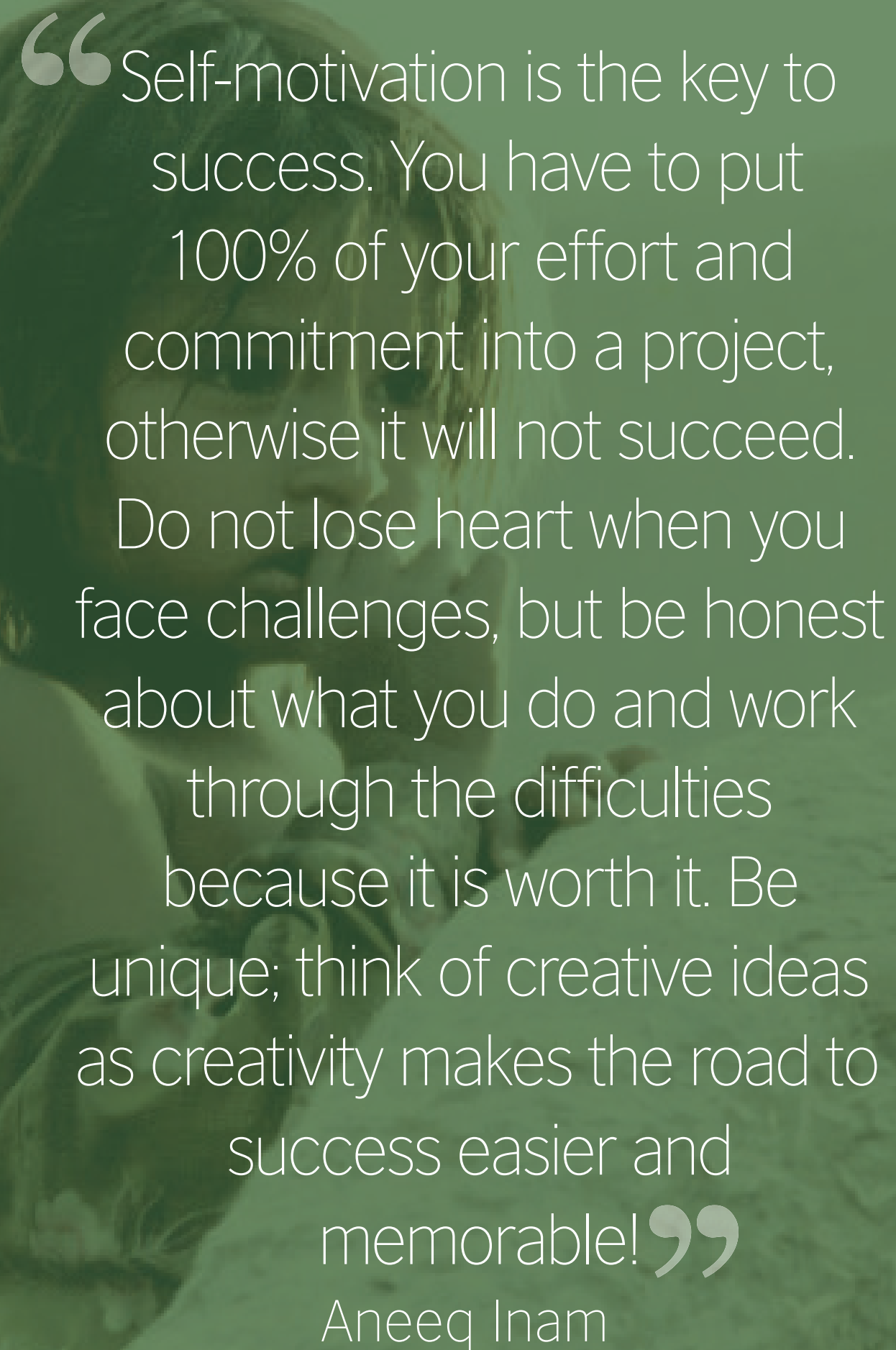
Useful skills gained through Active Citizens programme:

- Teamwork
- Assessment of people's needs
- Leadership

Proudest moment:

When delegates from London, Afghanistan and Bangladesh came to visit the exhibitions and praised the photos. I was also invited for a human rights training in Sri Lanka. Another very proud moment was when I received the National Award from the British Council.

Partner organisation: **Women's Rights Association (WRA)**



“Self-motivation is the key to success. You have to put 100% of your effort and commitment into a project, otherwise it will not succeed. Do not lose heart when you face challenges, but be honest about what you do and work through the difficulties because it is worth it. Be unique; think of creative ideas as creativity makes the road to success easier and memorable!”
Aneeq Inam

My SAP notes

Active Citizens

Things to remember

What I would
have done differently



Bright idea, safer street

Theme: Community Safety; Community Mobilisation

City, Province: Quetta, Balochistan

Project Duration: 2 months

“I can’t believe people are doing this for us, what an amazing idea!”
Community member.



Problem

A lack of street lights has been a big problem in our city. The dark streets are used by thieves to rob people, making the local community feel unsafe in the evenings and at night.

Planning

14 of us decided to raise money

to install lights in one particularly dangerous street. We wanted locals to be able to use the street after dark and to make it easier for old people to travel. During our planning phase we had three meetings a week in which we allocated roles amongst each other and came up with a fundraising plan.

Action

First, we conducted fundraising efforts on the streets for 20 days. We told people that we wanted to install the lights; in response, people were supportive and excited that something was finally being done about this problem. Once we raised enough money,

we installed 14 street lights, which took three days to do. At first, local people questioned our motives and didn't understand why we were raising funds for

street lights, so we spoke to them about our project to ease their suspicions. During our Social Action Project, we collaborated with the local community and had

support from family members and friends.

Impact

We installed 14 street lights on a road that was known to be dangerous at night and had a historically high level of robberies and muggings. Once we installed the lights, people were really happy because they were able to use the street and felt safe again leaving their houses after dark.

Profile of the **Active Citizen**

Name: **Muhammed Musa** Age: **23** Gender: **Male**

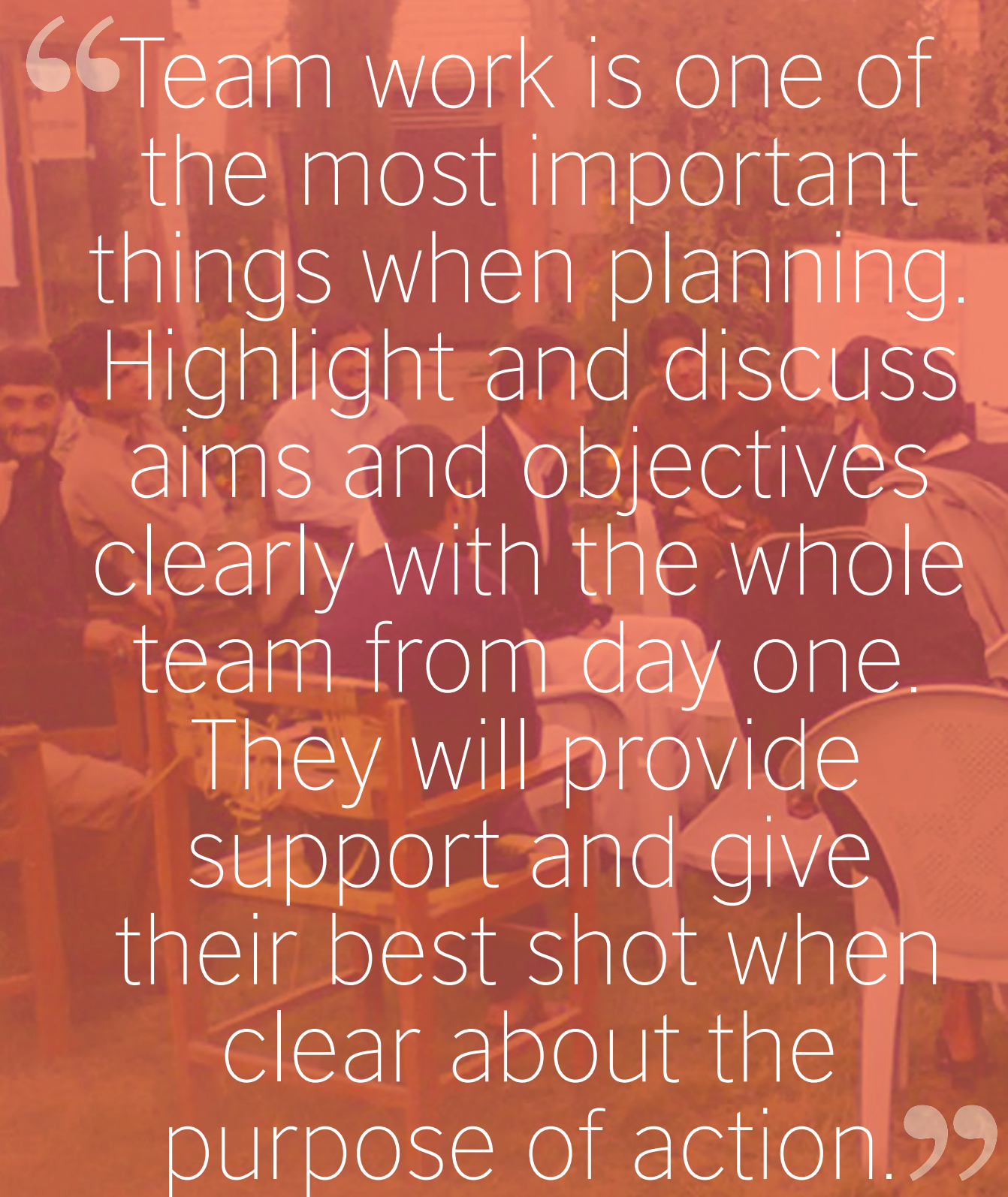
Useful skills gained through Active Citizens programme:

- Communication
- Self-confidence
- Teamwork

Proudest moment:

I was very proud to see how well our group worked together during the fundraising effort on the street. I knew we were working for a good cause and that everybody appreciated our efforts.

Partner organisation: **College Of Youth Activism and Development (CYAAD)**

A group of people, including men and women, are seated outdoors at a community meeting. They are gathered around a long table covered with a white cloth. The background shows a building and some trees. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter.

“Team work is one of the most important things when planning. Highlight and discuss aims and objectives clearly with the whole team from day one. They will provide support and give their best shot when clear about the purpose of action.”

Muhammad Musa

My SAP notes

Active Citizens

Things to remember

What I would have done differently



Inheriting a better future

Theme: Human Rights; Community Mobilisation

City, Province: Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Project Duration: 1 month

“We need exactly such meetings because they help us to understand our problems better.”

An attendee of a workshop.

Problem

I live in Charsadda, a district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. All my life I have seen how many families do not care about the rights of their own daughters. One area where

Land is very important in our district and, for many families, it is even more important than their daughters. Our culture and Pakistani law allow married daughters the right to inherit land.

remain unmarried or else are not respected by the families of their husbands. A related problem is that many marriages are arranged at a very early age.



this is evident is that of land. Issues over land and property forces girls into marriage, often at a very early age.

However, many families deny women this right, either by preventing them from marrying or simply not giving them the land. This means that many women

Planning

I knew that this problem had existed for a very long time, but today, Pakistani culture is changing and we have the chance

to empower women. The Active Citizens programme inspired me to attempt to solve this conflict by bringing together people from different areas across the Charsadda district in a workshop. My aim was to start a conversation about this difficult problem. I needed a strong legal argument to prove to people the rights that women have in Pakistan. Therefore, I secured the support of a lawyer who helped me design the workshop. I then invited participants from important families in different areas of our district because I knew that they can change the

opinions of the other family members. I knew this issue was too difficult to confront on my own, so I worked with a team of other young people who cared about women's rights.

Action

I picked a venue for my workshop in Kausar Abad town, because I knew it would be easily accessible. A total of 21 families were present, along with one political leader. The lawyer I worked with started by presenting the Islamic and the legal context. Then the family representatives

started asking questions and we began a group discussion. This helped everybody talk about issues and raised questions that they had not felt safe to talk about before coming to the workshop.

The participants of my workshop were very interested in the theme of the workshop and opened up about their fears and insecurities. Although the conflict between women's rights and land shares is a very difficult one, the participants were friendly and discussed things calmly.

Impact

The atmosphere of the workshop was so positive that the family members decided to start a conflict resolution group named “Khegara”. Some weeks after the workshop, the group resolved one family conflict about the share of a woman in the land of her family. The woman received her share and is now happily married.

For me, the main success was when the family members started to talk about the issue of women's rights and land share. This does not happen usually as most people feel that it is an issue of honour and a personal matter best left alone.

Profile of the Active Citizen

Name: **Imad Ali**

Age: **24**

Gender: **Male**

Useful skills gained through Active Citizens programme:

- Influencing
- Confidence

Proudest moment:

When I realised that people had really begun to talk about this sensitive issue in the workshop, I knew that we had reached a milestone.

Partner organisation: **Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP)**