

History of Social Welfare in Pakistan

In 1951 when the Government of Pakistan sought the assistance of the United Nations with a view to formulate a social welfare program befitting a free country. A year later the first batch of the UN Social Welfare consultants arrived in Karachi and this marked the beginning of a new orientation in the field of social welfare. In the absence of trained social workers, they advised the government to give priority to social work training as without qualified workers, social welfare projects and programs cannot be properly implemented. On the recommendation of the UN Adviser, the Government of Pakistan (Health Division) drew up a plan for initiating an organized social welfare program in the country in 1953. In the initial stage the government's responsibilities were confined to imparting social work training encouraging voluntary agencies and sponsoring of urban and rural community development projects.

National Planning Commission

The government, thenceforth, set up a Planning Board in 1953 to prepare a plan of economic development for the country. A social welfare section was created in the Planning Board to investigate social problems and social needs arising out of social change and economic development in the country; to review the social policies and legislation in the various fields of social welfare; and to prepare a five-year plan for social welfare programs. This section was later on named as the National Planning Commission.

National Council of Social Welfare

The Council was created in 1956 to stimulate the welfare activities of the voluntary organization by providing financial assistance and consultative

services. Subsequently, provincial councils were formed in the provinces with the objective of helping the voluntary welfare agencies both in expansion and coordination.

Directorate General of Social Welfare

The central Directorate of Social Welfare was abolished in 1962 as a result of decentralization of certain subjects under the new constitution. In September, 1964 the Directorate General of Social Welfare was created in the government of the then West Pakistan.

Social Welfare Department

After the dismemberment of one unit in West Pakistan in July, 1970 the former provinces of Sindh, Punjab, NWFP and Balochistan were revived. As result the West Pakistan Directorate General of Social Welfare and the West Pakistan Council of Social Welfare were bifurcated into four parts. One Directorate and one Council were established in each province as such.

In other words, two organizations have principally been set up by the provincial governments to look after social welfare programs in their respective provinces. In 1979 a separate department of Social Welfare was established. Afterwards in 1996, the segment of Women Development and in 1998 the segment of Bait-ul-Maal was also attached with Social Welfare Department. Later on in 2012, a separate department of Women Development was established and the segment of women development was separated from Social Welfare and

Bait-ul-Maal Department.

Functions of Social Welfare Department

According to Rules of Business 2011, Social Welfare and Bait-ul-Maal Department perform

following functions:

- Registration, technical assistance and monitoring of social welfare agencies
- Social protection including institutional care, skill development and rehabilitation
- Registration, assessment, training, employment, and rehabilitation of disabled persons
- Eradication of social evils
- Coordination with and grant-in-aid to non-governmental organizations engaged in the
- field of narcotics control and rehabilitation of drug addicts
- Relief during calamities and emergencies
- Financial assistance to poor and needy through Punjab Bait-ul-Maal

Social Work Education in Pakistan

Though some private organizations were working for the education of poor children and women i-e APWA (All Pakistan Women Association) formed by Raana Liaqat Ali Khan but there was need of professionalism in the field of welfare.

In the year, 1951, the government of Pakistan approached the United Nations for suggestions and cooperation for the solution of her ever increasing social problems. The development of social work as a profession in Pakistan is the result of the cooperation between the Govt. of Pakistan and the UN experts.

In 1952, a group of United Nations experts was sent to Pakistan to survey the needs, problems and social structure of Pakistan and assess the feasibility of implementation of social welfare programmes. After a comprehensive study, the

experts put priority on training of social work. The beginning was made with the introduction of a short term training course in Karachi. Mostly, the people already working in welfare institutions were trained through that course. In 1953 a similar three months training course was started at Dacca and Lahore.

After that, with the financial help of federal and provincial govts, University of the Punjab LHR started two year diploma course in social work soon after that, the same university started classes of M.A Social Work. In 1961, Karachi University also opened the postgraduate program in social work and Sindh University in 1966. In 1974 and 1978, Bloachistan University and Peshawar University respectively opened the Departments of Social Work. At BA level, in more than 100 Colleges, Social Work is being taught. In 2002, University of Sargodha and in 2004, University of Bahawalpur started master programs in Social Work. Social work education is considered very essential to produce much more professionals who can study, observe and understand the social problems and social stricture of the Pakistan society in well way and can play best role in policy making, implementation of programs and evaluation.