
INTRODUCTION

The SAARC region has 23 per cent of the world's population and 43 percent of the world's absolute poor and undernourished population with low life expectancy, low literacy rate and higher degree of gender inequality. The investment in Human Resource Development (HRD) is an absolute necessity for the SAARC region to meet the emerging challenges as an outcome of the globalization and regionalization processes and to achieve the set Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The poverty levels in the SAARC region are high and performance of most social indicators is disappointing. There is a consensus that strong economic growth is a precondition to reduce poverty and hunger in the region. The policies, strategies and operational options for increasing investments in HRD could lead to improve the human capital in the region in particular and thereby alleviating absolute poverty in general.

The Heads of State or Government of the SAARC Member Countries at the Fourth Summit held in Islamabad, Pakistan on 29-31 December, 1988 agreed to establish the SAARC Human Resource Development Centre (SHRDC) and welcomed the offer of the Government of Pakistan to host the Centre in Pakistan.

The SHRDC Project Proposal prepared by the Government of Pakistan was approved by SAARC Council of Ministers in its 17th Session held at New Delhi on December 19-20, 1996. Based on that decision, the Government of Pakistan was requested to make arrangements for the establishment of SHRDC.

Towards this end, the SHRDC a regional institution of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was established in Islamabad in 1998.

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of SHRDC is to support the capacity building and enhance the capacity of regional HRD functionaries, policy makers and trainers. The programmes are conducted at the regional level. The Centre's goal is to create critical mass for development in the South Asia and enable its people as partners and beneficiaries of the development process.

The objectives of the SHRDC are as under:

- ⇒ To keep abreast of HRD related research works being conducted in the research institutions of the region and exchange of experiences within the Member States;
- ⇒ To conduct research programmes in Human Resource Development (HRD) in the South Asian Region;
- ⇒ To provide forum for professional interaction and policy advocacies of HRD for robust, equitable and sustainable growth;
- ⇒ To promote capacity strength by extending training to Member Governments functionaries, policy makers, trainers and development practitioners;
- ⇒ To provide service and support to the institutions / organizations in the region for enhancement and exchange of their knowledge and skill within the region; and
- ⇒ To disseminate HRD information through seminars, conferences, symposiums and workshops, so as to share experiences for implementation of HRD programmes at regional level and bring out publications.



**Minister of State / Chairman of National Commission for Human Development
With the Training Participants.**

FUNCTIONS

The functions of the Centre to achieve its objectives are:

- ⇒ Stimulate activities through networking of institutions, information and knowledge;
- ⇒ Develop linkages with Nodal Points designated by the Member States, and also with the already existing Institutions in the Region and bank upon their backup support;
- ⇒ Prepare directory of research institutions and experts in the area of Human Resource Development (HRD) in the region;
- ⇒ Collate HRD data as well as data on Socio-Economic Indicators of the region;
- ⇒ Review HRD policies and strategies of the SAARC Member Countries and undertake need assessments;
- ⇒ Facilitate Exchange of experiences of Member States in the area of Human Resource Development; and
- ⇒ Capacity building and impart training to HRD experts, policymakers and functionaries.



The chief guest Mr. Salman Bashir, Additional Foreign Secretary inaugurating the SHRDC's website.

ORGANIZATION

Governing Board

The SHRDC Governing Board comprised of 10 Members, one eminent expert nominated by each Member State, representative of the SAARC Secretary General, a representative from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan and the Director of the Centre. Director of the Centre acts as Member / Secretary of the Governing Board. The Board meets once a year in the last quarter of the year.

The Governing Board recommends the Centre's Programme of Activities and Budget for approval to SAARC Standing Committee and Council of Ministers.

Staff

The Director of the SHRDC is nominated by the Host Government. He acts as the Executive Head of the Centre under the supervision of the Secretary General, SAARC. The Centre is having two types of staff.

a. Regionally recruited Professionals

- Deputy Director 1
- Research Fellow 2
- Research Associate 2

b. Locally Recruited General Services Staff

- Admin. & Accounts Officer 1
- Computer Programming Officer 1
- Secretary 2
- Librarian cum Document Assistant 1
- Accounts Assistant 1
- Admin Assistant 1
- Data Entry Operator 2
- Receptionist 1
- Driver 2
- Messenger 3

The organizational chart of SHRDC is given at *Annex-I*.

The Second Meeting of the SHRDC Governing Board in Center's Terms of Reference as following

In pursuance of the Agreement reached during Fourth Summit of the Heads of State or Government of SAARC Member States held in Islamabad on 29-31 December, 1988 and taking note of the decision of the Council of Ministers in its 17th Session held at New Delhi on 19-20 December, 1996 to establish the SHRDC, the Terms of Reference of the Centre are to:

1. Organise and undertake research, training programmes and dissemination of information on human resource development for poverty alleviation and applicable to specific needs of the Member States and recommended strategies and policies in the following areas that are included in the work programme of the Centre;

- i) Population and Welfare**

- a) Social Welfare and Social Security including problems of vulnerable groups such as the youth, the handicapped, and socio-economically disadvantaged groups etc.
 - b) Income distribution, poverty and equity
 - c) Demography and population
 - d) Strengthening of the Human Resource Development, Components of Regional Poverty Alleviation Programmes and Schemes.

- ii) Women and Children in Development**

- a) Women's perspective and development
 - b) Child care and welfare

- iii) Basic Human Needs**

- a) Education and Literacy
 - b) Health, hygiene and nutrition
 - c) Shelter
 - d) Food Security

- iv) Labour and Employment**

- a) Labour market information and institutions
 - b) Employment and development of human resources
 - c) Rural Development and Employment

- v) Environment and Human Development**

- a) Environmental conservation and sustainability
 - b) Impact of the Green Revolution
 - c) Urbanization and Social Services
 - d) Pollution and toxic wastes
 - e) Green House Effect
 - f) Sea level Rise
 - g) Aforestation

-
2. Achieve objectives and strategies for HRD from SAARC Member Countries, and meet their expectations from SHRDC and undertake activities through institutions, and hold meetings, workshops, seminars, training programmes for this purpose;
 3. Coordinate with Member States while also using network and information technology, through Nodal Points in the Member States, serve as a facilitating agency of HRD data especially of the SAARC region, its collation, analysis, policy related research work resulting in specific recommendations. To facilitate these tasks the Centre may:
 - (i) Prepare a directory of research institutions in the area of HRD in the region to create synergy and provide a resource base;
 - (ii) Undertake, with the approval of the Governing Board, any joint activity in collaboration with regional intuitions and other agencies, or activity assigned by the Council of Ministers / SAARC Summit;
 - (iii) Consider entering into co-operative arrangements with multilateral or bi-lateral donors to promote HRD within the SAARC region.
 4. The following areas of priority will be intensively pursued:

Education, health, gender, poverty, children, handicapped and environment with emphasis on access to information, exchange of country experiences, best practices, regional policy formulation, and training for achieving required outcomes of SHRDC.

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR 2003

The Governing Board of SHRDC directed the SHRDC at its Third Meeting to concentrate on core and focussed programme of activities, which eventually give tangible benefits to people the Member States in the region according to its mandate and terms of reference. The Board also directed the Centre to obtain the HRD related study reports and other relevant information already available with the Member States and the SAARC Secretariat (like ISACPA Report on Poverty related issues) and compile these information in order to draw up a road map for future plan of activities of the Centre. The Board also guided the Centre to review relevant reports and documents of the region to avoid duplication in its work. Further, it has also recommended the SHRDC to work in close concert with the SAARC Technical Committee on HRD. The Board approved the following programmes for implementation in the year 2003:

1. Database Development in the area of Macroeconomics, Demography, Education, Health, Gender, Poverty, Children & Environment, Food security and Nutrition, and Energy;
2. Directory of HRD Institutions in the SAARC Countries;
3. Training of Trainer's (TOT) Programmes of SHRDC (Short term);
 - i) Training on Poverty Alleviation;
 - ii) Training on Gender & Development;
 - iii) Training on Vocational and Technical Education Training (VTET);
4. Preparation of Training Modules in the Identified Areas;
5. Computer Mediated Communication of Information;
 - i) Access to Internet, Server charge, Website updation etc.;
 - ii) Purchase of Hardware, Software, upgradation, repairs etc.;
6. Monitoring Backstopping Support to Programmes, Interaction between SHRDC and relevant Institutions in SAARC Countries;
7. SHRDC Quarterly Newsletter (4 Issues);
8. SHRDC Annual Report; and
9. Information Booklet on SHRDC.

Status of Programmes/Activities 2003

Pursuant to the approval of the report of the Third Meeting of SHRDC Governing Board by the Fourth Special Session of the SAARC Standing Committee held in Katmandu, Nepal on 9-10, July, 2003, the SHRDC has initiated the actions on approved programme of activities and the current status of the programmes are as under:

- **Database Development on Macroeconomic Profiles and HRD Indicators in the SAARC Region;**

Data received from Member Countries is being processed. The final report and the database will be disseminated on-line through the SHRDC Website in the year 2004;

- **Training Course on Poverty Alleviation through Human Resource Development**

The Training Course was held from 15-28, September 2003. A total of 16 participants from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka took part in the training course;

- **Training Program on Gender and Development (GAD)**

The Training Course was held at the Centre from 6-19 October 2003. A total number of 23 participants from all the member countries took part in the training course.

- **Training Course on Vocational and Technical Education and Training (VTET): A Means of HRD**

The Training Course was held from 9-22 December 2003. A total of 20 participants from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka took part in the training course.

- **Development of SHRDC Website (www.shrdc-isb.org)**

SHRDC has developed and launched its website as one of the events of the 18th SAARC Charter day celebrations held in December 2003. It is expected to disseminate research reports; training modules, annual reports, HRD News letters and other HRD related data and publications online to the end users through the SHRDC website;

- **HRD News – SHRDC Newsletter**

The Volume 1, Number1 of the HRDnews was published in September 2003 and Volume 1 Number 2 of the HRDnews is forthcoming;

- **Preparation of Directory of HRD Institution in SAARC Countries**
- **Publishing annual progress report.**
- **Information booklet on SHRDC.**

Programme of Activities Recommended for 2004, at the Fourth Meeting of the Governing Board:

The following programme of activities were recommended by the Governing Board of SHRDC:

Regular/Ongoing Programmes

1. Database Development on Macroeconomic Profiles and HRD Indicators in the SAARC Region;
2. Training of Trainer's (ToT) Programme of SHRDC (Short Term)
 - i. Training Course on 'Population, Environment and Development';
 - ii. Training Course on 'Labour and Employment';
 - iii. Training Course on 'Good Governance';
3. Computer Mediated Communication of Information;
4. Monitoring backstopping support to programmes, Interaction between SHRDC and relevant Institutions in SAARC Countries;
5. SHRDC Newsletter (Quarterly);
6. SHRDC Annual Report;

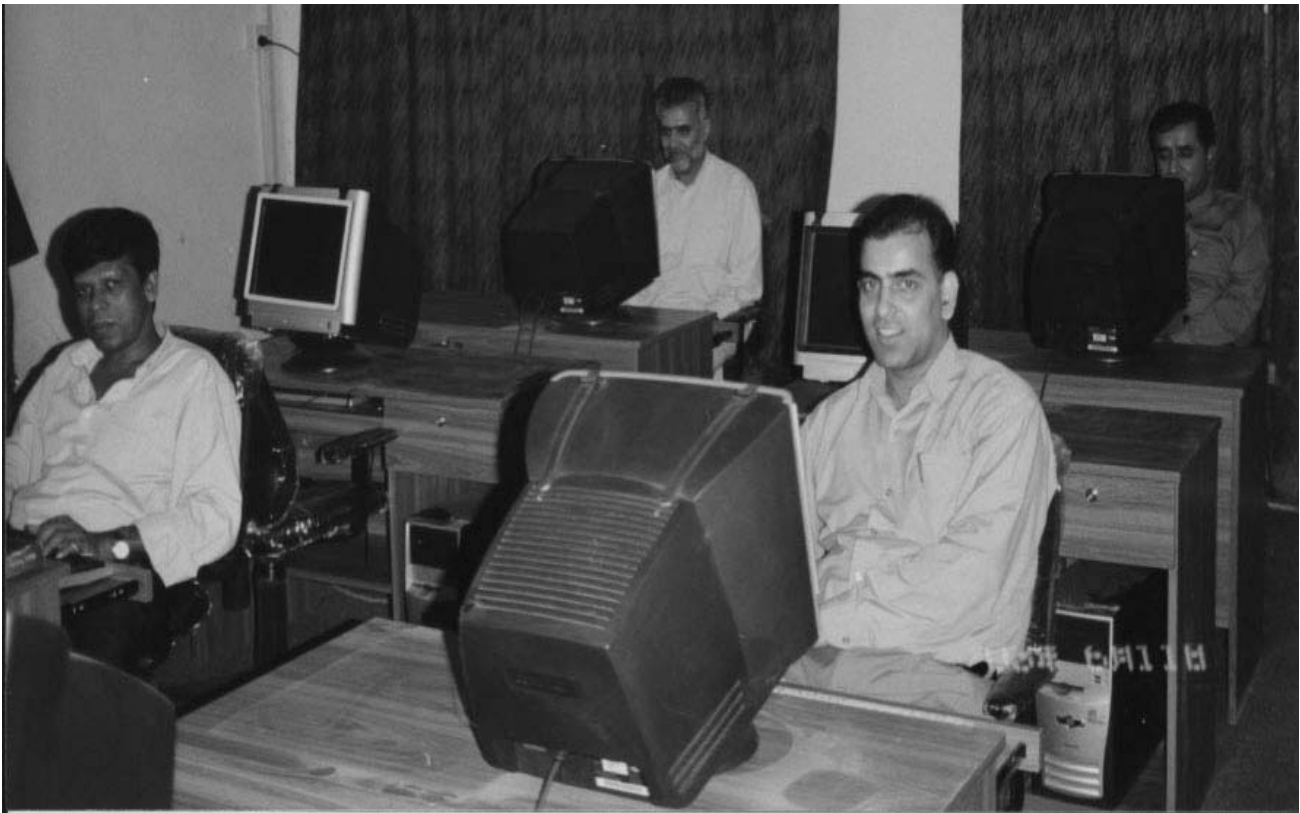
New Programmes for 2004

7. SAARC Inventory of HRD Best Practices: Poverty Alleviation;
8. SAARC Symposium on Regional Capacity Development Collaborative Framework for Human Development;
9. SAARC Journal of HRD (Annually);
10. Directory of HRD Experts in the SAARC Region;
11. Regional Workshop on Development Strategies and the Employment Problem in the SAARC Region;
12. Acquisition of Publications in the areas of HRD from SAARC Member Countries;
13. Distribution of SHRDC Publications, Information Collection & Communication; and
14. Comparative Analysis of Macroeconomics and HRD Scenario in the SAARC Region;

The Facilities of SHRDC:

■ Computer Lab

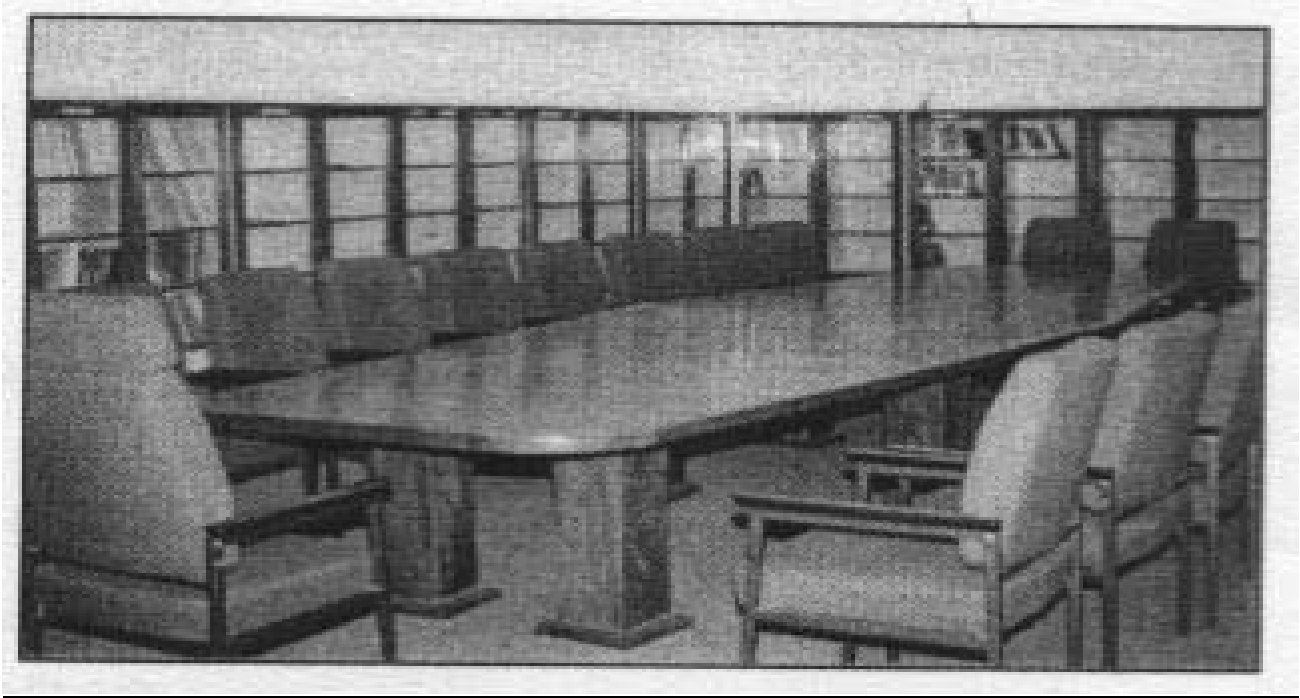
The SHRDC has a computer Lab with a Local Area Network (LAN), Internet and desk top publishing facilities. Further, the Centre has developed its website - www.shrhc-isb.org to disseminate its macroeconomic and HRD database and other SHRDC's reports and information online to the end users.



■ Library

A small library has been established in the SHRDC to facilitate the Professionals to carryout Research and Training Programmes on HRD. The new books relevant to various socio- economic subjects and training on HRD are being procured for the library. The reference section of the library includes Encyclopedia Britannica, Europa yearbook, latest Statesman Year book and other publications relevant to the SAARC region. In addition, the internationally reputed journals,

magazines and other periodicals on HRD and Contemporary Development Issues are also being purchased for the library.



SHRDC's Library

■ **Conference Hall**

The Centre has established its Conference Hall with facilities for holding its training Programmes, Workshops, Seminars and Discussions in an attractive setting and relaxed and comfortable environment with state of the art audio-visual facilities including sound systems and multi-media facilities. The Conference Hall has the capacity to accommodate 25 participants with simultaneous conferencing facilities.



A view of the SHRDC Conference Hall