



Name: Dominic Stephen

Country: PAKISTAN

Date of birth: 20th Dec 1945

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I was born of very poor parents in a small town Umerkot (where the great Moghal King Akbar was born) in the Sindh Province of Pakistan. My father converted to Christianity from Hinduism in 1945.

We originally come from a Hindu tribal group called 'Parkaris' whose population in Pakistan is about 180,000 now. Only five percent of this population is Christian, whereas the rest belong to the Hindu religion. The Dutch Missionaries helped me to receive a primary education at St. Joseph's Urdu School, Matli (Sindh, Pakistan) and I did matriculation from St. Mary's High School, Sukkur (Sindh, Pakistan) in 1966.

Subsequently I acquired my MBA degree from University of the Philippines, M.A. Economics and MSc Rural Development degrees from Sindh, Pakistan.

I married Mariam d/o Daniel in 1966.

I started my career in 1966 as a junior office clerk at St. Teresa's Mission Hospital (100 bed) and then worked my way up to become Senior Accountant and Administrator.

I went to work for the Aga Khan Maternity Homes as their Administrator in 1981 and worked in this position until the end of 1982.

I worked for the Catholic Diocese of Hyderabad, Sindh, Pakistan as Diocesan Administrator from 1983 to 1988. As I wanted to make my further career in rural development, I went to work for the Tharparkar Rural Development Project (TRDP), established by the Save the Children Fund UK, as Project Manager in 1989. I remained in this job until September 1997. I resigned my job with Save the Children in September 1997 to establish the Participatory Village Development Programme (PVDP) in October 1997. PVDP however was conceptually developed in July 1997 when I was still working with Save the Children. I am presently serving as the Executive Director and Founder member of PVDP.

I am a professional development worker, with special interest in rural development of grass-roots communities. I am also working as a freelance development consultant and trainer for local NGOs, CBOs and Donor Organizations.

My current areas of interest are the Arid and Coastal Lands which are dependent on rainfall for subsistence agriculture and livestock farming. I am presently working for PVDP in the Thar Arid Zone, Coastal Land of Thatta and Agrarian districts of Mirpurkhas, Umerkot, Sanghar and Badin to improve the living conditions of the marginalized communities. We are working to improve the water, the land, the fodder and livestock resources and thus the living standards of the poor and underprivileged communities in the mentioned districts. PVDP also works to improve health conditions particularly of women and children. In education, PVDP is supporting about 2400 girls and boys to receive quality education at primary level.

Work with Future in Our Hands Pakistan.

I am also supporting work of FIOH Pak focusing more on youth. We believe that youth has to be directed in a right way in their life otherwise we will not need the terrorists to destroy us. We have seen that in Pakistan, unguided youth have become drug addicts and are involved in criminal activities such as robbery, fraud and even killings as survival mechanism.

FIOH Pak believes what Mother Teresa has said that "the root of all evils lies in our homes where family and moral values are dying". FIOH Pak therefore, works with families as well to work towards improving the family morality and family values. The tools used for identifying social and moral issues are: Making of Comic Posters and exhibiting, Interactive Theatres, Songs, Poetry, Seminars and workshops etc. The results of this kind of work is quite encouraging and youth has started giving meaning to their lives.

In the floods 2010 and 2011, FIOH Pak volunteers worked with PVDP to provide the flood affected people with needed relief in the form of food, hygiene kits, kitchen wares and tents etc. PVDP supported more than 20,000 flood affected households in the two floods. The support directly reached to about 150,000 men, women and children affected by floods in Sindh Province of Pakistan.

I am now over 66 years old and working towards my retirement which may come in the next one or two years depending on how soon we find my replacement. I am so addicted to the social development work that I find it hard to detach myself from the active engagement in social development of the poor and marginalized. I started my career in 1966 which was soon after my marriage. So I have already spent almost 46 years of solid and active working life. Thanks to God who made this possible. However, the fact is fact and I have to be mentally and physically ready to accept a happy retirement. I want to remain engaged with humanitarian work even after my retirement as a volunteer where ever I am needed that is my desire. Pray for me.

A video showing one of the problems associated with life in the Thar Desert can be seen on You tube:
http://youtu.be/uY_HOJ9MuX8

Dominic Stephen
Chairman,
Future in Our Hands Pakistan.

Note: A branch of Future in Our Hands was established in 2005. It is presently operating from Ratanabad, Mirpurkhas Sindh - General Manager: Yousaf Dominic.

Personal Data

Languages: Urdu, English, Sindhi, Parkari and Punjabi

Parents: Father, Sona, Mother Hanu Cecilia

Children: Pauline, Alvina, Florence and Lina and Yousaf, Saleem and Irfan Daud.

Wife: Miriam Daniel