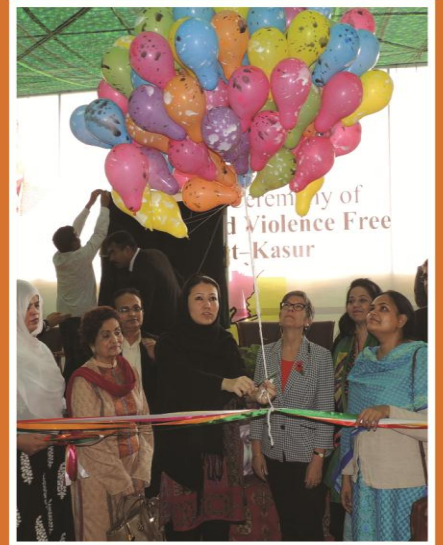


ANNUAL REPORT 2016



AURAT FOUNDATION

Annual Report

2016



Aurat Foundation

Report: Annual Report 2016
Edited and reviewed by: Benazir Jatoi
Layout and design: Shahzad Ashraf
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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAC	AAWAZ <i>Agahi</i> (awareness) Centre
AAF	Aurat Action Forum
ADF	AWAZ District Forum
AF	Aurat Foundation
AGHS	Asma, Gulrukh, Hina and Shahla (law firm)
AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir
ANF	AAWAZ National Forum
ANP	Awami National Party
AOM	Area Opening Meeting
AOR	Agreement Officer Representative
ASF	Acid Survivors' Foundation
ATF	AAWAZ <i>Tehsil</i> Forum
AUF	AAWAZ Union council Forum
AVF	AAWAZ Village Forum
BBC	BISP Beneficiary Committee
BISP	Benazir Income Support Programme
BTCC	BISP <i>Tehsil</i> Coordination Committee
BUCC	Beneficiary Union Council Committee
CAC	Citizen Action Committee
CAO	Civic Advocacy Organization
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CLAAS	Centre for Legal Aid Assistance and Settlement
CNIC	Computerized National Identity Card
CRM	Child Rights Movement
CSC	Civil Society Coalition
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAI	Development Alternatives Incorporated
DV	Domestic Violence
ECP	Election Commission of Pakistan

GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GCI	Gender Concerns International
GEP	Gender Equity Program
HRCP	Human Rights Commission of Pakistan
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IFT	Insan Foundation Trust
IHI	Insani Huqooq Ittehad
IRC	Interactive Resource Centre
KAP	Knowledge, Attitude and Practice
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
LG	Local Government
LISTEN	Leverage in Social Transformation of Elected Nominees
LRC	Labour Resource Centre
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MSI	Management Systems International
NADRA	National Database and Registration Authority
NAF	National Advisory Forum
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PCSW	Provincial Commission on the Status of Women
PFC	Provincial Finance Commission
PGC	Pakistan Gender Coalition
PM	Prime Minister
PML-N	Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz
PMU	Project Management Unit
PPAF	Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund
PPP	Pakistan People's Party
PTI	Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf
PTV	Pakistan Television
RHV	Raising Her Voice
SDPI	Sustainable Development Policy Institute
SJA	Sindh Judicial Academy
SM	Social Mobilization

SMC	School Management Committee
SO	Social Organizer
SPO	Strengthening Participatory Organisation
SSO	Senior Social Organizer
SWWDD	Social Welfare and Women Development Department
TAF	The Asia Foundation
ToT	Training-of-Trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAW	Violence Against Women
WDD	Women Development Department
WGW	Working Group for Women
WLG	Women leader Group
WLP	Women's Learning Partnership

Introduction

This year the largest province of Pakistan unanimously passed the landmark Punjab Protection of Women Against Violence 2016. The passage of the bill was highly controversial with various different concerns being voiced, both from the far religious right to rights activists. The law has pushed barriers in terms of women's protection and holding the perpetrator to account. Perhaps its greatest achievement is the simple but imperative recognition of domestic violence as an offence.

Aurat Foundation is proud that we have been part of every process of the bill - from its initial draft to the final vote in the provincial Assembly. We, as a watchdog and champion for women's rights celebrate this law as a great milestone. Yet, we are well aware that real celebration will be when the law is actually implemented and affects the lives of women that it is meant to protect. Another achievement of this law has been that women parliamentarians across party lines supported this bill. This reiterates AF's firm belief that more women's political participation will translate into better and greater legal protections for women, and will often be over and above party lines. And thus the appointment of the first woman speaker of the Balochistan Assembly, Ms. Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani is a cause for much celebration amongst women's rights activists.

Unfortunately, incidents of violence follow us into this year. We saw a deadly suicide attack at a popular park in Lahore on Easter Sunday that was packed with Christian families. 72 people died. It is also in Punjab that we saw the horrific Kasur child sex abuse scandal that was unravelled 400 videos of some 280 child victims, who were forced to be filmed. In another province, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, we saw extremist attack on Bacha Khan University, killing 19 people. These attacks have reminded us that the struggle for a peaceful society, without violence in all its manifestations, is still very much still unrealised with only very few glimpses of hope.

It is Aurat Foundation's resolve this year that in addition to drafting, advocacy and lobbying of the passage of laws, we will analysis further the reason law is not being implemented and to work towards removing barriers that hinder access to justice. This year again seems to see incidents of violence against women and girls on the rise. We have witnessed the murder of the social media celebrity Qandeel Baloach, killed in her sleep by her brother, for apparently bringing shame to the family. Her death has brought many questions to the forefront regarding how effective the "honour" crime law really is and put a face to the countless other women killed in the country under the guise of "honour". Other "honour" crimes have included a 19-year school teacher tortured and killed in Muree killed by family members for refusing a marriage proposal.









Another incident included the a year 16 year old girl who was ordered to be killed by the local Jirga for helping a friend to marry of her own choice. These are only a few incidents in a number of others that question the very fabric of society. But these incidents also strengthen our resolve to work on issues that address underlying causes of violence against women and girls. These include understanding and challenging inequality, lack of women's agency and patriarchal mind sets and structures.

Aurat Foundation, through the hard work and commitment of all its staff and members of the Board of Governors and under the wise counsel and guidance of Nigar Ahmad, are still working towards a violent free society where everyone is considered and treated equal. We are pragmatic and aware of the setbacks and challenges that lay ahead but we are forever hopeful.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Naeem Ahmed Mirza". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name.

Naeem Ahmed Mirza
Chief Operating Officer
Aurat Foundation
January 2016, Islamabad

Board of Governors

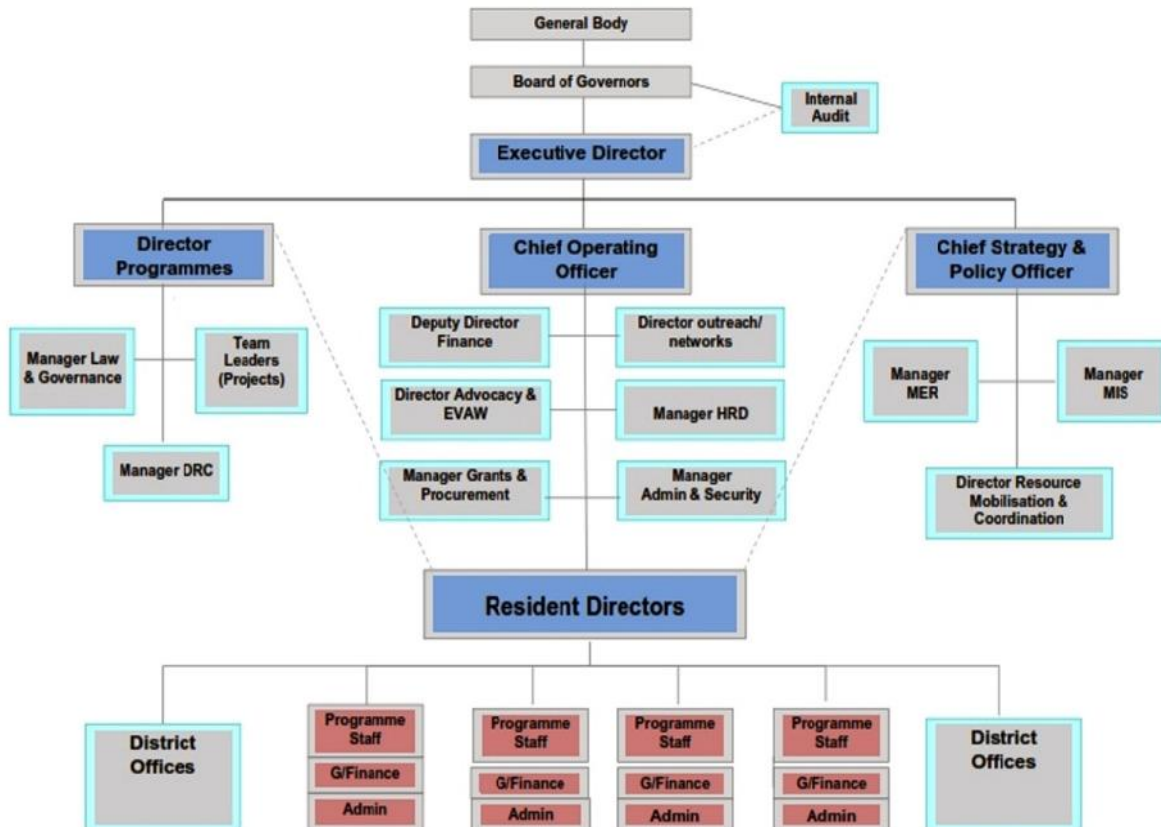
<p>Dr. Masuma Hasan <i>President</i></p> <p>Development Practitioner; former Cabinet Secretary & Ambassador; Researcher</p>		<p>Nigar Ahmad <i>Member/Executive Director</i></p> <p>Economist; Human Rights Activist; Development Practitioner</p>	
<p>Mohammad Tahseen <i>Treasurer</i></p> <p>Executive Director, South Asia Partnership Pakistan; Development Expert; Human Rights Activist</p>		<p>Arif Hasan <i>Member</i></p> <p>Architect & Planner; Social Researcher and Writer; Development Practitioner</p>	
<p>Anis Haroon <i>Member</i></p> <p>Chairperson National Commission on the Status of Women; Women's Rights Activist</p>		<p>Tasneem Siddiqui <i>Member</i></p> <p>Chairman Saiban; former Director, Katchi Abadis, KDA; Development Practitioner</p>	
<p>Samina Rahman <i>Member</i></p> <p>Educationist; Women's Rights Activist</p>		<p>Anjum Riyazul Haque <i>Member</i></p> <p>Development Professional, former UNESCO head in Pakistan</p>	
<p>Dr. Aliya H. Khan <i>Member</i></p> <p>Educationist; Economist, Development Expert</p>			

Executive Council of Aurat Foundation

Name	Function	Gender	Affiliation
Nigar Ahmad	Executive Director	Female	30 years
Naeem Ahmed Mirza	Chief Operating Officer	Male	19 years
M. Younas Khalid	Chief Strategy & Policy Officer	Male	21 years
Nasreen Zehra	Resident Director, Lahore	Female	20 years
Shabina Ayaz	Resident Director, Peshawar	Female	20 years
Haroon Dawood	Resident Director, Quetta	Male	19 years
Mahnaz Rahman	Resident Director, Karachi	Female	12 years

Organogram

Institutional Structure Aurat Publication and Information Service Foundation



Audit Report



KPMG Taseer Hadi & Co.
Chartered Accountants
2nd Floor,
Servis House
2-Main Gulberg Jail Road,
Lahore Pakistan

Telephone + 92 (42) 3579 0901-6
Fax + 92 (42) 3579 0907
Internet www.kpmg.com.pk

Independent Auditor's Report to Board of Governors

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of **Aurat Publication and Information Service Foundation**, which comprise of the balance sheet as at 30 June 2016 and the income and expenditure account, the statement of other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in accumulated funds and the cash flow statement for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's responsibility for the financial statements

The Board of Governors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with the approved accounting standards as applicable in Pakistan, and for such internal controls as the Board of Governors determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with the approved auditing standards as applicable in Pakistan. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal controls relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by Board of Governors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

mmxdt

KPMG Taseer Hadi & Co., a Partnership firm registered in Pakistan and a member firm of the KPMG network of independent member firms affiliated with KPMG International Cooperative ("KPMG International"), a Swiss entity.



KPMG Taseer Hadi & Co.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of **Aurat Publication and Information Service Foundation** as at 30 June 2016, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the approved accounting standards as applicable in Pakistan.

Emphasis of matter

We draw attention to note 1.2 to the financial statements, which indicates that the Foundation has applied to the Joint Stock Companies of City District Government for renewal of registration certificate under the Societies Registration Act 1860 which is under process by Joint Stock Companies of City District Government. Our opinion is not qualified in respect of this matter.

Date: 02 October 2017

Lahore

KPMG Taseer Hadi & Co
Chartered Accountants
(M. Rehan Chughtai)

Aurat Publication and Information Service Foundation
Balance Sheet
As at 30 June 2016

		2016	2015		2016	2015
	Note	Rupees	Rupees		Rupees	Rupees
Funds and liabilities						
<u>Accumulated funds</u>						
General fund		10,354,772	68,039,733		11	58,645,440
Endowment fund - restricted		1,035,924	1,035,924		12	3,935,223
		11,390,696	69,075,657			62,580,663
<u>Non-current liabilities</u>						
Staff severance pay	6	-	8,669,604			
Donated funds - restricted	7	(20,866,665)	12,987,271			
Deferred capital grants - restricted		48,768,410	57,990,347			
		27,901,745	79,647,222			
<u>Current liabilities</u>						
Trade and other payables	8	67,871,629	38,470,659			
Short term loan	9	500,000	500,000			
Staff severance pay		12,799,256	-			
		81,170,885	38,970,659			
		120,463,326	187,693,538			
Contingencies and commitments						
	10					
<u>Assets</u>						
<u>Non-current assets</u>						
Property and equipment		50,871,456	58,645,440			
Intangible assets		3,381,245	3,935,223			
		54,252,701	62,580,663			
<u>Current assets</u>						
Advances, deposits, prepayments and other receivables	13	36,622,912	32,178,065			
Cash and bank balances	14	29,587,713	92,934,810			
		66,210,625	125,112,875			
		120,463,326	187,693,538			

The annexed notes 1 to 19 form an integral part of these financial statements.

Lahore


 Executive Director


 Director

AMMA

Aurat Publication and Information Service Foundation
Income and Expenditure Account
For the year ended 30 June 2016

Note	Aurat		Consolidated	
	Foundation Rupees	Projects Rupees	2016 Rupees	2015 Rupees
Income				
	-	1,037,786,392	1,037,786,392	864,592,700
	499,478	-	499,478	40,099,063
	410,471	-	410,471	3,299,227
15	2,259,233	-	2,259,233	11,089,520
	-	15,777,247	15,777,247	15,344,522
	3,169,182	1,053,563,639	1,056,732,821	934,425,032

Expenditure

	-	417,257,933	417,257,933	223,355,528
17	23,974,238	355,379,311	379,353,549	359,338,473
	17,829,376	111,951,307	129,780,683	115,227,950
	-	5,122,884	5,122,884	5,085,296
	24,494	8,592,866	8,617,360	10,633,534
	700,231	48,590,461	49,290,692	47,647,124
	-	35,510,534	35,510,534	32,120,425
	120,334	8,235,655	8,355,989	8,553,798
	46,885	16,958,584	17,005,469	37,087,032
	560,154	5,506,102	6,066,256	8,619,242
	-	475,484	475,484	408,938
	654,438	3,476,884	4,131,322	10,831,658
	88,981	2,272,188	2,361,169	1,465,090
	2,702,827	5,628,117	8,330,944	8,969,970
	-	11,506,424	11,506,424	8,637,400
	-	12,000	12,000	1,359,401
	-	1,309,658	1,309,658	2,670,104
11.1	16,000	14,478,294	14,494,294	13,959,691
12.1	245,025	1,298,953	1,543,978	1,636,273
	13,891,160	-	13,891,160	692,526
	60,854,143	1,053,563,639	1,114,417,782	898,299,453
Net (deficit) / surplus	(57,684,961)	-	(57,684,961)	36,125,579

The annexed notes 1 to 19 form an integral part of these financial statements.

Lahore


Executive Director


Director

List of Operational Projects

Sr #	Project	Donor
1	AAWAZ Voice & Accountability Programme	DFID
2	SM-NCTP, WeT	DFID
3	Gender Equity Programme	USAID
4	Institutional strengthening to bring gender reforms	Trocaire
5	Leverage in Social Transformation of Elected Nominees WLP, Safe districts (pilot project)	OXFAM
6	Gender in Emergencies	OXFAM

Chapter One

Law and Policy Reform



1. Law and Policy Reform

Keeping in line with the Constitution of Pakistan and our various international commitments, Pakistan has shown some progress towards introducing pro-women laws. These newly enacted laws are attempting to address discrimination and the inequality gap between women and men. Aurat Foundation, since its inception, has worked towards lobbying legislators towards progressive law. This includes firstly, amending existing legal provisions that are discriminatory against women and girls and secondly, to create new laws to address specific issues, which women in Pakistan face. Examples of AF's relentless campaigning have included the recognition of "honour" crimes as specific crimes under the Penal Code. This was achieved in 2014. In terms of domestic violence, AF's hard work of drafting and lobbying saw results in Sindh with the Sindh Domestic Violence Act 2013. One of AF's major achievements this year has been the Punjab Protection of Women Against Violence Act 2016. Aurat Foundation has been part of all stages of this law, including drafting and the various consultative processes and the consistent lobbying of parliamentarians for the passage of the Act. This law recognises domestic violence as an offence, with harsh punishment for the offender. We look forward to its actual implementation and will ensure to monitor it very closely.

1.1 Unanimous passage of 'Protection of Women against Violence Act 2016' celebrated

Amongst much controversy from conservative elements, the Aurat Foundation celebrated the passage of landmark legislation the 'Protection of Women against Violence Act 2016' on 3 March 2016, at the Avari Hotel, Lahore. The AF AAWAZ Programme in collaboration with Oxfam GB organized the event. Addressing the occasion, speakers said that for the first time in the history of the country, a substantial protection has been guaranteed to women in the largest province of the country. Speakers acknowledged that the government responded positively to the demands of civil society and highlighted specifically the role of Aurat Foundation in the passage of this Act.

Adviser to the Chief Minister and the chief architect of this law, Mr. Salman Sufi said, "We faced a lot of resistance to the law, which shows that the bill covers all forms of violence against women. This is not a war between men and women". He said that the



law provided a comprehensive implementation strategy. He said that ambulances and legal and police help would be provided at protection centers (protection centres are one stop centres to be set up all over the province as recognised in the new law). He also said that the Government of Punjab are open to discussing the reservations of religious leaders on the law but this has to be beyond just negative reactionary comments but clause by clause critic of the law.



Ms. Hameeda Wahid-ud-Din, Provincial Minister for Women’s Development, said the law had provided a mechanism for protection of women. Apart from protection centres, the law provides for committees to be constituted at the district levels.

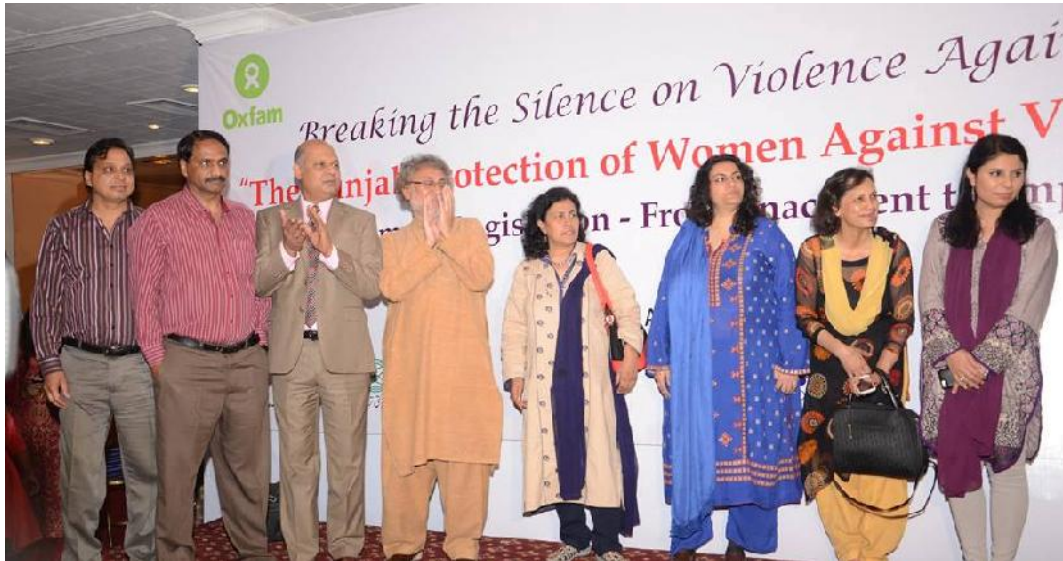
Ms. Zakia Shahnawaz, Minister for Population Welfare and Environment, said, “there was a misconception that the PML-N was not a women-friendly party. This legislation has proved how wrong that is”.

Mr. Naeem Mirza appreciated the commitment by Ms. Faiza Malik from the Pakistan People’s Party and Ms. Nosheen Hamid from the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI), who who took the bill forward in the Punjab legislature. The passage of the bill is an outcome of the years long struggle by the citizens of the Pakistan. He said the law would prevent all forms of violence against women by dealing with circumstances that lead to heinous crimes such as acid attacks and honour killings. He said 90 countries across the world have laws against domestic violence, including Saudi Arabia. Commenting on the resistance against the bill by the religious right Mr. Mirza said “When will the Council of Islamic Ideology understand that the world has changed?”



Ms. Mumtaz Mughal said, “Our efforts towards this legislation started in 2002 and in the years that followed it has been taken up in both the National Assembly and the provincial assemblies by various lawmakers”. She said the civil society have continued lobbying efforts for the passage of the bill under successive governments and was pleased that finally their struggles bore fruit.

Mr. Mohammad Tahseen paid tribute to all the women members of the Punjab Assembly who rose above party lines to vote for the bill. He further said effective implementation of law will provide a comprehensive solution on violence against women.



Ms. Mary Gill, MPA, Punjab Assembly, highlighted that the greatest reservations against the bill was on the provision of a tracking bracelet for an accused. She clarified that this was meant to be used only in case of repeat offenders and said that this would act as a deterrent.

The speakers called upon the government to ensure the effective implementation of the law and stressed the need to allocate a sufficient budget for the smooth and effective working of various districts protection committees in this regard. The speakers welcomed the provisions of the law that impose a penalty and imprisonment on any person that obstructs the protection officer while carrying out his/her duties.

A large number of female Punjab Assembly members and members of the civil society attended the event. This included Begum Zakia Shahnawaz, Begum Hameeda Waheed-ud-Din, Justice (R) Nasira Javed Iqbal, Ms. Uzma Bukhari, Ms. Faiza Malik, Dr. Nousheen Hamid, Dr. Farzana Nazir, Ms. Shuneela Ruth, Ms. Shumila Aslam, former parliamentarians Ms. Mehnaz Rafi, Ms. Sajida Mir, Ms. Amna Ulfat, Ms. Salman Sufi, senior member Punjab Government’s Special Monitoring Unit, Mr. Naeem Mirza, Chief Operating Officer, Aurat Foundation, Ms. Mumtaz Mughal, Resident Director Aurat Foundation Lahore, Mr. Harris Khalique, Team Leader DAI, Mr. Mohammad Tahseen, Executive Director SAP Pakistan, and Mr. Salman Abid, Regional head SPO.

1.2 AF and CSO delegation met Minister for Women Development Department



A delegation of civil society representatives met with Provincial Minister for Women's Development, Ms. Hameeda Waheed-ud-Din on 26 February 2016 at the office of Women's Development Department. The meeting was to acknowledge the minister's efforts for passing the Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Act 2016. Ms. Waheed-ud-Din said that effective implementation of the protection bill will be ensured. Ms. Mumtaz Mughal, Resident Director Aurat Foundation, Ms. Ruhi Maqbool, Regional Manager MDM, Mr. Salman Abid, Regional Head SPO, Ms. Ferzana Mumtaz, National Manager Advocacy, SAP-PK, Ms. Ume Laila, Executive Director, Home Net Pakistan, Ms. Ambreen Fatima, Actionaid, Ms. Amna Ulfat, social and women rights activist, Dr. Zarqa Tamour, Ms. Fakhra Tehreem, Ms. Sumera Saleem, Ms. Rizwana Waseem, Mr. Abid Ali, Mr. Muhammad Zubair and representatives from Mumkin Alliance and civil society organizations were present at the occasion.

Ms. Hameeda Waheed-ud-Din said that the efforts of civil society, women assembly members and the Women's Development Department were commendable for the passage of the protection law. She said that in addition to focusing on implementation of the bill there will also be focus on the awareness campaign around the Act. She said the purpose of the Act was to curb violence against women and help save family systems in our society.

Ms. Mumtaz Mughal Resident Director Aurat Foundation said that it was due to the continuous struggle of civil society and cooperation of the government that the bill had been passed. Yet she warned that the fruits of this legislation are linked to its implementation in letter and spirit.



Civil society representatives congratulated the government on the passage of the Act and said that the Act would help curb violence against women. They also said that they

would be able to play their due role in national development with more confidence. Yet they stressed that an awareness campaign by the government regarding the rights of women and around this bill should be made more widespread and effective.



1.3 Study circles with parliamentarians organized

Aurat Foundation, in collaboration with the Women’s Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) organized two study circles from February 26-27, 2016 in Nathia Gali. Participants included members of the National Assembly from different political parties including MQM, PTI, JI and PMAP and members of political parties’ wings. The study circles were organized to build cross party consensus among parliamentarians on issues that need urgent response for policy and legislation. The first study circle was conducted on ‘Health Issues of Women and Girls in Pakistan and its Impact’. Ms. Saliha Ramay, an activist and specialist on violence against women issues, highlighted that women and girls’ health issues with a particular focus on sexual and reproductive health. It was highlighted that women and girls’ sexual and reproductive health issues have been neglected. It is very important to generate a discourse on these issues as during the Commission on the Status of Women’s 59th session, our government took a back foot when these issues were highlighted at the global level.

The second study circle was conducted on ‘the Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Bill 2014 and the Religious Perspective’. This was in light of the Child Marriage Restraint Bill having been recently rejected by the Senate committee on the advise of the Council of Islamic Ideology. The Council declared raising the age of the girl child to be un-Islamic and blasphemous. The study circle reviewed



the bill once again under Islamic jurisprudence to find out the alternative options to raise it in the Senate again. At the end of both study circles, parliamentarians committed to put questions and “Calling Attention Notices” collectively and beyond party positions. WPC also committed to organize another study circle on both issues within assembly premises.

1.4 Pending pro-women legislation discussed with members of Standing Committee, Balochistan.



A consultative meeting was held with members of civil society and parliamentarians on pending pro-women legislation in Balochistan on 11 February 2016, at Provincial Assembly Balochistan, organised by Aurat Foundation. The meeting was chaired by the Honourable Speaker Balochistan Assembly Ms. Raheela Hameed Durrani. Dr. Shama Ishaq, Chairperson Standing Committee on Women Development, Social Welfare, Youth and Minorities, and other members of standing committee were also present. Ms. Salma Qureshi, Director Women Development Department (WDD), Ms. Irum Mehmood, Advocate High Court, and Law Department officials also attended the discussion.

The main objective of the meeting was to discuss the pro-women legislative agenda, which includes the bill on the establishment of Balochistan’s Commission on the Status of Women and the Balochistan Acid throwing prevention, protection and rehabilitation of survivors bill. Both bills were presented by Ms. Salma Qureshi and different provisions of both bills were discussed in detail by all participants.

Ms. Raheela Durrani said that meetings of standing committees are being called on a regular basis in order to work on pending pro-women legislation. Ms. Durrani suggested to the Law Department and Women Development Department representatives that Urdu translations of the proposed bills be disseminated. Ms. Saima Javaid of Aurat Foundation suggested that ‘acid throwing prevention bill’ needs more consultation with key stakeholders for the finalization of the draft. It was also suggested that the concerned department, at the same time as, should prepare the rules of business of any future act when the bill is being drafted. This will make the process of implementation easier and more immediate.

The honourable Speaker concluded the meeting with appreciation for civil society’s supports to legislative bodies for envisioning and implementation of pro women legislation. She ensured that all pro-women bills/resolutions would be discussed in detail before tabling in the Assembly

1.5 Meeting with Speaker Balochistan Assembly held

A delegation of civil society and Pakistan Gender Coalition (PGC), led by Aurat Foundation, Quetta office, called upon newly elected speaker of Balochistan assembly Ms. Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani in her chamber on 4 January, 2016. The delegation congratulated her for being elected as the first woman speaker of the Balochistan assembly. The delegation said that appointment of Ms. Durrani as speaker was a big achievement for the civil society of Balochistan as civil society organizations have continuously been demanding women's representation in the provincial government.

During the meeting, a copy of the charter of demands for women's rights and copy of Child Marriage Prohibition Bill was presented to her for her information and further lobbying in the Balochistan assembly. At the end of meeting Ms. Durrani thanked the members of delegation and assured them of support in promoting women's rights issues on the floor of House. The visiting delegation comprised of Ms. Roshan Khursheed Barocha, member AF General Body, Ms. Rukhsana Ahmad Ali, Social activist and former member NCSW, Dr. Rasheeda Panezai, social activist and ED Mehack, Ms. Farhat, Representative BEEJ and Member PGC, Ms. Saima Javaid, DPM-GEP, AF, Mr. Muhammad Haroon Dawood, RD-AF, Quetta and Ms. Fatima Tahir, CMO-GEP, AF.



1.6 Advocacy meeting with Sindh Women Parliamentary Caucus (SWPC) held

Aurat Foundation conducted a meeting regarding the draft of the Acid and Crime Bill with the Sindh Women's Parliamentary Caucus (SWPC) and Deputy Secretary, Ms. Shehla Raza on 16 December 2015 at the Sindh Assembly. Seven other women MPAs and two male MPAs were also present during the discussion.

The members were made aware of the previous draft of the Acid and Crimes Bill, which was thoroughly discussed with members of the media, NGOs, law officials and parliamentarians at the time of its initial draft. The SWPC members expressed their commitment towards discussing the bill further and it was decided that on 22nd



December a consultation meeting of all the MPAs to review the draft bill would be held.

AF representatives also emphasised their concerns around the Rules of Business (RoB) of Domestic Violence Act and Child Marriage Act. Aurat Foundation also said that they have already submitted draft ROB's regarding these Bills but their approval is pending with the Chief Minister. A detailed discussion followed on the approval of the RoBs for the effective implementation of the Act. Ms. Shehla Raza assured the everyone present of her support and assistance with the issues discussed.

1.7 AF team met Deputy Speaker and MPAs to discuss draft of Acid and Crime Bill

Aurat Foundation arranged a meeting with Ms. Shehla Raza, Deputy Speaker, and MPAs of all parties including PTI, MQM, PPP, PML-Q and PML-N and Mr. Aijaz Mangi, Secretary, Women Development Department, at the Sindh Assembly on 22nd December 2015 to discuss the draft of the Acid and Crime Bill. The session discussed the amendments introduced in the provincial bill. These amendments focused on the license for buying and selling of acid, punishment for the crime, its rehabilitation aspects and inclusion of 'chemical' in the definition of substances that are used for acid attacks. Special emphasis was laid on the establishment of a Acid and Crime Monitoring Board and its crucial role with regard to the purchase and sale of acid and acid attacks. The aim of the amendments were to ensure all the angles of an acid crime -physically, mentally and emotionally – were covered.



While focusing on the tabling and passing of the Bill, Mr. Aijaz Mangi assured the meeting of his assistance throughout the progress of the Bill and the formation of its rules. Similarly, Ms. Shehla Raza suggested a follow up meeting for the assistance of the victims.

1.8 Policy advocacy and lobbying meeting held with Ch. Pervaiz Elahi

A meeting of the AAWAZ Provincial Forum (APF) Punjab was organized with Ch. Pervaiz Elahi, senior central leader of the Pakistan Muslim League (Q) and former Deputy Prime Minister, on 1 December, 2015, at his



resident. The 21 members delegation of the AAWAZ Provincial Forum also included representatives of Mumkin and the Alliance against Early Child Marriages.

The objective of the policy advocacy and lobbying meeting was to push the legislative agenda for women and the protection for minorities. Participants discussed the long-pending legislation due to be passed and the effective implementation of already existing laws. The meeting was moderated by member APF Ms. Amna Ulfat., member APF Ms. Mumtaz Mughal, Resident Director AF. Ms. Mumtaz then presented the following demands:

Enacting Punjab Women Protection Act 2015 (Domestic Violence Bill): Given the high statistics of domestic violence against women and gender based violence in Punjab, it was vital to have a specific law on domestic violence enacted in order to not just identify domestic violence as a crime, but also to provide support and protection for victims/survivors and for the prevention of such offences.

Amendment in the Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929: To increase the age of marriage of the girl child from 16 to 18 years. Girls married off young are more likely to face domestic violence.

Amendments in Local Government: There is a need to increase women's quotas and reserved seats to 33%. The demand included provision of more space for women in political participation with a minimum of 33% proportion of representation for women



and 10% for peasants/labour and 5% for non-Muslims (with gender balance). This should be at all three tiers of local government to be filled through party-based and constituency-based direct elections in a joint electorate system. The same principle must be ensured for all sub-committees, boards, commissions at all levels.

Devaluation of fiscal powers to newly elected councils: Allocation of development funds to the elected Councils and elected representatives should be made through a transparent, fair, rights-based and needs-based process. District Finance Award formula should follow for the allocation of funds to districts.

Further there should be amendment in the Political Parties Act to ensure 10% party tickets to women on general seats in addition to the reserved seats quota.

Personal laws of minorities: Non-Muslim minorities have out dated personal laws, which place women in a socially inferior and vulnerable position.

Law on anti-hate speech: There is need to bring legislation on hate speech with an effective implementation plan.

Home-based workers: At present, there is no protection to informal workers and home-based workers in the form of a policy and legislation. The issue includes recognition and social and labour protection to informal workers and home-based workers in labour laws.

Participants demanded that PMLQ should play their role to push the agenda in the assembly and also change their party manifesto to reflect these demands.

Ch. Prevaiz Elahi appreciated and acknowledged the role of civil society. He said that these issues are critical and need continues attention. Appreciating the services of civil society, Ch. Pervaiz Elahi said he and his party will do their best to push forward the civil society agenda. On the occasion, PML-Q leaders Mian Munir and Ms. Amna Ulfat were also present whereas civil society delegation included Ms. Mumtaz Mughal, Resident Director AF, Mr. Salman Abid, Regional Director SPO, Mr. Naeem Malik, National Manger Advocacy SAP-PK, Ms. Ambreen Fatima, Focal Person AACM, members of APF.

1.9 MoU signed between Aurat Foundation and Pakistan Institute of ICTs for Development

On Thursday, 29 October, 2015, Aurat Foundation and the Pakistan Institute of ICTs for Development (PIID) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), at the Aurat Foundation Islamabad office. The MoU was



for collaboration in conducting research, training programs and capacity building of different stakeholders in the area of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for Development (ICTD). Mr Naeem Ahmed Mirza, Chief Operating Officer, Aurat Foundation, and Mr Ammar Jaffri, Chief Executive, Pakistan Institute of ICT's for Development (PIID), signed the MoU, in the presence of Dr Masuma Hasan, President BoG, Aurat Foundation (former Secretary, Cabinet Division, GoP), and Mr Younas Khalid, Chief Strategy & Policy Officer, Aurat Foundation.

By signing the MoU, both the parties have entered into the understanding that they would share their available resources, strengths, space and expertise to enhance the capacities of stakeholders in the area of ICTs for Development (ICTD). This would involve people who are engaged in social development and uplifting of communities both from governmental and non-governmental organizations, departments and institutions.

1.10 Civil Judges trained to expedite conviction rate under pro-women laws



A two days training with members of the Sindh judiciary was held on 18-19 September, 2015, at the Sindh Judicial Academy, Karachi. The purpose was to discuss rate of conviction under pro-women laws such as the Sindh Domestic Violence Act, 2013, the Sindh Child Marriages Restraint Act, 2013 and the Prevention of Anti-Women Practices Act (AWPA), 2011. The theme of the training was titled 'Training on Gender Sensitization and Pro-women Laws.'

Over 30 participants including 9 females and 22 males attended. The majority of the participants were mainly newly inducted civil judges-cum-magistrates while some had 2-3 years of experience as civil judges. The first day of training was scheduled to sensitize the participants on gender and sex and human rights. Ms Mahnaz Rehman, Regional Director Aurat Foundation, Karachi conducted the session. She gave details briefing on gender and how males and females are perceived in different societies. There was an open and productive discussion with participants. Ms Mahnaz shared training manuals developed by Aurat Foundation. Mr. Syed Tariq Asaf Hussain, Senior

Faculty Member, Sindh Judicial Academy said the Academy was open to the idea of possibly including these manuals in the curriculum of Sindh Judicial Academy.

Ms Maliha Zia Lari, senior advocate and a human rights activist, conducted the last session of the day. The topic was human rights, violence against women and pro-women laws. She gave a brief presentation on human rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), International Conventions signed by Pakistan provisions of the Constitution of Pakistan. She carried out innovative group exercises as well and provided detailed analysis of the Sindh DV Act, Child Marriages Restraint Act and AWWA 2011. She provided examples of previous decisions of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and Sindh High Court.

Mr Zafar Ahmed Sherwani, Registrar of Sindh High Court, was invited for the closing ceremony. He shared his experiences with the participants and also insisted on how important it was to be gender sensitive and be aware of internal biases. He later distributed certificates of training among the participants.

1.11 AAWAZ Provincial Forum met with Provincial Election Commission, Punjab

A meeting of AAWAZ Provincial Forum (APF) Punjab was held with Provincial Election Commission, Punjab (PECP) on 17 September, 2015 at the offices of the Commission. A 12 members delegation of the AAWAZ Provincial Forum met with the Provincial Joint Election Commissioner Mr Ishfaq Sarwar. At that occasion Director General Local Government & Public Relation Officer, PECP, Mr Huda Ali Gohar and AAWAZ Consortium partner SPO regional head also attended the meeting.



The objective of the meeting was to introduce gender sensitive symbols and procedures for the upcoming LG Elections. The points which APF members discussed with the PECP included: i) allotment of gender sensitised symbol to women candidates on general and reserve seats, ii) separate counter for women during scrutiny of nomination papers of women candidates, iii) special arrangements for pregnant women, persons with disability and senior citizens on polling day, iv) selection of suitable place for women polling stations, iv) coordination and collaboration for running voter education campaign.

AAWAZ Provincial Forum organized a meeting with Provincial Election Commission of Punjab to introduce gender sensitive symbols and procedures during upcoming LG elections. Meeting was facilitated by Aurat Foundation. Meeting was chaired by Joint Election Commissioner, Punjab, Mr Ishfaq Sarwer. Participants shared their experiences about symbol. A number of women withdrawn from election due to insensitive symbols. Director Local Government Election shared the list of symbols. Participants showed their concerns and observations on them because all were patriarchal rooted notions and gender stereotypes. Typical social mindset was reflected through these allotments.

Resultantly, PECP welcomed the APF concerns and promised to incorporate the suggestions in polling schemes. It was decided that PECP would issue instructions to ROs such as providing the choice to women candidates for selection of symbol and allotting gender sensitive symbols, setting up special counter for women candidates during scrutiny of nominations, special treatment would be given for pregnant women, women with disabilities and senior citizen on election day.

Furthermore PECP will ensure that women polling station would be on ground floor and also ensure the proper boundary walls and toilet facilities. It should be setup at safe places by keeping in view of women access and mobility. PECP will instruct to district PECP office to participate in voter education activities.

In the end of meeting, Mr Ishfaq Sarwer appreciated the civil society efforts and acknowledged that civil society organizations always facilitated PECP. He said that civil society organizations campaign on voters' education will help us to increase the voters turn out. He said that PECP offices will fully cooperate to APF. Any violation and complaint which we would receive from APF, PECP would address on priority basis. He also offered to visit PECP monitoring cell which is constituted recently in PECP building. Participants visited it. He shared the number of helpline to register the complaint.

1.12 Conference on the constitutional protection to local governments

The AAWAZ programme consortium partners, namely Aurat Foundation, Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO), Sungi, and South Asia Partnership Pakistan (SAP- PK), organized a national consultation on the constitutional protection of Local Governments on 10th September, 2015, at Margalla hotel, Islamabad. The dialogue was the continuation of AAWAZ programme's 'AAWAZ Utha' campaign on the strengthening of Local Governments.

Apart from civil society members, prominent legislators particularly members of the Parliamentary Committee on Electoral Reforms attended the consultation. Parliamentarians spoke and pledged to support the move of a constitutional amendment (in the form of Article 140-A of the constitution) to provide a time frame to hold Local Government elections. Legislators regarded the dialogue a timely initiative of the AAWAZ programme, as the Committee on Election Reforms is likely to submit the recommendations to the National Assembly on strengthening local governments in Pakistan. Parliamentarians included Senator Mohsin Laghari, Independent, Senator Farhat Ullah Babar, PPPP, Senator Mian Ateeq, MQM, Ms. Naeema Kishwar, MNA-JUI-F, Senator Sitara Ayyaz, ANP, Ms. Maliha Khan, MPA-KP Assembly, Ms. Anisa Zeb Tahir Khali, MPA, QWP, KP Assembly, and Dr. Araish Kumar, former MNA from minorities.

Panellists from the AAWAZ consortium spoke in detail of the role of provincial governments. Speakers said that the local government system needs constitutional protection to be more effective and efficient in Pakistan because it has lost its sustainability due to lack of legal authorization. According to 18th amendment, it is the responsibility of the provincial government to play their role in devolving powers to districts through local government system.



During the consultation parliamentarians condemned the decision of provincial governments in not holding direct elections on specific seats. Parliamentarians also highlighted that such a move was against the law as it deprived voters from their right to choose their representatives directly. This, they said, would make it harder for true representation of people to come forward.

Mr. Zafar ullah Khan, political activist, researcher and Chief Executive of Centre for Civic Education demanded that the local government elections should be held directly on special seats as done in Balochistan and KP.

Mr. Farhat Ullah Babar, Senator and political leader added that political parties challenged this amendment in court and hoped that the court would do justice in this case. He added that devolution of power is mandatory at the moment to serve the interest of the common people in Pakistan. Consistence efforts are required to make amendments in the constitution.

Ms. Maliha Khan, MPA-KP Assembly, lauded that local government system as the basic unit of the democratic process and highlighted that democracy would remain incomplete without strengthening the local government system.

The conference concluded with consensus that strengthening Local Governments require both constitutional protections by the National Assembly as well as a change of mindset of the provincial governments to devolve powers. Legislators and members of parliament's committees on elections invited detailed recommendations of the AAWAZ consortium partners to strengthen Local Governments and representation of the women, minorities and excluded groups.

1.13 Round table meeting on ‘Child Marriage Prohibition Bill 2015’

Aurat Foundation organized a round table meeting on the draft of the Child Marriage Prohibition Bill 2015, at the Serena Hotel, Quetta. The activity was chaired by Ms. Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani, Speaker Provincial Assembly of Balochistan. Women parliamentarians



Dr. Shama Ishaq, Ms. Kishwar Naheed, Ms. Masooma Hayat, Ms. Spozmai Achakzai, Ms. Arifa Siddique, and Ms. Salma Qureshi, Director Women’s Development Department, Justice (retd) Mehta Kailash Nath Kohli, Chairperson Balochistan Public Service Commission, members of standing committee, representatives from Social Welfare Department, te Women Development Department, Law Department and members of civil society and media also participated in the meeting.

Ms. Durrani praised the efforts of Aurat Foundation for presenting the pro-women agenda for Balochistan especially legislation for prohibition of child marriages. Yet she said that Council of Islamic of Ideology (CII), religious scholars and other stakeholders would be taken on board on the bills pertaining to child marriage, acid throwing on women and welfare of disabled persons. She said that such a consultation stakeholders would ensure that everyone is on board with regard to these issues.

She said that standing committees of Balochistan Assembly are functional and all stakeholders are being consulted on different aspects of the bills introduced. She emphasized that members of every standing committee must review all aspects of the draft before tabling it in the assembly.

Earlier, Mr. Haroon Dawood, Resident Director Aurat Foundation Quetta, briefed about the stages that were taken by AF and other civil society organizations till the vetting of draft by Law department. He informed the participants that child marriage prohibition bill was drafted after comparing both the Sindh and Punjab laws on the subject. Ms. Saima Javaid Deputy programme manager, presented the facts and adverse effects of early marriages society and also presented the draft of the proposed bill. Justice (Retd) Mehta Kailash Nath Kohli reviewed different points of the bill.

Participants appreciated AF’s efforts towards the drafting of the bill and their continuous struggle for its passage at the Balochistan Assembly.

Chapter Two

Capacity Building and Consultative Processes



2. Capacity Building and Consultative Processes

Aurat Foundation’s continuous capacity building trainings and workshops are across every project and reaches all spheres of the socio-economic groups with whom we work. This includes extensive training of women community leaders as AF’s basic ethos believes in strengthening local women leaders as agents of change. Further to this our continuous engagement with the police and judiciary is considered imperative and has been our focus in most of our projects, particularly LISTEN. AF considers repeated and updated knowledge sharing to be of utmost importance for institutional capacity building among state institutions which women are most likely to come into contact with.

2.1 LISTEN’s progress reviewed at its Annual Planning Meeting

Aurat Foundation organized a progress review of LISTEN project during its Annual Planning and Review Meeting on 26 June 2016 in Nathia Gali. The objective of the meeting was to discuss and review the progress of the project, including assessment of project interventions, success indicators and future strategies for a way forward to implement the objectives of the project.



Ms. Shamaila Tanvir, National Programme Coordinator, briefed participants about the different dynamics of the LISTEN project. While discussing future strategies of the project, she said that the entire LISTEN team should focus on exploring innovative ways to implement the project objectives and also for engaging policy makers, politicians, legislators and decision makers in this process of change. She also pointed out that society lacks ideology and vision towards the empowerment of women and its benefits to all members of society. Speaking about the socio-political context, she said, “We as a nation will have to head on towards the industrial revolution if we seriously want to combat the giants of poverty, inflation, unemployment and other socio-political and economic instabilities”. Mr. Asim Malik, Director Outreach and Networks, AF, stressed the need to hold healthy dialogues and discussions among AF staff on different social, political and economic issues of special concern. He further added that having the right knowledge is a source of producing mind set and building ideology and added that through the LISTEN project they will attempt to ensure this.

Mr. Anjum Rafique and Ms. Malka Khan, Regional Coordinators, LISTEN project, discussed in detail the achievements and challenges they faced during the implementation of the project. They said the lack of political will for legislation on women's issues, unavailability of proper budget allocation for provincial alliance building, lack of coordination and extremism were the main hurdles in the way of implementing LISTEN activities. The participants stressed the need to engage women leader groups more efficiently more effective implementation.

2.2 ICSWDD project reviewed during Annual Learning meeting

Aurat Foundation organized an annual learning and review meeting with stakeholders under the Institutional Capacity Strengthening of Women Development Department (ICSWDD) project on 25th of June 2016 in Nathia Gali. The meeting was aimed at the



reviewing the project; learning of the inception phase, future strategy and planning of activities to generate support at the district level for a Gender Based Violence (GBV) free district(s).

In the meeting, Ms. Shamaila Tanvir, National Programme Coordinator, presented a comprehensive review of the GBV situation in Punjab with inclusive insight into the purpose and functioning of the project. She said that the project is designed to facilitate a process that leads to women's empowerment and inclusion while exploring the possible modes for carrying out some reinforcing initiatives to collaborate with the Women Development Department of the Government of Punjab. The programme is centred on bringing change at three levels: household, civil society and the state systems. This institutional capacity building initiative will help to better work towards prioritization, ownership, oversight and impact.

Furthermore, Mr. Anjum Rafiq, Regional Coordinator, Punjab and Ms Uzma Idrees, Secretary District Resource Center, Kasur, shared project implementation strategies and lessons learned during project's initial implementation phase in district Kasur. She highlighted the major achievements of the project and shared some challenges faced during the implementation of the project. Ms. Komal Zahra, Secretary District Resource Center, Muzaffargarh, shared findings of the SWOT Analysis. Mr. Asim Malak, Director Outreach and Network, Aurat Foundation, shared the strategies required for implementing the project effectively. Mr. Muhammad Ayaz, Assistant Manager M&E Aurat Foundation, explained monitoring, evaluation and reporting technicalities required for reporting activities and outcomes.

2.3 National Training of Trainers for CSOs organised

Aurat Foundation, in collaboration with Women Learning Partnership (WLP), organised a six days Training of Trainers in Nathia Gali from 16-21 June 2016. Aurat



Foundation and WLP enjoy a longstanding partnership to build the capacity of leading advocacy organizations and networks across Pakistan. Through such capacity building trainings a number of women's rights defenders are trained and imparted with advocacy and lobbying skills in community based networks.

The objective of the TOT was to reflect on discriminatory perceptions, attitudes and practices, develop a common understanding on gender and women's rights and anti-women practices. The sessions included: Enabling a selected group of facilitators to review and evaluate the success of leadership and political participation workshops, building knowledge and training capacity of a new group of facilitators, strengthening each partner's capacity for follow up and evaluation, building organizational capacity and deepening the understanding of each partner's unique context and opportunities. Ms. Rabeea Hadi, Director Advocacy, conducted the training, and Ms. Hina Akram, Assistant Manager Capacity Building, facilitated the training.

2.4 Show & Tell Convention

Aurat Foundation, in collaboration with Trocaire and AusDFAT organized a Show & Tell Convention on 15 June 2016 in Islamabad. The event was organized to provide an



opportunity to Gender Based Violence (GBV) response institutions to showcase their performance and services related to the strategies adopted for minimizing GBV against women and girls. Institutions present included the Women Parliamentary Caucus, National Police Bureau, Ministry of Human Rights, medico-legal officers and shelter homes etc. from the national and provincial capitals (Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). They highlighted their progress within their respective domains and the challenges faced.

Mr. M Hassan Mangi, DG (IC), Ministry of Human Rights, in his address that said that the Ministry is pro-actively working on fine-tuning various women and children related laws. He gave examples of the draft policy on violence against women, recently developed in collaboration with Aurat Foundation, would soon be sent for approval. Similarly, the Ministry has successfully introduced some amendments in the Criminal Law (Second Amendment) Act 2016, which recently signed by the President of Pakistan. The Act states that any cruelty with the child would be dealt with as a criminal activity. Mr. Mangi also informed of the Ministry work on devising a law to address child labour in the Islamabad Capital Territory. He further talked about finalising a draft policy for home-based women workers. Ms. Rabeea Hadi, referring to Mr. Mangi's comments on the proposed policy on violence against women, said that the draft policy is present on the website of the Ministry of Human Rights and comments are welcomed from all concerned stakeholders.

Mr. John O Brien, Country Director, Trocaire, while briefing on Trocaire's work on ending violence against women, said that Trocaire is also working closely with the national civil society organizations to end violence against women.

Ms. Shaista Pervaiz Malik, Chairperson Women Parliamentary Caucus (WPC), while addressing the gathering, said that WPC has been on the forefront to ensure women's empowerment through active legislation. She said the WPC is building partnerships with civil society and national and international organizations to end violence against women. Ms. Huma Chughtai, Technical Advisor, WPC, gave a detail presentation on WPC's vision, mission, key objectives and strategies.



Ms. Mahreen Maqsood, Deputy Director, National Police Bureau, appreciated the reporting of violence against women incidents by the Gender Crime Cell and National Police Bureau. Ms. Maqsood, however, regretted that NPB does not have the infrastructure or resources to publish that data. She said that to end violence against women the country needed a national action plan. She also emphasized on training of women police to actively respond to GBV related incidents. The NPB is working on a toll free help line for women and children to address for violence related matters.

Mr. Shafqat Javaid, Director General, Ministry of Health, said that as a doctor he saw many cases of violence against women as a public health issue and that a the public health policy should address this. He also pointed out gaps in the medico-legal services in addressing gender-based violence. He also pointed out that the lack of gender

based data on violence against women hinders addressing the GBV and the issue of reporting violence related cases requires strengthening.

Ms. Meraj Khan, Member KP Assembly, and Chairperson Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Women Parliamentary Caucus, said that the united struggle of members of the provincial caucus has brought many achievements forward including a separate ministry for women and celebrating the International Women's Day in the provincial assembly for the first time.

Mr. Taimur Khattak, Deputy Public Prosecutor from KP, in his presentation, covered the state of prosecution in GBV cases at the provincial level. Mr. Khattak acknowledged the passage of the North-West Frontier Province Establishment of a Commission on the Status of Women Act 2009, Elimination of Custom of Ghag Act 2013 enacted by the Provincial Government of KP, passage of KP Deserving Widows and Special Persons Foundation Act, 2014, women empowerment policy, wherein Provincial Commission on the Status of Women has been given autonomy to address all forms of violence against women.

Ms. Roohi Khan Babar from Noor Education Trust (NET), in her presentation briefed the audience about the aims, objectives and services of the Trust.

The reflections on GBV Programme Sindh was given by Ms. Rubina Quaimkhani, MPA, Ms. Saira Furqan, Manager SBBCW, Ms. Rehana Yaqoob from Shelter, Mr. Iqbal Detho, lawyer, Mr. Faizullah Korejo, AIG, Sindh Police, and Ms. Mahnaz Rahman, RD, Aurat Foundation.

2.5 In-house session on 'NGO-State relations: Women NGOs in Focus' organized

On 17 March 2016, Aurat Foundation Quetta organized an in-house session on 'NGO-State relations: Women NGOs in Focus', at its office, for its staff and Pakistan Gender Coalition (PGC) members as part of AF's efforts to provide learning opportunities and capacity building. The resource person for the activity was Dr. Aurangzaib Alamgir, Assistant Professor, Department of Internal Relations at Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS) Quetta.

Dr. Aurangzaib talked in detail, beginning with the history of the emergence of the state system in Pakistan. He said that, the state system was introduced and established in 1648 through the issuance of the 'First International Order'. The order was issued after 80 years of war to keep peace. He said that due to the state system peace remained till 1914. After the WWI, the state system remained intact but anarchy spread all over the world. He said that, the United Nations (UN) came into being in 1945 to stop that anarchy. Then the NGO system started in the world.



He said that NGOs should possess four characteristics: to influence, access to the government, support of public, knowledge of regime type (government/political parties). Explaining the NGO-State relations he said that, there are three types of relationships between both parties: cooperation, confrontation and complimentary. He said that NGOs of Pakistan both in cooperation and as well as compliment the State. He did, however, stressed that bureaucracy is a major obstacle in the path of good relationships between the government and NGOs in Pakistan.

He gave the example of 'Sisters in Islam' a Malaysian women rights organization is an Islamic feminist organization which works on women's legal rights according to the teachings of Islam and pushes its government to legislate new women-friendly laws by taking on board the religious parties. He said that the organization forced the government to amend the polygamy law.

At the end participants shared their views and praised the efforts of AF for arranging such an informative session for them. Mr. Haroon Dawood, Resident Director AF, Quetta, thanked Dr. Aurangzaib on behalf of AF for delivering a highly knowledgeable lecture and also thanked PGC members for their presence.

2.6 Capacity Building and Gender Sensitization Training on Pro-Women Laws



Aurat Foundation conducted a 2 day capacity building and gender sensitization training on pro-women laws' with prosecutors on 27-28 February, 2016, at PC Hotel, Karachi. Ms. Mahnaz Rahman, Resident Director, briefed the participants on gender and explained the cultural influences that pertain to the restraints that arise regarding both feminine and masculine

gender. This followed with a detailed discourse about CEDAW. Imminent lawyers, judges and jurists with regard to pro-women laws then led the session.

2.7 Meeting with Ombudsperson for Punjab protection against sexual harassment arranged

Aurat Foundation arranged a meeting with Ms. Farkhanda Waseem Afzal, Ombudsperson for Punjab Protection against Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace on 30 December 2015, at her office.

The objective of the meeting was to enhance coordination between AF and the Ombudsperson's office. The AF delegation consisted of Ms. Mumtaz Mughal, Resident Director AF, Ms. Nabeela Shaheen Advocate, Coordinator Policy Data Monitoring Violence Against Women, Mr. Anjum Rafiq, Coordinator Institutional Strengthening Capacity Strengthening of Women Development Department and Mr. Anjum Raza,



Programme Officer AAWAZ. Ms. Mumtaz Mughal, Resident Director gave a brief introduction of the AF programmes and their outreach in Punjab. She shared her observations on the weak implementation of the sexual harassment at workplace Act; the non-functioning of inquiry committees at the district and provincial level, no display of code of conduct in public and private offices, sensitization of inquiry committee members and lack of awareness about the law between employees and employers in the public and private sector.

Ms. Farkhanda Waseem Afzal acknowledged the role of civil society for bringing this legislation at provincial level. She said that it is compulsory for all government and semi-government departments to constitute an inquiry committee with at least one woman member. She further said that the code of conduct



in English or any other language, which employees could easily understand, should be displayed. Ms. Farkhanda said that if the head of any department does not follow the requirements of this law a fine of up to one lakh rupees can be imposed. It was decided that: firstly, the Office of ombudsperson would activate a provincial watch committee for the protection of sexual harassment at workplace secondly, the office of the ombudsperson will share the district wise data of the inquiry committees of AF AAWAZ districts including Kasur and Muzafar Garh for arranging sensitization sessions; and lastly, AF team would utilize all its resources to create awareness about the law.

2.8 Chief Justice Balochistan promised Women Friendly Spaces (WFSs) in all district courts

Honourable Chief Justice of Balochistan High Court Mr. Justice Noor Muhammad Miskanzai committed for the provision of Women Friendly Spaces (WFSs) in the premises of all district courts of Balochistan. He said this during the inauguration of Women Friendly Space in the premises of District Court Sibi on 29 December 2015. This included separate waiting rooms and bathrooms.

The waiting room at the district court in Sibi was refurbished by the organisation DANESH under the GEP and Aurat Foundation programme. The Chief Justice acknowledged AF's role in bringing into light an issue that is often ignored.

The Chief Justice also assured the AF team that he would take suo moto notice if an FIR is not registered when survivors of gender based violence (GBV) approach the police. He further added that the implementation of the Anti-harassment Act in different offices should be addressed and requested that the AF team meet with him separately to devise steps for its implementation in the province. During his speech, he also informed the participants that the cases of honour killing will be dealt with by the anti-terrorism courts. The event was attended by all the judges of High Court of Balochistan and a large number of lawyers, and representatives of the bar council and association were also present. Mr. Muhammad Haroon Dawood, RD AF Quetta, Ms. Saima Javaid, DPM-GEP, AF, and Ms. Ishrat Altaf, Director DANESH were also part of the inauguration ceremony.



2.9 Preliminary findings of GBV interventions in complex emergency launched

A launching ceremony to share the preliminary findings of the scoping review on Gender Based Violence (GBV) intervention in humanitarian context was held on 16 December, 2015, at Ramada Hotel, Islamabad. The ceremony begun with a standing ovation to Army Public School students and teacher. Mr. Naeem Mirza, Chief Operating Officer welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of the study.

Ms. Graceila, UNFPA talked about the importance of the scoping review and role of UNFPA in eradicating GBV. Ms. Uzma Zarrin, Director Programmes, Aurat Foundation presented the preliminary findings of the scoping review on GBV interventions in the humanitarian context. Speakers of a panel discussion included Ms. Gulalai, Director Programmes, Khwendo Kor,



Mr. Furqan Abbas, Deputy Director, Information Dept. Social Welfare, Punjab, Ms. Roohi Zahir Shah, President Girls Guide Association of Pakistan, Mr. Haroon Dawood, Resident Director, Aurat Foundation, Quetta, Mr. Taj Marri, Programme Manager, Bhandar Hari Sangat, and Dr. Nusrat Rana, psychiatrist. Speakers shared their experiences and good practices regarding GBV intervention. Ms. Shamaila Tanvir, Coordinator Research & Development, Aurat Foundation moderated the Q & A that followed.

2.10 AF team monitor Local Government elections in Karachi

The AF team, comprising Mr. Atif, Mr. Ahmed Sadiq, Ms. Anis Fatima and Ms. Mahnaz Rahman, visited 20+ polling stations in Gulshen-e-Iqbal, Liaquatabad, Nazimabad, Firdaus Colony, Garden, Soldier Bazar and Saddar. The observed that the polling process went on smoothly everywhere except in areas where polling staff could not reach or



where in single rooms many polling booths had been set up. In Firdaus colony at the Mumtaz Government Boys School, the polling staff had demanded 12 rooms in order to set up two polling stations but they were given only 8 rooms. In some schools of Nazimabad, only one ballot box was provided for both green and white ballot papers while in Gulshen-e-Iqbal booths, there were two separate boxes for green and white ballot papers. In other observations, only at one polling station a woman tried to cast her vote twice but the polling agent of another party caught her and foiled her attempt.

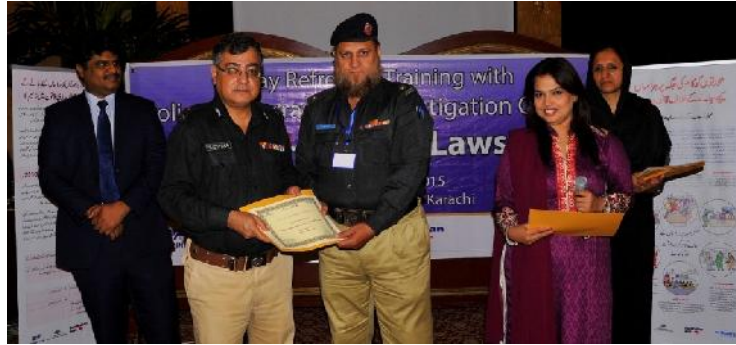
At some polling stations printing discrepancies in ballot papers were found. In big buildings voters were wandering from one floor to another to find their polling booth. At some booths, there was a shortage of stamp pads and at some places there were not enough ballot boxes. In Riaz Girls College, we saw a woman presiding officer in a male voters booth while in some other schools one male presiding officer was sitting in the female officer's booth. At one polling station, booths of women and men were merged together and because of the absence of female polling staff, the women voters found it difficult to enter the polling booth because male voters were not giving them any space. The AF team had to help create space for women voters with the help of two policemen who were on duty.

(More detailed description regarding this exercise is available on our website www.af.org.pk)

2.11 Refresher training with police moharrars and investigation officers held

Aurat Foundation as part of annual training workshop programme with the police on the Child Marriage Act, Domestic Violence Act and Anti-Women practices Act organised its yearly training on 10-11 November, 2015, at Hotel PC, Karachi, It was a 2 days 'Refresher Training with Police Moharrars and Investigation Officers' to consider the implementation of the laws and the number of cases submitted under the

newly passed Acts. The workshop commenced with a detailed discussion on human rights and its importance by Ms Mahnaz Rehman, Resident Director Aurat Foundation.



This followed with an informative session by Mr Iqbal Ahmed Detho, advocate and trainer, whereby the constitution of Pakistan together with the police rules under PPC were discussed in detail. Mr Detho defined the role and duties of the police under Articles of the Constitution together with the laws provided in the Penal Code. He also briefed the participants regarding the introduction of human rights as a subject to be included in the police training. Ms Shireen Aijaz, Regional Coordinator, coordinated the session and discussed the key issue of FIR issuance with regard to women victims. Mr Faizullah Korejo, SSP Sindh Police South, further shed light on the same topic in regard to the criminal laws and discussed the implementation of these.

The 2nd day of the training specifically discussed pro-women laws together with Hudood and family laws. This was followed by a certificate distribution ceremony by Mr Mushtaq Mahar, CCPO Sindh Police. Mr Mahar also conducted a brief session on the importance of FIR issuance and the role of police in regard to women protection directly and indirectly.

2.12 Training of trainers on minorities' human rights and gender held



The Pakistan Religious Freedom Initiatives: Leaders of Influence (PRFI) organized a 5 day Training of Trainers (ToT) sessions with police officials from 5-9 October, 2015, at Conference Room, DIGP Training Range Office CPO, Karachi. The main objective of the training was to incorporate human rights, minority rights

and gender issues in the core curriculum of the Sindh Police Training Institute. Twenty trainers of the Sindh Police attended the ToT from various units of the Sindh Police. There were many trainers and facilitators who conducted the training sessions including Mr Niaz Siddiqui, former IG Sindh, Ms Fouzia Tariq, HR Defender, Mr Naem Zeeshan, Police Trainer, Ms Maliha Zia Lari, Consultant AF, Ms Mahnaz Rahman, Resident Director AF, Ms Erum Javed, Project Manager PRFI and Ms Fareeda Tahir, Associate Program Manager, PRFI.

Ms Erum Javed discussed the project, its rationale and the scope of the activities. Ms. Mahnaz Rahman gave the presentation on gender and international treaties of human rights, including CEDAW and its importance. Mr. Niaz Siddiqui covered domestic violence and its implementation; Ms. Fouzia Tariq discussed gender based violence; Ms.. Maliha Zia took the session on human and minority rights; Mr. Naeem Zeeshan shared the lesson planning; Ch Jehangir took the session on training; and Ms. Erum conducted the session on communication skills.

2.13 Visually impaired students sensitized on sexual violence



A one day activity was conducted with visually impaired children at Government Girls Blind School, a boarding school, in Shams Abad Rawalpindi, Pakistan. It was held on 8 September, 2015, as part of celebrating International Literacy Day.

The activity was organized and conducted by Aurat Foundation in joint collaboration with Garden of Hope Taiwan. In total 58 blind girls studying in grade 5th to 10th and 12 teachers participated in the activity. The activity was divided into two sessions where one session was on 'Child Abuse & Violence Against Women & Girls'. Ms Rabeea Hadi of Aurat Foundation conducted this session. Mr Muhammad Zeeshan, psychologist working with Pakistan Foundation Fighting Blindness, conducted the second session and the theme of was the importance of education.

2.14 National Training of Trainers (ToT) held with Police College instructors

A two day National Training of Trainers (ToT) was held on September 7-8, 2015, at Sihala Police College, Rawalpindi. The theme of the training was 'Pro-Women Laws and Gender Sensitive Investigation'. The training was arranged by Aurat Foundation under its GBV Advocacy & Capacity Building project.

The National Police Bureau (NPB) under the MoU signed between Aurat Foundation and NPB facilitated the training. 26 participants including 9 females and 17 males from the four provinces of the country and the Islamabad Capital Territory attended the training. The majority of them were inspector ranked officers and were stationed in different police training schools and colleges of the country.

On the first day of the two-days training, Ms Rabeea Hadi, Director Advocacy & ERAW of Aurat Foundation, briefed the participants on the objectives of the training

and Aurat Foundation's mission as well as its association with NPB and other GBV response government departments. Ms Maliha Zia, senior lawyer and gender specialist, conducted group work with the participants on gender including biological differences and socially assigned roles differences between men and women.

On the second day of the training Ms Sumera Malik, National Coordinator GBV Advocacy project, discussed the concepts of violence against women and its types. She divided the participants in four groups and assigned them different age groups of men/boys and girls/women. She further asked them to prepare a chart presentation of the types of violence faced by boys/men and girls/women in each age group. Each group presented their findings to Ms. Sumera Malik while summarizing the findings of all groups concluded the session that both boys and girls face the same kind of violence at young age but as they grow up, girls become the victim of more types of violence and with greater intensity.

The training on day two was further forwarded by Mr. Muhammad Haider Imtiaz, Advocate, by discussing pro-women laws legislation for the protection of women's rights at the federal level as well as provincial levels. He discussed salient features of the constitution, domestic violence laws of Balochistan and Sindh, The Sindh Child Marriages Restraint Act, The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Elimination of Custom of Ghag Act, 2013, The Punjab Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Act, 2015. It was a highly interactive session.

The two day training was concluded with a certificate distribution ceremony and the participants gave a written commitment to further conduct such trainings at their assigned training schools and colleges.

2.15 Pakistan Religious Freedom Initiatives organized training of police on minority rights

Pakistan Religious Freedom Initiatives: Leaders of Influence (PRFI) held two one-day training sessions with Police officials from 29th to 30th August, 2015 at Hotel Movenpick, Karachi. The main objective of these training sessions was to make the officials aware about the gaps in enforcement of regularity framework and about the issues related to Minority issues. It was especially for the Police Officers, to aware those about the recent laws passed on the rights of minorities. Mr Niaz Siddiki, former IG Sindh, Ms Fouzia Tariq, HR Defender and Mr Naeem Zeeshan were the trainers on both days.

On the first day of training, Ms Erum Javed, Project Manager, spoke to the participants about PRFI which is being implemented by Aurat Foundation and shared the objectives of the workshop with the participant.

Ms Fouzia Tariq gave the presentation on Human Rights Constitution of Pakistan, UDHR, Mr Niaz Siddiki covered the Child Marriages Restrained Act 2013, Domestic Violence Act 2011, Acid Burn Act 2011 and its impact on minorities. Moreover, Mr Naeem Zeeshan delivered a session on Gender and Minority rights.

A certificate distribution ceremony was held and Chief Guest Mr Ghulam Qadir Thebo, former Additional IGP Karachi, was requested to present the certificates. Certificate distribution session was followed by a tribute to Martyrs of the Pakistan Police through a candlelight vigil, Mr Qadi Thebo briefly shared the issues of the minorities as well as appreciated the initiative that Aurat Foundation had taken under this project and hoped

that this collaboration would continue so that the police force could be trained on various topics such as gender and minority rights in the future as well.

In the end, the participants were asked to fill the evaluation form by Fareeda Tahir. Police officials appreciated the efforts of Aurat Foundation and stated that such trainings should be arranged more often. In the end, Ms Erum Javed concluded the session with a vote of thanks to Mr Abdul Qadir Thebo, trainers and the participants and shared that Aurat foundation will continue its activities on the sensitization of minority issues with police trainers in future as well.

2.16 Pakistan Religious Freedom Initiatives organized a meeting with Religious Freedom Caucus



Pakistan Religious Freedom Initiatives: Leaders of Influence organized a meeting of Religious Freedom Caucus (RFC) on 22nd August, 2015 at Moven Hotel Pick, Karachi. Among the prominent participants were Ms. Syeda Shahla Raza, Deputy Speaker Sindh Assembly, Ms. Iram Khalid, MPA PPP, Ms. Nusrat Abbasi, MPA- PML-F, Ms. Kulsoom Chandio, MPA PPP, Mr. Ali Imran, TAF Consultant, Ms. Shahnaz Sheedi, SAP-PK Sindh, Mr. M. Parkash N.L.D, Mr. Saleem Michael, advocate Justice Helpline, Mr. John, B.T.I, Mr Nadeem Shaikh, President Justice Helpline, Ms. Nadia Tariq Ali and Mr. M. Kashif Kamal represented The Asia Foundation in the meeting.

Ms. Erum Javed and Ms.. Nadia Tariq Ali welcomed the honourable parliamentarians and shared the objectives of the meeting then shared the said highlights of the project. She stated that under the PRFI project, the aim was to introduce laws specifically for minorities. Aurat Foundation shared four bills: Force Conversion Bill, Hindu Marriage and Separation Bill, Christian Marriage and Separation Bill and Minority Commission Bill with the members of the minority Caucus.

Ms. Shahala Raza acknowledged that parliamentarians are very cooperative and would submit the bill with the help of the Secretary Minorities.

Ms. Nadia Tariq Ali, Program Manager (TAF), stated that Sindh is a progressive province and it has passed many bills and resolutions regarding women rights. Thereafter, it is expected that such steps would also be under taken for minority rights. Mr Ali Imran, Consultant TAF and trainer, discussed the global perspective of the Religious Freedom Caucus and recent scenario of the legislation on minorities in Pakistan. He appreciated the achievements of the Sindh Minority Caucus. Members of

RFC shared the resolution passed unanimously in Sindh assembly for the protection of religious minorities in Sindh.

2.17 Enhanced role of MPs in implementation of Sustainable Development Goals stressed



The Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) highlighted the role of parliamentarians in the implementation and oversight of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The demand came forward in a study circle for women parliamentarians organized by WPC in collaboration with Aurat Foundation (AF), Trocaire, DFAT, Trocaire and Australian Aid, held on 29 July 2015. The purpose of the study circle was to acquaint women parliamentarians on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the transition to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The study circle started with the introductory remarks by Secretary WPC MNA Shaista Parvez and AF Director Advocacy Rabeea Hadi, which was followed by an in-depth presentation by Chairperson Parliamentary Taskforce on MDGs MNA, Maryam Aurangzeb.

Ms. Aurangzeb highlighted the government's efforts and action plan to implement the SDGs. She said that global development agenda can only succeed when it is streamlined with the national agendas and Parliamentarians can play an important role in this regard.

She termed lack of attention by the governments, dearth of resources for the set targets, major shift of responsibilities as a result of devolution and lack of ownership and oversight by Parliamentarians as basic reasons behind this below par performance as reasons for failing on the MDGs. Highlighting challenges to implement global development agendas, Ms. Aurangzeb said that after the devolution, the implementation of major development goals has been shifted to provinces and the federal government is responsible to report on international treaties. Maryam said that the collection of data from provinces is a huge challenge. Besides the lack of data, she said that the government departments lack capacity to analyze the available data. She said that the government is working to improve curriculum for civil servants and the

judiciary to equip them and make the government machinery more aware of emerging challenges.

Mr. Shehryar Ghazi from Rutgers WPF and Ms. Rabea Hadi from AF highlighted the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) and discussed the need for increased interaction among parliamentarians and CSOs to enhance their knowledge and learn from each other. They acknowledged the essential role of Parliaments in sustainable development through the enactment of legislation and adoption of budgets.

The women parliamentarians appreciated the study circle and expressed their desire to hold more study circles on women centred issues. Furthermore, they agreed on raising SDGs specific issues through calling attention and questions in parliament.

2.18 Training sessions with Karachi police on ‘rights of minorities’

Aurat Foundation’s project ‘Pakistan Religious Freedom Initiatives: Leaders of Influence (PRFI)’ organized a three day training session with police officials from South, East and West police zones of Karachi. The training was held from 27th to 29th July, 2015, at Hotel Movenpick, Karachi. The main objective of the training was to sensitize employees of the law enforcement agencies, especially police officers on the rights of minorities and to increase their awareness about new laws specific to minorities.

The trainers included Mr. Niaz Siddiki, former IG Sindh, Ms. Fouzia Tariq, HR defender, Mr. Faizullah Korejo, SSP Investigation and Mr. Naeem Zeeshan, Police Trainer. Moreover, since the aim of the training sessions was to target police officers from all over Karachi, police officers from South were invited to attend the first day, officers from West were the participants on the second day and on the third day officers from East attended the session. Ms Mahnaz Rahman briefed the police officers and the rest of the participants about Aurat Foundation’s work. Ms Erum spoke to the participants about PRFI, which is being run by Aurat Foundation and shared the objectives of the workshop. The sessions were well attended and greatly appreciated by participants.

2.19 Meeting held with Social Welfare Department

Pakistan Religious Freedom Initiatives: Leaders of Influence (PRFI) organized a meeting with officials of Social Welfare Department, Government of Sindh on July 24, 2015. Ms.. Riaz Fatima, Deputy Director, Mr.. Anwer Alam, PCRDP, Mr.. Nasir Hussain Qazilbash, PRCDP, Ms.. Mahnaz Rahman, Resident Director AF and Ms. Fareeda Tahir, Associate Programme Manager AF attended the meeting.



Ms. Mahnaz Rahman briefed the members of the Social Welfare Department about Aurat Foundation’s work. While giving the project introduction, she said that

Pakistan's Religious Freedom Initiative attempts to deal with the problems that non-Muslim Pakistanis face, such as forced conversion and hate speech in curriculum. Ms. Fareeda Tahir, shared that the Religious Freedom Caucus (RFC) will be the same as the Women's Caucus in the Sindh Assembly, and will be established at the parliamentary level and across party lines. This will include members of the Provincial Assembly from the mainstream parties and religious minorities. This caucus will serve as an advocacy platform for the religious freedoms in Sindh and will lobby with other parliamentarians for tabling important legislation and draft bills, undertake advocacy toward desired changes in party manifestos and also setting up minority wings in their respective parties.

Ms. Riaz Fatima informed the meeting of the work being carried out by the Social Welfare Department. She said that 78 women welfare centres are being run all over Sindh. Ms. Fatima said that affirmative action should be taken for minorities. She said that there should be a separate interview and a separate test for minorities. She also mentioned that in interior Sindh, religious minorities are a majority in terms of the population. She then spoke of the medical assessment project which is being run by the Social Welfare Department. Under this project, tests are administered which certify if people are disabled according to the rules set by the Pakistani government so that they may be eligible for jobs under the 2% quota set by the government. Moreover, now there is a monogram which is engraved on their CNIC as well to make the process of getting a job easier. However, she mentioned that the Certificate can only be made once the CNIC has been made therefore the applicant needs to be 18 years or older. Lastly, she mentioned that the Social Welfare Department also provides career counselling so as to facilitate disabled people when they are applying for jobs. She said that many of these criteria could also apply to minorities to help them be part of the labour force.

2.20 Meeting held with Labour, Minorities Affairs, Women Development, Planning and Development Department and Provincial Ombudsman

Pakistan Religious Freedom Initiatives: Leaders of Influence (PRFI) held a meeting with government officials and other stakeholders on July 24, 2015, at Marriott Hotel, Karachi. The meeting was attended by Ms. Saira Shahliani, MPA PPP; Mr. Aijaz Ahmed Mangi, Secretary Labor; Mr. Muhammad Sadiq, Director Minorities Affairs; Mr. Anwar Ali Babar, Official Minorities Affairs; Ms. Musarat Jabeen, Deputy Director, Women Development Department; Ms. Anis Fatima, Assistant Director, Planning and Development Department; Mr. Ghulam Haider Memon and Mr. Abdullah Shah Ombudsman Sindh; Ms. Farhat Moosa, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics; Mr. Abdul Rahim Moosvi, Sabiha Shah from Women Development Foundation, Pakistan; Mr. Syed Moazzam Ali, Consultant TAF Project; Ms. Mahnaz Rahman Resident Director, AF Karachi office, Ms. Erum Javed Project Manager and Ms. Fareeda Tahir Associate Programme Manager, AF.

Ms Mahnaz Rahman spoke about the various projects that AF is currently working on, with a special focus on the Gender Equity Program, which is funded by USAID. While introducing the project, Ms Fareeda Tahir said that PRFI is a project of Aurat Foundation in Sindh supported by The Asia Foundation. She said that the purpose of the project was to deal with the issues that non-Muslims Pakistanis face. These have been identified through a KAP survey, which was conducted at the district level. Mr.

Moazzam, consultant responsible for conducting the KAP survey, identified issues of minorities and discussed the survey further. It was also highlighted that there has been extensive work on going with AF coordinating and collaborating with other stakeholders to draft a comprehensive law that deals with the issue of forced conversion in Sindh. Secretary Labour said that all government departments had received a notice about the 5% quota for minorities and all relevant departments should be working towards implement this quota. After this,

2.21 Advocacy meeting with Secretary Minorities held

Ms. Mahnaz Rahman, Resident Director, Aurat Foundation Karachi and Ms. Fareeda Tahir, Programme Officer, arranged an advocacy meeting with Mr. Ahmed Bakhsh Narejo, Secretary Minorities, Government of Sindh. While briefing the Secretary Minorities on AF's work, Ms. Mahnaz Rahman, said that they are continuously lobbying with MNAs, MPAs, Government officials, police department, lawyers, NGOs, CBOs and minorities leaders on women's rights issues. During the last few years Sindh Assembly has passed some important women and minorities rights bills like 'The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013', 'The Sindh Child Marriages Restraint Act 2013', 'The Sindh Hindu Marriage bill, 2015', and the Forced Conversion Bill. Ms. Fareeda Tahir said that AF has conducted Focus Group Discussions with minorities and meetings with concerned government officials for the allocation of 5% quota for minorities. In the meeting Mr. Nareejo said that their department is working for the safeguard, protection and promotion the rights of minorities and they were doing everything possible to ensure that the department is able to assist minorities in achieving their full constitutional potential.

Chapter Three

Social Mobilisation and Citizens Engagement



3. Social Mobilisation and Citizens Engagement

Social mobilization is seen at AF as a means to motivate socio-economic sustainable change by to bring awareness among people and ultimately for ordinary citizens to demand and claim their rights. This is through engagement at all levels and the decentralisation of policy and decision-making. Aurat Foundation has been involved in engagement with ordinary citizens at all levels, concerning issues ranging from the importance of obtaining national ID cards, awareness around pro-women laws, women as voters and political participants and identifying women community leaders.

3.1 Social Mobilization Waseela-e-Taleem Project (SM-W-e-T), National Cash Transfer Program (NCTP)

Social Mobilization Waseela-e-Taleem (WeT) programme has been designed keeping in view the concept of co-responsibility, where cash is transferred to the underprivileged recipient households of the already existing Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP). To support the Government of Pakistan (GoP) initiative under the BISP, the World Bank and UK-Aid have extended technical and financial assistance for establishing, strengthening and institutionalizing the Federal Safety Net Authority in Pakistan. With the financial and technical assistance of UK-aid, the Aurat Foundation (AF) and its partners carried out the pilot test phase August, 2012- February, 2013 with a purpose to test the social mobilisation design for the Waseela-e-Taleem (WeT) programme.

The W-e-T programme is a conditional cash transfer programme where BISP beneficiary mothers/families must ensure the enrolment of their children between ages 5-12 in primary schools and their retention by attaining 70% attendance to benefit from the programme. Social mobilization is the integral part, where beneficiaries are grouped to form committees for their empowerment, case resolution and mobilization for children enrollment. The project was implemented in 32 districts of 4 provinces and 2 regions- AJK and Gilgit- Baltistan. The Waseela-e-Taleem programme is a conditional cash transfer initiative of BISP funded by the UK government and run with technical assistance from the World Bank. BISP is a social mobilisation mechanism to help alleviate poor women, and hence poor families, out of poverty.

The crux on the Waseela-e-Taleem programme is to allow school going children, from families at the bottom end of the poverty line, to receive an education. This programme allows cash initiatives for already existing BISP beneficiaries to enrol and keep their children in school. BISP beneficiaries include the most underprivileged of women in the targeted districts, who receive conditional and unconditional cash transfers from the BISP programme under the Federal Security Network Programme of the Government of Pakistan.

During the period of July, 2015- June 2016, under social mobilization and communication component, 7710 BISP beneficiaries were mapped out in project districts, 8,843 BISP Beneficiaries Committees (BBCs) were formed 220,024 BBC meetings conducted.

Under Waseela-e-Taleem component, Micro Supply Capacity Assessment- MSCA and GPS Coordinates of 10,554 public, semi-private/primary schools carried out during the

enrolment of children in schools. Beneficiary mobilization campaigns were launched to mobilize BISP beneficiaries with a particular focus on WeT beneficiaries' and to inform communities about the registration and admission campaigns in the target areas. This forward communication campaign focused on ensuring that the BISP beneficiaries are aware of the set-up of registration centres. The communication model of W-e-T heavily focused on local communication by primarily involving the secondary target audience to channelize the communication messages of W-e-T to the primary target audience of W-e-T i.e. W-e-T beneficiaries. The total of 34,699 beneficiary mobilization meeting and 17,006 with elders and notables of the area conducted respectively. Capacity building is a key component of the programme, which aims at enhancing the capacities of individual in the target communities for in-depth understanding of project and its effective implementation. A total of 468 orientation events for 11,700 women leaders and 24,430 teachers oriented from public and private schools on SM W-e-T programme.

For the registration of W-e-T beneficiaries and children, 66 makeshift and mobile camps were established in 32 districts where over 4,688 orientation sessions for beneficiaries arranged on awareness for SM W-e-T programme in relation of co-responsibility of mothers in attaining regular school attendance of their children. A total of 387,520 beneficiaries were screened and 300,470 eligible beneficiaries registered, 605,148 children of beneficiaries were registered and 664,944 admitted in schools. AF facilitated 280,169 beneficiaries in obtaining their civil registration- CNIC during the project cycle.. In addition beneficiaries were also facilitated for getting B- form and birth registration certificates for their children. Compliance monitoring of attendance is a continuous process on quarterly basis for providing stipend to children already studying/ newly enrolled under SM W-e-T project. During the reporting period the attendance of 662,833 children in 23,871 schools, 582,629 children in 23,577 schools and 869,069 children in 34,661 schools verified for Q 3, 4 of 2015 and Q-1 of 2016 respectively for releasing payment to compliant children.

3.2 Prime Minsiter's Waseela-e-Taleem Programme launched in 27 Districts

The Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's Waseela-e-Taleem programme of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) was launched, in collaboration with Aurat Foundation, in a grand ceremony on 28 November, 2015, at Makli Stadium, Thatta, Sindh. The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Mr. Mamnoon Hussain, formally



inaugurated the event. The ceremony took place to launch the programme in 27 districts of Pakistan, after the completion of its successful pilot phase, last year.

The launch saw the unveiling of women leaders' cards. The purpose of the cards is to give women leaders 'Leadership identity' in the community and to allow these leaders to help resolve cases at BISP local offices and with other stakeholders.



Other dignitaries present at the launch included, Ms. Marvi Memon, Chairperson BISP, Mr. Saleem Ranjha, Secretary BISP, Mr. Philip Barton, British High Commissioner to Pakistan and Dr. Masuma Hasan, President Aurat Foundation. The attendees included over 24,000 BISP beneficiaries.

On this important occasion, Mr. Mamnoon Hussain, President of Pakistan, stated that poverty and illiteracy are the main causes of corruption, crime and extremism in the country. He noted that the promotion of education and addressing poverty alleviation at the grass root levels, could help challenge these ills. Noting the dire facts of how many children in Pakistan were out of school, the President wished that with joint efforts of skilled professionals and the civil society, the problem could be curbed. He further stated that strict monitoring of the programme was necessary so that the school going child could directly benefit from the stipend being received.

The President commended the efforts of Ms. Marvi Memon and her team for their role in the success of BISP and its contribution towards women's development in the country. He expressed his wish for the programme to have an eventual outreach, across Pakistan. He also thanked the UK government for their assistance and support in addressing the important issue of education in Pakistan.





Ms. Marvi Memon, MNA and Chairperson of BISP addressed the crowd and stated that the government was committed to promoting education at the grass root levels, understanding that education was the right of every child in the country. She went on to state that “women can play a vital role by sending their children to school and Waseela-e-Taleem programme will provide financial assistance for the purpose.” Ms. Memon expressed her hope for the expansion of the programme throughout the country.

Mr. Philip Barton, British High Commissioner to Pakistan spoke in English, Urdu and Sindhi highlighting the importance the United Kingdom placed on education. He noted that the poorest and most disadvantaged families, should avail this opportunity in education, particularly to educate girls, to better their future.

Dr. Masuma Hasan, President, Board of Governors, Aurat Foundation, gave a brief history as to how the Waseela-e-Taleem programme came into existence. Dr. Hasan proudly highlighted the programme’s outreach, having benefited 1,300,000 women and seeing the enrolment of 850,000 children in school. She praised the hard work of Aurat Foundation in its effort to help empower women.

Mr. Saleem Ranjha, Secretary BISP, informed those present of the programme’s aim to enrol 2,000,000 children into school by the end of December 2016 and extend this incentive based free education to 50 districts.

Three BISP beneficiaries also spoke at the launch, sharing their positive experiences and significant change to their lives because of the cash stipends received. They further spoke the new found awareness regarding their rights and the right and importance of education, especially education for girls.

3.3 One million BISP children enrolled in schools under Waseela-e-Taleem : Marvi Memon

Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has achieved the target of enrolment of one million beneficiary children in schools under Waseela-e-Taleem (WeT) initiative; Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar will launch its official celebration. This was stated by Minister of State and Chairperson BISP, MNA Marvi Memon during her visit to Government Boys and Girls Taleem-ul-Quran High



Schools, Rawalpindi wherein BISP children enrolled in these schools were also present.

WeT programme is four years co-responsibility Cash Transfer (CCT) Programme which was initiated to financially support the primary education of 5 to 12 years old children of BISP beneficiary families. Each beneficiary child receives a cash transfer of Rs.750 per quarter on meeting the admission verification in 1st quarter and attendance requirement of 70% in subsequent quarters till completion of primary education. The design of the Programme was developed by BISP in consultation with all the stakeholders of the programme including World Bank, DFID and Provincial/Regional Education departments. Under the WeT programme, total Rs.993.50 Million have been disbursed to the beneficiaries in 32 districts of the country. Rs.161.80 Million were disbursed in initial five districts and Rs. 831 Million in extended 27 districts.

BISP set a target of reaching out to 1.3 million children of beneficiary families in 32 districts by June, 2016 and has to-date enrolled one million children wherein 47% of the programme beneficiaries are girls. On the occasion, Chairperson BISP said that BISP's endeavors towards the issues of poverty and education are in line with the present government's commitment to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and vision 2025. She further said that BISP aims to expand WeT initiative to the entire country beyond 32 districts as the organization has an equalizer policy towards every region of the country.

Chairperson BISP, MNA Marvi Memon congratulated WeT team under the leadership of Secretary BISP, Muhammad Saleem Ahmed Ranjha, DFID, World Bank and Aurat Foundation on this great achievement.

Mr Younas Khalid, Chief Strategy and Policy Officer (CSPO), Dr Nasira Malik, Team Leader Waseela-e-Taleem Programme, Aurat Foundation and Ms Shaista Bano, Principal, Govt Girls High School Safdarabad were also present.

3.4 LISTEN:

LISTEN (2013-2017) project aims to promote active citizenship among 1,200 women and youth in 30 targeted districts by building their capacities to strengthen women's voices through dialogue and engagement with provincial and national assembly representatives. The current proposed intervention is also a step forward towards appraisal of elected leaders.

The LISTEN programme has contributed to the empowerment of women and youth. The activities include trainings for capacity building and knowledge sharing, designed for grass root level inclusion. These activities have helped in the behavioural change of communities and in turn the empowerment of women. There is no doubt that women leaders raised voices due to the project.

The geographical outreach of the project covers 30 districts of Pakistan i.e. 15 districts of Punjab, 9 districts of Sindh, 3 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 3 districts of Balochistan. Within these 30 districts, the project is being implemented in 92 tehsils (of total 123), 145 union councils (of total 2,036), and 86 villages (of total 32,115).

Direct beneficiaries of the project (75% women, 25% youth)

In 2nd year of the project (July 2014 – June 2015), 5,345 women, men and youth capacitated through 4 refresher training courses, 30 downstream training workshops, 60 study circles, 30 meetings with elected representatives, 30 interactive theatre activities, 3 media talk shows, 6 media stunt activities at university level and 2 media campaigns.

In-direct beneficiaries (75% women, 25% youth)

In-direct beneficiaries of the project through counselling from women leaders groups. Women leaders and youth representation from different walks of life include:

- Lectures / teachers = 10%
- Human Rights activists / NGOs workers = 17%
- Home-based workers = 10%
- Political workers = 13%
- Students / youth = 25%
- Private jobs (Beautician, shopkeeper, labour, etc) = 11%
- Health department = 7%
- Lawyers = 6%
- Government officials = 1%

Indirect beneficiaries

Women leaders facilitated 31,578 men and 53,611 women to obtain their CNIC. They helped 20,157 voter registration, 7,694 domiciles, and referred 4,309 poor patients to hospital for treatment. Moreover, 3,673 women were engaged in different micro financing institutes to start small business, and parents were mobilized for enrolling their children - 3,443 boys, 6,476 girls in schools.

CNIC		Voter Registration	Domicile	Referring patients to hospital	Facilitation for micro credit	Enrolment of children in school	
F	M					F	M
53,611	31,578	20,157	7,694	4,309	3,673	6,476	3,443

Women leaders under the LISTEN project are also being engaged through other AF projects, which include:

- 40 women leaders through Aagahi Centes of AAWAZ project
- 80 women leaders through Gender Equity Project (GEP)
- 153 women leader through Waseela-e-Taleem – National Cash Transfer Programme (WET-NCTP)
- 80 women leaders through AAWAZ District Forum (ADF), AAWAZ Village Forum (AVF), AAWAZ District UC (AUF)

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3.5 Gender Based Violence Free District launched in district Kasur

Aurat Foundation launched ‘The Gender Based Violence Free District’ campaign in district Kasur in collaboration with the Women Development Department (WDD), Government of Punjab, on 12 November 2015, at Garden City Club, Kasur. The event was organized to launch OXFAM GB supported project ‘Institutional Capacity Strengthening of WDD department Punjab’.



Ms. Hameeda Wahuddin, Provincial Minister for Women's Development & Social Welfare Department, Punjab, Ms Margaret Adamson, Australian High Commissioner, Ms Mary Gill, Member Provincial Assembly, Dr. Aamina Imam Secretary Women Development Department, Mr. Arif Jabbar Oxfam GB Country Director, Mr. Adnan Arshad Aulak DCO Kasur, Mr. Faraan Baig DIG Motorway, Mr Munno Bhai and Mr Hassena Moin, prominent writers, Mr Asim Malik, AF Director Outreach & Network, Ms Mumtaz Mughal, AF Provincial Manager and other representatives from civil society and government officials attended the event.

Ms Hameeda Wahuddin said the Punjab government had taken concrete measures for the empowerment and development of women and Punjab women's empowerment package 2012-15 are part this. She said the Punjab government has increased job quotas for women from 5% to 15%. She said that 50% of funds have been allocated for women in youth business loan programmes.

Mr Adnan Arshad, Kasur DCO in his address said that the administration and all departments in Kasur would take every possible step for making the district free from gender violence. He said that the transfer of inherited property is being made immediately to women after amendment in Punjab Land Revenue Act. Mr Ali Nasir Rizvi said that 2,138 police employees are working towards the elimination gender based violence and protection of women's rights.

Mr. Arif Jabbar said that Oxfam has always worked towards supporting women leadership programmes and that Oxfam will continue assist in a various strategies and standards towards equality through its humanitarian strategy 2020, Gender Minimum Standards in Emergency, and strategy on women rights in humanitarian programming. Oxfam envisions bringing about sustainable change to ensure women are able to control financial resources and have leadership opportunities. He further added that Oxfam has signed an MoU with WDD Punjab for institutional capacity building of the department.



This programme will also contribute to piloting women crisis centres to replicate Oxfam's women protection centre model. It also builds synergies and strengthens linkages between the federal and provincial ministries to create and ensure compliance with Pakistan's international commitments and national Vision 2025 policy.

Ms. Aamina Imam said the Government of Punjab, in consultation with all civil society organizations, has evolved legal and institutional systems. Mr. Muno Bhai said that it was unfortunate that Punjab being one of the most developed provinces had the highest number of crimes against women committed last year. Ms. Haseena Moeen said only education can bring change in our society. She appreciated the struggle of Ms. Nigar Ahmad, Executive Director, Aurat Foundation, for the rights of women in Pakistan.

Ms. Mumtaz Mughal said that this situation has marked Pakistan as 'off-track' on its global obligations and Pakistan ranked 2nd worst country in Gender Gap Report, 2013. According to the last six months data on violence against women gathered by Aurat Foundation, 2,926 cases have been reported. Many more cases of domestic violence remain unreported. Programme target districts fall in top 15 districts of Punjab where more gender based violence cases are occurring i.e., Rawalpindi (149 cases), Muzaffargarh (113 cases), and Kasur with 72 cases are reported while the ratio of unreported cases is very high. However, the conviction rate for such cases is still very low. According to the Punjab DIG Investigation Branch 2013 report, 6 women are murdered/attempted murder, 8 raped, 11 battered and assaulted and 32 women are abducted in Punjab daily.

Ms. Mary Gill said treating women equally starts from when they are children and boys and girls should be treated equally. She said effective implementation of pro-women laws can play a vital role to eliminate violence against women. She said that this is a unique programme as it is for the first time that the 'GBV free City/District' concept will be tested and developed in Pakistan and looked forward to a positive result.

3.6 AAWAZ Voice and Accountability Programme:

AAWAZ Voice and Accountability Programme (2012-2017) is a five-year programme to strengthen democratic processes in Pakistan by making it more open, inclusive and accountable to citizens. It is funded by DFID and managed by DAI. The programme is being implemented in 45 districts across Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces by Aurat Foundation, SAP-PK, SPO and Sungi Development Foundation.

In order to achieve its goal of maximizing outreach and mobilization on women, girls and minorities' issues, the following forums and centres were established under AAWAZ and Accountability Programme during 2014-2015:

- 13 AAWAZ District Forums (ADFs) in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- 26 AAWAZ Tehsil Forums (ATFs) in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- 130 AAWAZ Union Council Forums (AUFs) in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- 1300 AAWAZ Village Forums (AVFs) in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- 130 AAWAZ Aagahi Centres (AACs) managed by 130 female Resource Persons (RPs), facilitation over 5,000 people per month.
- Two AAWAZ Provincial Forum (APFs) and one AAWAZ National Forum (ANF), which connects parliamentarians, legislators, lawyers, media

representatives, political parties' representatives, human rights organizations and activists etc. for gender based legislation under AAWAZ themes.

Through these forums following tasks were accomplished:

Task	Women	Men	Total
CNIC registration	19,538	11,016	30,554
Birth registration	1,961	1,468	3,429
Voter registration	15,523	10,486	26,009

The awareness and mobilization campaign inspired huge number of women, men and organizations to join the above forum. The detail is as under:

- Over 41,844 person join in AAWAZ forums (Women: 15,205, Men: 26,639);
- 50 Community Partner Organizations (CPOs) engaged at UC and village level;
- 64,747 person signed petition for local government elections, and 63,011 people signed petition for anti-hate speech and social harmony; and
- 11,743 person (6,218 women, 5,908 men, 6 transgender) were sensitized on human rights, roles and responsibilities of an active citizen and state.

During 2014 – 2015, the main focus of the AAWAZ programme was to strengthen the various forums and build their capacities for raising their voices. The year marked with the commemoration of 16 days of activism where approximately 118,000 people signed a resolution for ending domestic violence and Child Early and Forced Marriages (CEFM). Lobbying and advocacy meeting with the legislators were made throughout the year to draft and pass bills for protection of women and religious minorities. Women assemblies were conducted to build women's constituencies through promoting a culture of rights and bringing them in leadership positions (as candidates and voters).

Under AAWAZ programme, a cadre of well informed and sensitized youth (young boys and girls) was created through Youth Conventions to raise voice for rights and accountability and firmly reject 'Violence Against Women and Girls' (VAW&G) and its associated customary practices and mindsets, which promote gender discrimination. Cultural and peace events were celebrated at union council (UC) and district level for the promotion of peace and harmony. Consultation meetings with lawyers, media, journalists and social activists were also organised for bringing harmony in the society. *Khuli Kachehri*'s were organised at UC level to highlight and resolve the issues on the basis of priority.

Chapter Four

Advocacy, Awareness-Raising and Lobbying

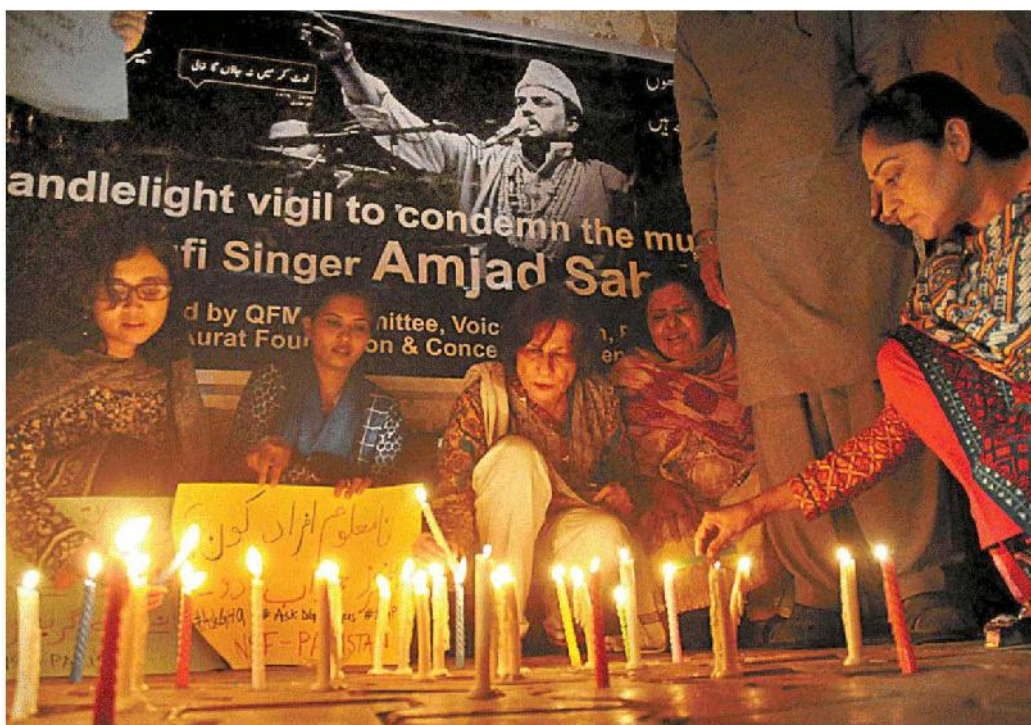


4. Advocacy, Awareness-Raising and Lobbying

Aurat Foundation is essentially an advocacy organisation that has established a wide network around the whole country, lobbying and creating awareness around gender related issues, including pro-women laws and women's political participation. As an organisation, we have also raised our voices against societal injustices, protesting against the lack of State involvement to protect persecuted groups and marginalised people. Below we showcase what we have worked towards, celebrations and protests on causes and issues we hold close to our hearts and minds.

4.1 Civil society condemned the murder of renowned singer Amjad Sabri

Civil society organizations and networks organised a candle light vigil to pay tribute to renowned qawwali singer Amjad Sabri who was murdered in Karachi on 22 June 2016. In the condolence message civil society condemned the murder of Amjad Sabri



as an attempt to diminish socio-cultural spaces from society. The vigil was held on 24 June 2016, outside Karachi Press Club, was jointly called by Aurat Foundation, PILER, PQF, Qazi Faiz Memorial (QFM) Committee, Voice of Sindh and Concerned Citizens. Ms.. Mahnaz Rahman, Resident Director, and Ms.. Malka Khan Program Officer, represented Aurat Foundation.

4.2 First 'Habib Jalib Courage Award' presented to women rights activist Nasreen Azhar

Aurat Foundation, on behalf of its Executive Director Ms. Nigar Ahmad, presented the first ever 'HABIB JALIB COURAGE AWARD to women's rights activist Ms. Nasreen Azhar in recognition of her services for democracy, human rights and women's



rights. The award was arranged in memory of ‘12 February 1983 – Lahore demonstration against discriminatory laws’ in which Habib Jalib was also baton charged along with other women’s rights activists.

Mian Raza Rabbani, Chairman Senate of Pakistan, was the Chief Guest and presented the award to Ms.. Nasreen Azhar. Speakers included former senator Mr. Afrasayab Khattak of Awami National Party, Senator Mir Hasil Bazinjo of the National Party’s, Mr. Naeem Mirza, Chief Operating Officer Aurat Foundation, and Mr.. Mujahid Barelvi, a senior journalist who has written two books on Habib Jalib.

The ceremony was further honoured with Jalib’s daughter Ms.. Tahira Jalib reading out the poem ‘Aise dastoor ko, subh-e-benor ko, main nahi manta, main nahi janta’ by her late father.

4.3 Launching Ceremony of ‘ZEWER’ as an achievement of women leaders' struggle under LISTEN Project

Under the LISTEN project, Aurat Foundation in collaboration with Oxfam GB and Ahsas Welfare Foundation organized a launching ceremony of ZEWER (Zeal Efforts for Women’s Empowerment & Rights) project on International Women's Day, 8 March, 2016, at Pakistan National Council of Art (PNCA), Islamabad. The project is attributed as an achievement of women leaders' struggle. It would be implemented in four districts





namely Chakwal, Rawalpindi, Nowshera and Attock. This collaborative effort was made to appreciate women leaders' group efforts towards sustainability and continuity of the LISTEN project. The project is aimed at right based advocacy and social

development by providing education, skills and entrepreneurship to the deprived and marginalised girls initially in four districts.

The event was attended by honourable guests Deputy High Commissioner Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, H.E. E. A. S. Wijayanthi Edirisinghe,, H.E. Volodymyr Lakomov, Ambassador of Ukraine, parliamentarians, social activists and women's leaders' groups.

On the occasion Mr. Naem Ahmed Mirza, COO, Aurat Foundation, said that women are more than 50% of the population of Pakistan and hence deserve 50% share in jobs, and natural resources, land, education and development. He said that half of the planet as per the theme for this year's International Women's Day i.e. 'Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality.



Mr. Lakomov said that for the empowerment of women and a peaceful society education was necessary. While addressing the ceremony, Ms. Edirisinghe said that Pakistani women are hard workers and contribute significantly at both the national and international level. She gave examples of Sharmeen Obaid and Malala Yousafzai. She said there is a need to make women stronger to build a good economy but also a good society.

4.4 National Women's Day celebrated

Aurat Foundation celebrated National Women's Day on 12 February 2016 at its regional offices, Lahore and Karachi, and Head Office in Islamabad. 12th February marks the 32nd anniversary of the momentous challenge to General Zia-ul-Haq's military government and his 'Islamisation' process. On 12th February 1983, women in Lahore broke the public silence against the military regime by protesting on the Mall Road. The women were baton charged by the authorities and mass arrests took place but these women resolved to continue their struggle.

Islamabad: Rich tribute was paid to Late Ms.. Shehla Zia, Co-founder Aurat Foundation and member Women Action Forum for her struggle and contributions towards legal protection of women's rights in Pakistan. Ms. Zia, struggled for the safeguarding of women rights, their legal protection, repeal of discriminatory laws i.e. Hudood Ordinance, laws against 'honour' killing, and amendments in personal laws etc.



In addition to this, Aurat Foundation Islamabad also organised a National Women's Day celebration at the Islamabad Club, where women beneficiaries of Gender Equity Programme (GEP) shared stories of their triumph. Their success stories showed how a little help can turn the lives of Pakistani women. Ambassador of the United States to Pakistan H. E. Mr. David Hale joined as special guest. The event was also attended by senior government officials, diplomats and representatives of the UN.

Lahore: At the Lahore office, a large number of women leaders from different districts of Punjab joined Aurat Foundation's staff and renowned women's rights activists to celebrate National Women's Day and expressed their solidarity with human rights defenders facing violence because of their work for promoting human rights. Ms.



Nigar Ahmed, Executive Director Aurat Foundation, said that National Women's Day is celebrated on 12th February each year to remember Pakistani women's movement and their courage and bravery in their fight against violence and discriminatory laws and injustices. She stressed that there is a need to create widespread awareness and commitment for a just, democratic and caring society in Pakistan where women and men are recognized as equals and lead their lives with self-respect and dignity.



Member of the Women's Action Forum and renowned women's rights activist Ms.. Mahnaz Rafi said that women activists will continue for justice, peace and equality.

Ms.. Mumtaz Mughal, Resident Director, AF, said that laws are the reflection of the values of society. Women are struggling for attaining more and more legal protection and empowerment. There are many factors responsible for the poor protection of women's rights e.g. lack of education, rigid value system, absence of proper implementation of the laws and the complex judicial system. Many steps have been taken to improve the status of women, which are remarkable but there is still a need for devising a mechanism for implementation of these laws.

Mr. Muhammad Tahseen, Executive Director, South Asia Partnership Pakistan said that 12th February is celebrated throughout the country to acknowledge the achievements of women excelling in different fields of life. Yet discriminatory laws still exist and thus the struggle for women's social, political, cultural and legal rights still continues.

Karachi: A large number of Women Action Forum (WAF) members, GEP partners and representatives of other civil society organizations attended the AF Karachi office to celebrate National Women's Day.

Ms. Mahnaz Rahman, Resident Director of Aurat Foundation welcomed the participants and spoke about the significance of National Women's Day. She paid homage to Ms.. Shehla Zia for her struggle for women's rights in Pakistan.



Dr. Masuma Hasan, President of AF's Board of Governors, said that women activists have achieved a lot in their long struggle. She said that we should focus on the positive trends of society and celebrate women's journey to success and not just dwell on the atrocities committed against women by the society.

Ms. Anis Haroon, Board Member of Aurat Foundation, paid tribute to Ms. Shehla Zia who was Ms. Haroon said was a pioneer in the women's movement. She spoke at length about her contributions by taking women's rights to a whole new level with her legal and constitutional acumen. She also recited a poem she has written for Ms. Zia.

Ms. Khawar Mumtaz, Chairperson NCSW, lauded her friend and colleague, Ms. Zia's role, and highlighted her taking the government on board on women laws, which is still paying off in taking this movement forward. She added that it seems only yesterday that "Shelly" was with us, though it has been 11 years since she passed.

Justice (R) Majida Razvi, Chairperson, Sindh Human Rights Commission, said that there has been a lot of change and women are on the forefront in almost all professions. Women need awareness and a conducive environment to thrive and flourish in their respective professions.

Dr. Asha Bedar, the elder daughter of Ms. Shehla Zia, was also present on the occasion. She recalled her childhood memories and her mother's passion and devotion to her family and close friends.

The representatives of various CSOs and GEP sub-grantees also shared their experiences and the issues faced by women and emphasized that a lot of good work has been done and a lot more still needs to be carried out. Ms. Maria Taqdeer, a young women's leader, shared her struggle and achievements in both her personal and professional life. A documentary was also screened at the end of the programme.

Quetta: Aurat Foundation's Quetta office celebrated National Women's Day at its office with human rights and women's rights activists and members of the Pakistan Gender Coalition (PGC). A documentary on women's rights, namely 'Mien safar mien hoon', produced by Gender Equity Programme of Aurat Foundation was also screened.

After a discussion, the participants recommended the formation of a larger group of civil society including members of PGC to outline women related issues in Balochistan. It was also decided to alleviate the network as an advisory forum for better interaction with the provincial government on issues of women's and citizens' concerns.

4.5 Dinner in honour of Ms. Kamla Bhasin and Ms. Chandni Joshi

Aurat Foundation hosted a dinner in the honour of renowned women's rights activists, Ms. Kamla Bhasin and Ms. Chandni Joshi, on 29 January 2016, at AF office, Islamabad. Both activists were presented with shields in recognition of their commitment and contribution to the women's movement in South Asia and their long association with Aurat Foundation. The shield to Ms. Chandni Joshi was presented by Mrs.



Anjum Riyazul Haque, Member Board of Governors, AF, and Ms. Kamla Bhasin received her shield from Ms. Surriya Ameeruddin, former Senator and Member General Body, AF. The dinner reception was well attended by representatives of UN agencies, international and local NGOs as well as AF's staff.



4.6 “We must differentiate between same and equal” – Kamla Bhasin

Concepts related to feminism were clarified as renowned activist Ms. Kamla Bhasin gave a detailed talk on ‘Contemporary Issues of Feminist Discourse and Challenges in South Asia’, on 29 January 2016, at the National Press Club, Islamabad. The talk was jointly organized by Aurat Foundation, SPO and Rozan from the platform of ‘One Billion Rising for Love, Peace and Justice’ campaign.

Ms. Kamla Bhasin said that feminism is an ideology that equals men and women. She called it a fight between two mentalities: “One mentality



says that patriarchy is better, whereas the other says that equality is better. On both sides there are women and men. There are women who are ready to kill their daughter before she is born. Women are involved in pornography. They are those who dance half naked in films of Bollywood. So there are both men and women, who protect and nurture patriarchy.”

She said that every constitution in the world is against discrimination. “If we believe in the constitution that advocates for equal rights, we cannot practice social and cultural norms in our homes and communities that discriminate and reinforce patriarchal notions making women powerless and insecure.”



She stressed the need to differentiate between same and equal. She said that institutions of family and education play a critical role in defining gender roles in the society. “When a home becomes democratic and non-violent, only then the country and society become non-violent and democratic.”

4.7 National Working Women Day Celebrated

Aurat Foundation, Office of Ombudsperson, WISE and AAWAZ Voice and Accountability Programme jointly organized an event in connection with the commemoration of National Working Women’s Day, on 22 December, 2015, at the auditorium of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI). Besides a large number of working women, several women



representatives of civil society organizations, labour unions and government departments including police department, traffic police, Rescue 1122 and media joined the occasion.

Ms. Mumtaz Mughal, Resident Director, Aurat Foundation, highlighted the issue of the limited role of women in decision-making forums and processes and said that this must be increased. The majority of working women are involved in labour intensive jobs in the informal sector, at home and the agriculture sector. Many earn half the wages as compared to men for the same work and face double the problems in terms of gender discrimination, intimidation and most of all sexual harassment.

Ms. Farkhanda Waseem Afzal, Women Ombudsperson, while talking about the law on sexual harassment at the work place said her office is working to ensure harassment free work environments women. She urged the working women to speak against the violation of their rights and if they face sexual harassment at the workplace they should contact her offices.



Ms. Bushra Khaliq Executive Director, WISE, said working women are an asset for Pakistan, regardless of whether they are working in the formal or informal sector. The budget priorities for women's empowerment are real indicator of the government's sincerity towards women.

Ms. Sadia Sohail, MPA from PTI said, women are the best economic managers, good PROs and fine politicians. Their role in reducing corruption is crucial. Women must encourage women to come forward and claim their due space in various sectors.

Mr. Salaman Abid, Regional head SPO, said, development without women's participation is impossible.

Ms. Lubna Mansoor, from Ministry of Human rights, said the government values the vital role of women and is very much aware of human rights issues being faced by the women and other marginal sections of society. A number of pro-women laws are the evidence of the state's sincerity towards women's causes. She appreciated the role of CSOs in highlighting and promoting the women's issues in Pakistan.

Ms. Ammara Athar, SP Operations, Ms. Gulam Fatima from BLLF, Ms. Ruqiaya Bano from Rescue 1122 and Ms. Fakhara Tehreem from Daily Jang also spoke on the occasion and expressed their solidarity with the organizers for celebrating the important day of working women.

4.8 '16 Days of Activism'

The 16 days run from 25 November to 10 December every year. This is what the days signify. November 25 - International Day Against Violence Against Women, till December 10 - International Human Rights Day, were chosen to symbolically link violence against women and human rights and to emphasize that such violence is a violation of human rights. The 16-days period also highlights: November 29 - the International Women Human Rights Defenders Day, December 1- the World AIDS Day, December 3 – the International Day of Persons with Disability, and December 6 which marks the Anniversary of the Montreal Massacre.

4.9 GBV discussed in Balochistan

AF, Quetta office, other CSOs and Pakistan Gender Coalition (PGC) organized a large scale event on closing of 16 Days of Activism campaign to discuss Gender Based Violence (GBV) at Officer's Club Quetta. At the start a one minute silence was observed for the tragic death of Pakistan's First Lady Pilot, Marriam Mukhtar.



The main objective of the event was to highlight the 'Pro-women legislative agenda for Balochistan'. The event was chaired by Dr. Kaleemullah Khan, Mayor Quetta Metropolitan. Women parliamentarians Ms. Samina Khan (PML-N), Mr. Hashim Khan

Kakar and Dr. Shama Ishaq (National Party) also participated in the event. Justice (R) Kailashnath Kohli, Chairperson Balochistan Public Services Commission, Ex-Senator Ms. Roshan Khursheed Bharucha, Dr. Ishaq Baloch (NP), Mr. Hashim Khan Kakar, Director General Social Welfare, prominent social activists, members of academia, lawyers, line department and media personnel also participated in the event.



Ms. Saima Javaid, DPM Aurat Foundation), presented the proposed ‘Charter of Demand’ and said that Government of Balochistan should take affirmative steps for women and pass the bills on Child Marriage Prohibition Act and Acid Survivors Rehabilitation Bill. The proposed charter of demands 2015-16 was put forward and adopted by all participants. It read as follows:

1. Like other provinces, the provincial Government of Balochistan should take affirmative steps for the establishment of Provincial Commission on the Status of Women.
2. Efforts should be made for the passage of the ‘The Child Marriage Prohibition Bill’.
3. To ensure the formation of ‘Inquiry Committees’ under the Anti-Harassment Act 2010 at all government and non-government institutions and also make citizens aware of their rights at the at the local level.
4. Provincial Ombudsperson should be appointed as soon as possible for the effective implementation of the Anti-Harassment Act 2010.
5. Rules and regulations regarding implementation of Domestic Violence Act should be formed.
6. Formation of policies at provincial level for socio-economic protection of Women Home-Based Workers, formulation of development schemes for improvement of economic status of Women Home-Based Workers and establishment of ‘Product Finishing Units’ for the finishing of products made by them.
7. Formation of policy for the restoration of peace and harmony among citizens of Balochistan.
8. New committees with the partnership of civil societies, philanthropists, local representatives and scouts should be formed and organized by the government and Provincial and District level Disaster Management Authorities should play an effective part in focusing on women and children in time of calamity.
9. CM Balochistan and coalition government should elect woman parliamentarian as Speaker Provincial Assembly Balochistan.
10. Women parliamentarians should be included in the provincial cabinet.
11. Disabled women should be appointed in all government and private offices /institutions according to their allotted quota of 2 percent.
12. Easy friendly access should be provided to disabled women in all government and private departments.
13. Mental Health Care unit should be established in all civil hospitals at provincial and district level.

14. Mobile centers for Fistula treatment should be established at all Basic Health Units across the province.
15. Psychiatrists should be appointed in the all institutions for Special Children established under Social Welfare Department.
16. Emergency exits should be established in all hospitals including Bolan Medical Complex.
17. Women Friendly Spaces like day care centers, toilets, rest/common rooms and information desks should be established at Chamber of Commerce, Courts, Media Houses and all public and private offices/institutions.
18. HR policies of media houses should be revised in accordance with the gender sensitive needs through provision of maternity, annual and casual leave.
19. Gender sensitive HR policies should be prepared by the Chamber of Commerce, courts, media houses and all public and private offices/institutions.
20. Political parties should give equal tickets to women to contest on general seats.
21. Legislation and implementation of 'Acid Survivor Rehabilitation Bill' for Balochistan.
22. Dar-ul-Aman for women survivors and women police stations should be established at all divisional capitals.
23. Special measures should be adopted in the courts to ensure speedy trial of cases related to the violation of basic human rights of women.

DG Social Welfare followed this with the handing over of the wetted copy of the 'Child Marriage Prohibition Bill' to women parliamentarians. The session was chaired by Justice retired Mehta Kailashnath Kohli.

Women parliamentarians ensured that they attempt to have the bills at the provincial assembly. Speaking at the event as chief guest Dr. Abdul Kaleemullah, Mayor Quetta Metropolitan, said that women should be given regard in society and home. He said that Islam and the Constitution provide equal opportunities to women, especially in terms of inheritance rights.

Mr. Ishfaq Mengal (AF), Ms. Surriya Alladin and Ms. Ishrat Altaf (PGC) also spoke on the occasion.

4.10 IEC material on pro-women laws distributed amongst police stations for dissemination of knowledge and information

A group of AF staff and volunteers from other civil society organizations distributed IEC material containing standees and posters amongst different police stations at the federal capital, as part of the 16 Days of Activism Campaign. The IEC material was developed through the 'Policy Advocacy & Capacity



Development' project where AF conducted trainings and carried out different advocacy and lobbying campaigns for gender-based violence (GBV) free society in ICT, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh.

AF staff comprised of Ms. Farkhanda Aurangzib, Director Communication & Resource Mobilization, Ms. Rabeea Hadi, Director Advocacy & EAW, Mr. Muhammad Ullah, M&E Officer, Mr. Waqas Abdul Qadir, Program Assistant, Ms. Shumaila Jan, Admin Officer and Ms. Hira Khalid, HR Officer, while Mr. Kashif Ali from Rozan and Ms. Shazia from Aizan Development Foundation and two young volunteers Mr. Talha and Mr. Ibrar Hussain also joined this team in the distribution process.

4.11 Dialogue on laws on eradicating child marriages and violence against women in Sindh



Aurat Foundation in collaboration with Sindh Human Rights Commission and Action Aid conducted a dialogue on 'Promotion of Laws on Eradicating Child Marriages and Violence Against Women in Sindh', on 9 December 2015, at Hotel Mehran Karachi. The session's main aim was to discuss the implementation of already passed pro-women laws regarding child marriage and domestic violence, rules of business and the problems faced pertaining to the implementation of these laws.

Ms. Rubina Brohi and Ms. Fareeda Tahir, Programme Officers AF, conducted the dialogue. Speakers included Ms. Anis Haroon, Member NCHR & Board Member of AF, Justice (R) Majida Razvi, Chairperson SHRC, Ms. Saira Shahliani, MPA-PPP, Ms. Rana Ansar, MPA-MQM, Mr. Aslam Sheikh, Law Secretary, Ms. Mahnaz Rahman, Resident Director AF, Ms. Mussrat Jabeen, Deputy Director WDD, Ms. Riaz Fatima, Deputy Director Social Welfare and Ms. Rukhsana Siddiqui, Programme Officer WAR. AF staff also attended the event.

Ms. Rubina Brohi gave a general introduction of the programme and its main agenda Ms. Mahnaz Rehman gave an overview of Sindh laws on child marriage and domestic violence. Justice (R) Majida Rizvi focused on gaps and loopholes in the law. Mr. Aslam Sheikh, Secretary Law focused on the role of NGOs, social activists, police department and government to achieve the goal of equal rights for women. Ms. Rukhsana highlighted the various problems and issues still faced in dealing with cases of child marriages and domestic violence. Ms. Saira Shahliani emphasized the role of

Parliamentarians in passing the bills and appreciated the efforts of Aurat Foundation and various NGOs. Ms. Anis Haroon, descriptively highlighted the role of the media, police, government and NGOs in playing a part in giving awareness to the people about the laws.

4.12 Plight of women and girls with disabilities highlighted on International Day of PWDs

Aurat Foundation, in collaboration with STEP, US Embassy, Sight Savers, Serena Hotels, Ministry of Law, Justice and Human Rights, and Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), arranged an event titled ‘Policy Dialogue: Towards a Disability-Inclusive Post-2015 Development Framework’ on 3 December 2015 in Serena Hotel, Islamabad. This marked the International Day of Persons With Disabilities (PWDs).



An android application developed for the support of PWDs was also launched on the occasion. It was announced that the persons with disabilities (PWD) and their families will now be able to get complete information about the facilities available for PWDs through a new Android mobile application – DIVE. Through this first-ever Android mobile application for PWDs, information regarding the facilities available in both public and private sectors such as lists of education and rehabilitation centres, employment opportunities, laws, guidelines for CNIC registration, will become accessible for every disabled citizen of the country.

The application, launched by Special Talent Exchange Programme (STEP) with the support of International Foundation of Electoral System (IFES), was unveiled in a policy dialogue on ‘Towards a disability -- inclusive post 2015 development framework Pakistan perspective’ organised by the Ministry of Human Rights, Special Talent Exchange Programme (STEP), National Commission on the Status of Women, Sight Savers, United States Embassy, National Forum for Women with Disability and Aurat Foundation.

The policy dialogue brought together leaders of PWDs, development experts and decision-makers to initiate a process of inclusion of PWDs who are still the uncounted and unheard citizens of the country. Ms. Munazza Gilani, Country Director Sightsavers, Mr. Neal Murata, Cultural Attaché US Embassy, Ms. Vibeke Jensen, Country Director

UNSECO, Ms. Rabeea Hadi, Director Advocacy & EAW, Barister Zaffar Ullah Khan, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Human Rights, Mr. Muhammad Hassan Mangi, DG Human Rights, Mr. Atif Sheikh, Mr. Abdullah Abdur Rehman Khan, Manager CSR Telenor Pakistan, Syed Sardar Pirzada, Senior Journalist, Ms. Ayesha Khan, Deputy Manager, Corporate Strategy Serena Hotel, Mr. Ashtar Ausaf Ali, Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Law and Justice & Mr. Ole Holtved, Country Director IFES participated in the event.



Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Law, Justice and Human Rights Mr. Ashtar Ausaf was the chief guest. He stressed on a collaborative effort to empower PWDs. He said it is in fact the disability of society if they were unable to understand and accommodate persons with disability. He said the issue is not only that of accessibility of infrastructure but also of the accessibility of our minds. He pointed out that the issue of PWDs should not be parked in the human rights ministry but it must be made part of all policy initiatives of the government.

Ministry of Human Rights' Director General Mr. Muhammad Hassan Mangi said that the International Day for Persons with Disability reminds the government of their constitutional and international commitments to PWDs. He said that inclusiveness of PWDs ensured in SDGs provide an extraordinary opportunity to implement the national and international commitments.

Mr. Ole Holtved said that STEP and ISEF are developing information resources for PWDs. Senior journalist Syed Sardar Peerzada said persons with disability remain unaware of the political situation mainly because Pakistani media is also not disability friendly.

Ms Rabeea Hadi, Director Advocacy & EAW, Aurat Foundation, talked about violence against women with disability.

National Forum for Women with Disabilities Chief Executive Officer Abia Akram stressed for the need to make sustainable plans for the empowerment of persons with disability, especially women with disability.

4.13 Ms Mahnaz Rahman received Recognition Award at Voice of Frails seminar

Ms Mahnaz Rahman, Resident Director, Aurat Foundation received a recognition award for her invaluable support and contribution towards “making a difference today and for generations to come”. The award was presented in a seminar “Voice of Frails” organized by Dar-ul-Sukoon at PC Karachi on October 3, 2015, to create awareness about problems faced by much neglected senior citizens.



4.14 International day for person with disabilities celebrated

Aurat Foundation organized an awareness programme and seminar on International Day for Person with Disabilities (PWD) in collaboration with Social Welfare Department under Gender Based-Violence project on 1 December 2015, at the Arts Council of Pakistan, Karachi. The activity aimed at developing co-ordination and linkages among public and private sector. The event was coordinated Social Welfare Department, Government of Sindh and Aurat Foundation, Karachi.



Mr. Shariq Ahmed, Secretary, Social Welfare, Department, highlighted the goals of the social welfare department, and said that the department for PWD established 17 centres, providing education and vocational training to children/adults with disabilities.



Mr. Ashraf Ali Naqvi, Joint Director Labour Department, said that they are working for the welfare of all workers and were attempting to implement the 2% quota for PWDs.

Mr. S.M. Nishat, General Secretary, Association for Physically Handicapped (Adults), briefed participants on the coordination with the Social Welfare Department and activities and programmes such as educational workshops, that were carried out jointly.

Mr. Abdul Aleem Lashari, former Director, Social Welfare Department, said that all concerned should work for the implementation of the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities, (UNCRDP) at all levels and also towards the National Policy for persons with disability 2002.

Ms. Durre Shahwar, Senior Member, Karachi Chamber of Commerce, briefed about the role of Chamber of Commerce regarding the observance of 2% employment quota reserved for persons with disabilities.

Ms. Mahnaz Rehman, Resident Director, Aurat Foundaton, said that they are working with the public / private sector and for the betterment of laws.

4.15 Parliamentarians' role in eliminating violence against women stressed -- 16 Days of Activism

Aurat Foundation, in collaboration with the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) organised a study circle on November 25, on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The study circle was organised at the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS),



Islamabad. Participants included women members of the National Assembly, who are also members of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus, women journalists and representatives of civil society.

Parliamentarians who attended the study circle included Dr. Fauzia Hameed MQM, Ms. Asia Naz Tanoli PML-N, Ms. Mussarat Rafique PPPP, Dr Shazia Sobia, PPPP, Ms Suraiya Jatui, PPPP, Ms Shahida Rehmani, PPPP, Ms. Shakila Luqman Chaudhry, PML-N, Ms. Shazia Ashfaq, PML-N, Ms. Naseema Hafeez Panezai PMAP, Ms. Munazzia Hasan PTI, and former MNA and member Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) Dr. Samia Raheel Qazi.

The theme was titled ‘Significance of 16 Days of Activism and Role of Parliamentarians in Elimination of Violence against Women’. The study circle was intended to highlight the systemic nature of gender based violence that encourages inequality and discrimination and how women parliamentarians can play an effective role in its elimination.

Ms. Tahira Aurangzeb, MNA, and member WPC briefed the participants on the significance of 16 days of activism and role of parliamentarians. She said that violence against women is not confined to any particular political or economic system, but it prevalent in every society in the world. A World Health Organization’s report reveals that physical and sexual violence against women affects more than one-third of women globally. She said that even though there were constitutional guarantees for women but the situation on ground was very different. While elaborating on the work of the WPC, a cross party forum for women parliamentarians, Ms Aurangzeb said the caucus proposed some of the most innovative legislation including the ‘National Commission on the Status of Women Act 2012, ‘Prevention of Anti-Women Practices Bill, 2011’, ‘The Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Bill 2010’, ‘The Criminal Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010’, and ‘The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill, 2009’.

Prof Farkhanda Aurangzeb, Director Coordination and Resource Mobilization, Aurat Foundation, spoke on the significance of 16 Days of Activism, tracing its historical perspective and relating to our own social systems in terms of attitudes of violence prevalent nationally and globally.

Ms. Rabeea Hadi, Director Advocacy, Aurat Foundation, gave a detailed presentation on the history of the ‘16 Days of Activism’ and the situation of violence in Pakistan.

Situation of Violence Against Women (VAW) during January – June 2015 period

Offences Against Women	No of Cases
Kidnapping / abduction	1,020
Murder	709
Rape / gang rape	596
Suicide	399
‘Honour’ killing	186
Domestic violence	256
Sexual assault	36
Acid throwing	30
Burning	23
Miscellaneous	1,053
Total	4,308

Mr. Syed Shamoan Hashmi, Joint Secretary, Project Management Unit (PMU), National Assembly, talked about how social attitudes and domestic environment contribute towards violence against women.

Ms. Shahida Akhtar Ali, MNA, concluded the study circle. She paid tribute to the first and only women pilot Marriyum Mukhtar, who died in a plane crash during a training flying session yesterday.

The participant all agreed that more collective efforts is required. They also said that there is a notable absence of state response and larger framework that needs to strengthen including institutional mechanisms like gender crime cell, women caucuses, national policy framework on VAW (internally displaced, disability).

4.16 HUM AAWAZ Campaign Launched

A provincial level campaign launch event was organized by AAWAZ programme consortium partners, namely Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO), Aurat Foundation, Sungi, and South Asia Partnership Pakistan (SAP- PK), on 30 September, 2015, at Falatti's Hotel. The event was organized to launch the national level campaign 'Aurton Per Tashadud Ke Khilaf Hum AAWAZ'.



Ms. Hameeda Wahuddin, Provincial Minister for Women's Development & Social Welfare Department, prominent legislators particularly members of Women Parliamentary Caucus, Punjab Provincial Assembly, representatives from civil society, government officials and others were also present at the event.

Ms. Hameeda Wahuddin said the government and the Punjab Assembly were trying their best to introduce laws that could help in protecting women. "This abuse is not part of our culture and we must together condemn it on all account. It is a crime", she said.

Mr. Munnu Bhai, renowned writer, said the problem of proving ‘manhood’ in the society was the root cause of violence against women. He said not accepting women as equals was also part of the problem. “Every human being should be a friend, a companion and a helper to the other human being. Women are thought of as weak and helpless but in the long run have been much stronger even than men in most cases.”



Director Planning, social welfare department shared Punjab government’s Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Bill, 2015.

Ms Mumtaz Mughal, Regional Manager, Aurat Foundation, said that the AAWAZ Programme is working towards bringing change in the behaviour of women, girls, men and boys to

create an environment where VAW is not tolerated. According to Aurat Foundation VAW report 2014, more than 7010 cases of violence have been reported. In first six month of 2015 Aurat Foundation VAW report, 2,926 cases have been reported. Many more cases of domestic violence remain unreported. Pakistan’s performance in terms of the Gender Inequality Index (GII) is one of the worst. Pakistan has a GII value of 0.563, slipping down to 126th out of 149 countries in the 2013 index. Pakistan ranks last in women’s participation in the workforce among the SAARC countries. They comprise 42 per cent of the total family labour but are mostly unacknowledged. She further said that domestic violence has become a household terrorism.

Dr Farzana Nazir, MPA from PML-N and Convener Women’s Caucus Punjab said that we should stand up and speak up against domestic violence to help work towards creating prosperous communities. She said there is a need to reduce the social acceptance of violence against women.

Ms. Amina Ulfat, PML Q said that in Pakistan there have been positive changes in women’s rights and gender equality over the past decades such as more women accessing higher education, success stories of women’s economic participation, more women in parliament and participating in the political process.

4.17 Dialogue on rediscover the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) organized by WLP

Ms. Rabeea Hadi, Director Advocacy and Ending Violence Against Women, Aurat Foundation, and Liaison Person of Women’s Learning Partnership, participated in the conference on ‘The World We Seek: Reigniting the Dialogue on Human Security’. She spoke on the ‘rule of youth in combating extremism – a case study from Pakistan’. The conference was organized on 14 September, 2015, at the Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies, Washington DC. The objective of the conference was to rediscover the Universal Declaration of Human



Rights (UDHR). Women's Learning Partnership for Rights, Development, and Peace (WLP) and the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies invited the women leaders from all over the world for the conference, which was organized in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing. Discussants focused on the relationship between human, social, economic, and environmental rights and development and peace. They shared proven models for alleviating poverty, improving health and sanitation and countering violent extremism.

4.18 Aurat Foundation demanded support for acid attack victims

Aurat Foundation and Dastgir Legal Aid Center, along with two acid victims and their families held a press conference, on August 25, 2015, Karachi, to demand medical treatment and financial help for the victims.

It was demanded that shops selling acids should be sealed. The law is in place but not implemented. There are also many glitches in the system, which allows the perpetrators to flee without being convicted. Better police investigations, trials and treatment for victims was demanded. It was highlighted that offenders should be given severe punishments, to set an example for the future and financial help should be provided to the survivors.

4.19 Ms Mahnaz Rahman Receives 'Women Excellence Award'

Ms. Mahnaz Rahman, Resident Director, Aurat Foundation's Karachi office received the 'Women Excellence Award' at the International Conference on Women Leadership, held on Pakistan's Independence Day, the 14 August 2015. The Award, which was presented by Ms. Reham Khan, is given to seasoned women professionals in various categories on the exemplary services rendered by them in their respective fields.



Other recipients of the award include Ms. Maryam Nawaz, Dr. Fehmida Mirza, Ms. Mahira Khan and Ms. Tahira of Army Public School, Peshawar. Ms. Sherry Rehman, Senator PPP, and Mr. Nisar Khuhro, Minister for Information, Sindh, were among the speakers at the conference, and Ms Reham Khan was the Chief Guest.

4.20 Dr Abdul Hayee Baloch visits Aurat Foundation

Dr Abdul Hayee Baloch, former Member National Assembly (MNA) and Senator, visited Aurat Foundation Quetta office on 13 August, 2015. He discussed in detail the new emerging political dimensions of Balochistan in the perspective of Gwadar Mega Project and Pak-China economic corridor. Showing his concerns he said that it seems the benefits will only be for China only and it does not provide any development for Balochistan or Pakistan.



During the discussion he highlighted lacunae in the electoral and local government systems of Pakistan. He said that members of the provincial assembly do not want to transfer the powers to grass root levels and keep the budget intact, which causes failure of the local government system.

The topics under discussion were the current political situation in Balochistan, Pakistan's foreign policy with neighbouring countries and provincial autonomy. Dr. Abdul Hayee said that, there is a major security risk in Balochistan and democracy is the only way to overcome the issues currently prevailing in the province. He said that, his struggle will continue for the rights of Balochistan. He stressed that every individual should play his/her part for the prosperity of Balochistan and Pakistan. He praised the efforts of Aurat Foundation for playing a leading role in the development of society and thanked staff for sparing their time for the meeting. At the end, Mr. Haroon Dawood, Resident Director AF, Quetta, handed over AF publications and reading material to Dr. Hayee.

4.21 Acid attack condemned



Aurat Foundation's Karachi office organized a demonstration to condemn acid attack on a 19 years old girl. The demonstration was held on Friday, August 7, 2015, near the Sindh Assembly building. Several civil society organizations and human rights activists also joined in the

demonstration to express solidarity with the families of victims. While speaking on the occasion, Ms Mahnaz Rahman, Resident Director, AF, said it is a very painful situation that during the last two months 4 acid burn cases were reported in Karachi. She lamented on the non-implementation of the Acid Control and Crime Prevention Act, 2011 passed by the National Assembly.

Chapter Five
Support for Civil Society
Organizations



5. Support for Civil Society Organizations

Gender Equity Program - GEP is a grant-making programme being implemented in collaboration with the Asia Foundation, funded by USAID. It will extend over 400 grants to civil society organizations and governmental gender entities. It has four key objectives:

- i. women's access to justice and human rights
- ii. women's economic empowerment
- iii. combating gender-based violence, and
- iv. capacity-building of Pakistani organization.

Gender Equity Program achieved following outreach and mobilization targets:

- 1,956 women home based workers were mobilized
- About 308 selected women home based workers were trained as master trainers through a total of 30 Training of Trainers (TOTs)
- 12 Trade Facilitation Centres (TFCCs) were established in 12 districts to facilitate women home based workers
- 14 advocacy activities sensitized 1,372 key stakeholders (725 women and 647 men)
- 41 Women workers conventions were organised in 15 districts of Pakistan.
- 6,475 women workers and 890 men workers also participated in these conventions
- 1,762 women workers were sensitized about their rights through 62 trainings
- 219 women employer and 268 men employers were oriented about workers laws and work environment in 25 sessions
- 378 women leaders were trained to take forward GEP objectives beyond GEP. They have further reached out to 1898 women workers through 66 rollout activities
- 14 district level networks established in 14 districts of Pakistan. In addition, one District Women Protection Network was also established in Skardu, GB.
- 1,326 GBV survivors were provided services like shelters, psycho social counselling, legal counselling, legal aid and helplines services.

In July 2014 Grant Cycle 7A was launched. A total of 27 sub-grants were awarded under this grant cycle out of which 14 completed their performance period on 30 September, 2015.

5.1 AF and FWBL signed MoU to provide financial services to unbanked women

First Women Bank Limited (FWBL) and Aurat Foundation (AF) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at a prestigious ceremony held at Islamabad on May 26, 2016. The event was organized to showcase the products developed under 'Women Making Strides in Economic Empowerment' and focusing on how Gender Equity Programme (GEP) has developed a linked progress on helping women grow economically under USAID grant and recognizing the role of National Advisory Forum of GEP.



The MoU was inked by Ms. Tahira Raza, President FWBL and Ms. Anis Haroon, AF Senior Representative. Ms. Simi Kamal, Chief of Party GEP, AF and Ms. Fouzia Janjua, SVP/ Coordinator Development Cell and Strategic Initiatives witnessed the signing of MoU.

The FWBL and AF are determined to work together to strengthen, promote and create new value with an aim to provide financial services at doorsteps to unbanked women. The FWBL and AF have join hands and shown commitment to serve the women of Pakistan by changing their role from passive beneficiaries of social support to active catalyst of change and economic empowerment.

Under the MOU responsibilities FWBL will create a platform for empowering women for inculcating the habit to save money as well as get access to finance to establish new business and or develop existing business. FWBL will enhance women's economic



empowerment through capacity building, skills development and by imparting trainings on banking products, customer service delivery and support.

AF will share complete data of women population along with network support with FWBL and enable FWBL in contacting them. AF will also facilitate FWBL in identification of clusters in respective geographical regions in order to develop tailor made banking products and services that can help FWBL in the economic empowerment of Women of Pakistan.

The event was attended by leading women activists, female judges and prominent lawyers, representatives from academia, GEP Pakistan Gender Coalition members, GEP female beneficiaries from different provinces, USAID representative, media and press.

5.2 Supporting female graduates' access into IT launched

Launching ceremony of USAID-supported Project 'Supporting Female Graduates' Access into Information Technology Sectors through Internship Programs', a collaboration between Hamdard University and Aurat Foundation's Gender Equity Programme (GEP), was organized on 20 April, 2016, at Hamdard University's Madinat-ul-Hikmah campus, Karachi. The event was attended by representatives of corporate sector, universities, academia, NGOs, and media. Ms. Naushaba Khalid, Director K&N Foods, Pakistan, was the Chief Guest at the occasion.

The event highlighted key activities and objectives of the project which aims to link fresh IT graduates to the market in terms of the internships and job opportunities available in IT Sector. The project will equip 120 female IT graduates with employable IT skills along with the knowledge on women friendly environment, gender sensitization and laws on women protection.



Ms. Mahnaz Rahman, Resident Director, Aurat Foundation, talked about the critical role GEP has played for the betterment and empowerment of women in Pakistan in the past six years. Dr. Zubair A. Shaikh, President, Muhammad Ali Jinnah University, emphasized the importance of changing the paradigm and enabling more females to take up Information Technology as their career choice. Dr. Humaira Farooq, Head of Computer Science Department Bahria University, talked about the accomplishments made by women in the computing field. Ms. Alia Hasan, Faculty Member, IBA Karachi, spoke about the Career Success of Women.

Chief Guest Ms. Naushaba Khalid said that IT has penetrated a little late in our society and women have been a little wary of stepping into this profession. GEP's initiative through Hamdard University is like opening a door for females to enter the IT profession. She looked forward to assembling again to hear the success stories of these females. Professor Dr. Hakeem Abdul Hannan said that women's contribution is of utmost importance and twice in the history of Hamdard Foundation, at the time of major crises, it were women who led the institute.

5.3 'Enhancing Women's Economic Empowerment' launched

Launching ceremony of USAID supported 'Enhancing Women's Economic Empowerment' project, a joint venture of Aurat Foundation's Gender Equity Programme (GEP) and Management & Development Foundation (MDF), was held on 12 April, 2016, at Arts Council, Karachi. The event was attended by representatives of Women Development Department, CSOs, NGOs, project beneficiaries, and other stakeholders.

MDF, through this project, will train 60 housewives of Sakhi Hassan area in Karachi to cook hygienic food and distribute as lunch boxes to the nearby industries and offices. MDF will also establish their linkages with corporate sector in Karachi who are the end beneficiaries of this project. These women will also be given basic knowledge about developing their small enterprise, market linkages as well as methods to sustain their business beyond the life of this project.



The project objectives and scope were presented in detail to the participants. Ms. Musarat Jabeen, Deputy Director, Women Development Department, Sindh, expressed her appreciation of the project which has provided opportunity to women to take part in change, advance women rights, and reduce poverty at household level. Ms. Mehnaz Rehman, Resident Director, Aurat Foundation, appreciated MDF Management for close coordination and involving all stakeholders for the project launch.

5.4 Post Master General Balochistan visits AF Quetta office

On April 7, 2016, Post Master General (PMG) of Balochistan Mr. Khalid Awais Ranjha visited Aurat Foundation Quetta office. The visit of PMG was planned on his request. During his visit, discussion was made on the background of Aurat Foundation, ongoing projects and sub-grants awarded in Balochistan under Gender Equity Program (GEP).

Mr. Ranjha showed great interest towards the activities of Aurat Foundation in Balochistan and desired to extend his support. In reply Aurat Foundation team thanked him for visiting Quetta office. He was asked to help regional office in spreading women's rights messages, by printing such messages on the back of mailing envelopes

for the awareness of masses. He assured regional team for his complete support and also asked to devise messages that can be printed on the postal envelopes.

At the end of meeting Mr. Haroon Dawood, Resident Director, along with Aurat Foundation's team, thanked PMG for his visit and extending support to regional office for promoting women's rights agenda in Balochistan through messages.

5.5 AF delegation met Honourable Chief Justice of Balochistan High Court

A delegation of Aurat Foundation's Quetta office, comprising Resident Director, Deputy Programme Manager - GEP and IT officer GEP, visited the office of Honourable Chief Justice of Balochistan High Court Justice Muhammad Noor Muskanzai on 1 April 2016. The meeting was planned on the request of Aurat Foundation regional office and a renowned woman lawyer Ms. Irum Mehmood to discuss the issue of the implementation of Anti-Sexual Harassment Act 2010 in the premises of courts, establishment of women friendly spaces and development of Gender Sensitive HR policies for court premises in Balochistan.



Honorable Chief Justice informed the delegation of Aurat Foundation that after the inauguration of Women Friendly Spaces (WFS) established by GEP sub-grantee in session court Sibi, high court of Balochistan has proposed the establishment of WFS in every court premises as the part of new construction and renovation. At the end of meeting, Honorable chief Justice assured the delegation of

every help in the implementation of pro-women laws and policies in the courts of Balochistan.

Chapter Six

Research and Publications

آپ کا ووٹ



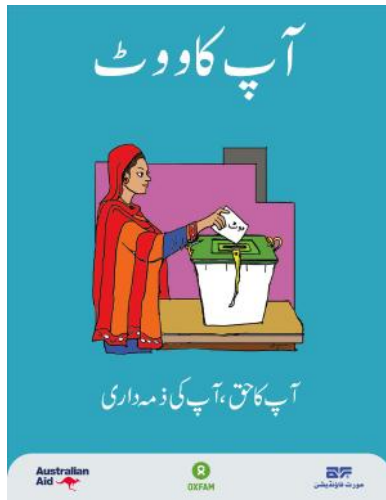
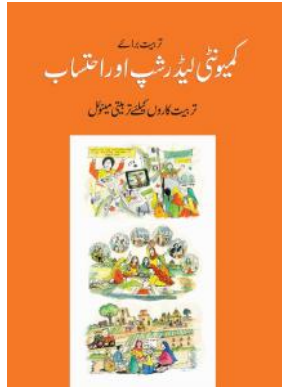
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6 Research and Publications

As the organization's full name suggests - Aurat Publication and Information Service Foundation - we are committed to publication and wide dissemination of material in order to create awareness among women and men regarding the rights of women and girls. In addition to raising awareness, the aim of publishing and dissemination of advocacy flyers and posters is to help create awareness around fundamental human rights and create a demand from ordinary citizens to fight for change. Every year and under every project AF publishes vast amounts of literature ranging from basic information for grassroots level communities, analysis of relevant laws, women's political participation to socio-economic issues that relate to women. Amongst our research we include data on reported cases of violence against women.

Keeping in view the elections and other social issues poster, booklets, manuals, pamphlets, CDs and stickers are published and widely shared to highlight the importance of various issues.

The IEC material is disseminated among participants of various project related activities. These have also been distributed among district partners, local and provincial governments, civil society organisations, community based organisations in 30 (LISTEN) project districts. This material was also distributed to AF district offices, AAWAZ Agahi centres, where a huge number of community members visit and receive information.



6.1 Legislative Watch Newsletter

AF publishes and distributes Legislative Watch newsletters several times a year. The editorial board consists of Wasim Wagha and Benazir Jatoi. It was founded by the late Shahla Zia (1947–2005).

Issue number 45 covered the period May–November 2016 and was published in both English and Urdu. It contains the following articles:

The Punjab Protection of Women Against Violence Act 2016: A Critique (Benazir Jatoi)

Analysis of the 2016 Honour Crimes amendment Act and the Anti-rape Amendment Act 2016 (Benazir Jatoi)

Changes to the Punjab Land Revenue Act 1967 (AF correspondent)

Justice to Justice in Pakistan: Issues and Impediments (AF correspondent)

Issue No. 45

May–November 2016



LEGISLATIVE WATCH



Founded by Shahla Zia

Patron-in-Chief: Nigar Ahmad

EDITORIAL

Legislation to protect women and girls and deter potential violators of the law has seen a very steady pace at the federal and provincial level. This welcome wave of pro women laws has been going strong since 2004. Most new laws enacted are criminal laws that penalise violence against women. Legislators, who introduced the bills and those that debated and voted in favour of the bills, and governments must be commended for proactively performing their basic fundamental duties to the electorate.

However, critical analysis of case law, conviction rates and statistics on violence against women all show that these laws have not yet fully come to life. The perpetrator is not held to account and thus justice is not ensured to the victim. This lack of implementation of the law shows uniformity throughout the country.

Therefore, to celebrate the enactment of law as sufficient would be premature, not only because many pro-women laws presently are fraught with lacunas that need urgent amendments. Law making is certainly the imperative first step. However, the law is a tool. It would remain merely a piece of paper if it does not perform the essential role of aiding women to get justice, ending gender discrimination and ultimately transferring de jure gender equality to de facto equality.

The next step that should be focused on by successive governments and other relevant agencies is collaborative efforts to implement the law. The wave of enactment has been so fast yet the knowledge that a particular law exists is still very sporadic, with essential agencies of the state, such as the police and lower Judiciary unaware of many pro-women laws. The police, lawyers and the judiciary are all agencies and institutions that require an understanding of what laws exist and how they are to be interpreted. For ordinary citizens, particularly women, state sponsored dissemination of the law, in local and laypersons languages, is the essential pre-requisite. Comprehensive and systemic mechanisms between and across various relevant agencies are also part of the implementation process. As are accountable complaint structures to ensure that institutions implementing the law do so transparently and are held to account for digression.

The real force that will bring the law to life, however, is, and has always lied in, political will and commitment. The next step for successive governments must be to work towards laying ground for effective implementation by ensuring that the intention of parliament - that is to ensure justice to the victim - is fully realised. Without political commitment the law will forever remain a tool, significant only on paper.

The Punjab Protection of Women Against Violence Act 2016: A Critique

By Benazir Jatoi

The Punjab Protection of Women Against Violence Act 2016 has created controversy and confusion amongst various groups, including defenders of women's rights. Many have challenged the new Act passed unanimously, through the democratic process, by the Punjab assembly on 24 February, 2016.

The voices of disapproval with the new law were from many fronts, with the loudest being from the religious clergy, who have declared the Act un-Islamic. In Pakistan we have often found it challenging to counter religious rhetoric when a law or policy comes forward that attempts to provide legal or institutional protection to women and girls. Under the clout of religion, right wing and other religiously inclined lobbies and groups have hijacked the debate to portray a picture that protecting women against violence or other adversities is un-Islamic.

The biggest shortfall in the Act is that it is not under the ambit of criminal law. The architects of the Act have brought this law under civil law. The reasons perhaps are two-fold. Firstly, the burden of proof in a civil case is on the balance of probabilities, i.e., more likely than not. This works in favour of women who have to prove that domestic violence did in fact take place. Under criminal law the test on the applicant is to prove their case beyond reasonable doubt. Secondly, the Sindh and Balochistan domestic violence Acts have both been covered under criminal law but in terms of convictions have showed no results in terms of convictions. Also, the criminal justice system is in need of dire reform and it is perhaps more likely that under civil law the matter will be more effectively and expeditiously dealt with.

Human right groups, were rightly disappointed that domestic violence was not criminalised. Among concerns, it is important to meet on one common ground and that is that the Punjab government has attempted to recognize that domestic violence is an offence. That is a small but significant first step. It is now time to ensure wide dissemination of the law, as promised in the legislation itself, to help the government further strengthened the law and most importantly, to hold the government accountable if there is a failure to enforce the law.

This is a clause by clause critique of the Act, to give a better understanding of what the Act entails, what its shortcomings maybe, and how it can be further strengthened. We have only dealt with the clauses that we believe need amending, repeal or those that have created controversy or have been or are most likely to be misinterpreted. The full text of the Act can be found on AF's website www.af.org.pk.

Section 1(3), **Short title, extent and commencement** is problematic because it is not specific as to when it will come into force. Many aspects of the protection mechanisms are through a phased period and the Act is not universally applicable to all parts of Punjab at once. If a woman attempts to use the provisions of this Act today, how will they work in practice?

Definitions

We have emphasised our critique on the definitions provided in the Act, under section 2. This is because they are the fundamental essence of any Act, constantly referred to when interpreting the law. The definitions are not consistent or in places incomplete.

1. We will discuss definitions of an aggrieved person, children and household.

Section 2(a), **Definitions** of the Act defines aggrieved person:

'...a female who has been subjected to violence by a defendant.'

A layperson's understanding of female is an adult woman who can bare offspring. However, a dictionary definition of female reveals that female includes 'of or relating to the sex that can produce young or lay eggs, characteristic of girls or women. <http://www.american-webster.com/dictionary/female>.

The reality in Pakistan is that young girls are often wives and mothers. Hence, for the avoidance of confusion of whether the protections under this Act applies to girls or not, the law needs to further clarify the definition of female. If the Act intends to cover girls as well as women, it will be problematic as to how a girl is dealt with under the law. The needs of young girls are often very different to women.

The Sindh and Balochistan Acts, through custody orders, have covered situations where the victim of violence may be a minor. There should either be a provision that deals specifically with girls or the definition of woman should be broadened to include girls.

Subsection 2(h) defines domestic violence to include violence in a situation where the defendant and aggrieved live or have lived together and '...when

Continued on next page

6.2 AF & Civil Society in Media

Daily Times

Thursday, May 31, 2016

Aurat Foundation rejects CII proposed bill

Bill suggesting beating of women is unconstitutional

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: The National Advisory Forum of Aurat Foundation noted with concern the news item that appeared in a section of press about the Council of Islamic Ideology's proposed "protection of women against violence bill".

The proposed bill asks women to stay away from public life, not receive foreign delegates and for women nurses not to attend to male patients. This bill suggests that a husband should be allowed to "tightly beat" his wife if she does not obey the commands and defies his desires. It further suggests that if a woman does not observe hijab, interacts with strangers and speaks loudly, she deserves beating.

In the meeting Aurat Foundation members strongly rejected the proposed bill and termed it unconstitutional, illegal and in violation of women's rights and fundamental human rights.

The forum further expressed that it considers Parliament as the only body to propose and make laws and expects parliament to withhold all such attempts to curb women's rights in the

name of religion.

The members of the National Advisory Forum include current and former ministers of women development, current and former chairs of the National and Provincial Commissions on the Status of Women, retired judges, women's rights activists, MNAs, MPAs, senators and academics.

Member National Assembly Munaza Hassan said in this context women in our society already fattened up why Maulana Sherani going to legalize it.

Bill proposed by the CII against Punjab Government Women Protection Bill (WPPB) has sparked outrage among the civil society and women organizations wherever it is suggested to keep away the women from public life.

The women organizations regretted that the CII proposed bill has allowed husbands to subject their wives to light beating and disallowed the female nurse to provide health care to male patient. Woman is getting on the nerves of Maulana Sherani, they added.

CII also demanded that provision incorporated in family laws for seeking

permission from first wife for second marriage should be deleted.

Human Rights Commission has described this proposed bill an attempt to open new front against the women. Maulana Sherani looks unaware of the concept of Ijtihad. In terms of women problems he seems to revert to the era when there was no concept of scientific inventions and even Edison had not invented bulb and people used to travel on camels and horses.

If Maulana is so fond of reverting to the past then he should start travelling on camels and horses. He is benefitting from scientific inventions and modern technology fully and on the other hand he is not prepared to accept DNA test as basic evidence in rape cases, the commission stated.

Parliament should not allow anyone to encroach upon women rights in the name of religion, commission stressed.

Social worker Rabia Hadi said 97 per cent parliamentarians are Muslims and they legislate as well. Then why there is any need of CII, she questioned.

Under article 25, women enjoy equal rights with men, she said.

TRIBUNE

Thursday, December 17, 2015

APS attack anniversary

Twin cities stand united to honour victims

People from all walks of life vow to play a part in eliminating terrorism

OUR CORRESPONDENTS

ISLAMABAD, RAWALPINDI

A year after the APS Peshawar attack, the nation still feels the trauma that moved the country to unite against militants. On the anniversary of the attack, educationists, women and human rights activists in Islamabad gathered at the Press Club to show solidarity with the victims.

Aurat Foundation Coordination and Resource Mobilisation Director Farukhanda Aunzeb told The Express Tribune that it is important to protest to let the perpetrators and their fellows know that attacks will not be accepted in the future. "This is to let them know that we have not forgotten and we never will. Today, we are better prepared and alert to watch their activities. Protests are important to create a deterrence and not just because it is an important day to remember but also because we have

learnt from the massacre", she said.

She further added that the terrorists thought their act would scare the masses, but now the extremists have to be on guard. "The reason why schools were off today is not because we are scared but because we wanted to show solidarity with the families and children who lost their lives on this day last year".

Saheera Siddiqui, a student of Viganun Nisa College, said that as a student, she feels strongly about the Peshawar attack. "We are here for those children and their families.

We are here to make a point that we will never stop educating others and ourselves just because of the threat of attacks. The power of education and the pen is strong," she said.

Expressing similar views, Rimsha, a teacher of Malison Montessori School, said that they had gathered to protest to eliminate terrorism from the country. "Children who lost their lives were not at fault and this incident not only left a lasting impact on their families but on all students and teachers across the



IN MEMORY: Locals hold candlelight vigils for APS Peshawar victims on the anniversary of the attack. PHOTOS: REUTERS

country. As a teacher, it was very difficult for me to instill the confidence in students to learn and gain education after the incident," she explained. "Extremism is the reason behind terrorism and we need to stand together against extremism to eradicate it from the society," representative of the Women Action Forum

Mehnaz Rehman said.

Roohi Saif, who lives near Army Public School in Peshawar, said what she witnessed last year was barbaric, horrific and absolutely heartbreaking. "We cannot even begin to imagine what the mothers went through. Every corner of the defence colony had a funeral".

In another speech, Rumana Bashir, an activist, said that last year the majority and minorities gathered here to raise their voices and this year "again we have gathered to voice against terrorism and extremism. We must not tolerate anyone who attacks our children, our schools, our women and innocent ones".

Vigils in Rawalpindi

Politicians, traders, government officials and members of civil society organised a candlelight vigil outside Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) Office to pay homage to the martyrs of Army Public School (APS) Peshawar.

Pictures of the victims were put on display and the participants offered prayers for the departed souls and laid down floral wreaths.

Meanwhile, glowing tribute was paid to the martyrs of APS, by female poets of the region at a function held at Rawalpindi Arts Council (RAC).

The mehfil-e-mushaira was chaired by Lubna Rehan Pirzada, a PML-N MPA. Fakhira Batool and Farheen Chaudhary, both poetesses, were guests of honour on the occasion. Lubna said that being a woman, she could truly feel the sorrow of mothers of the martyred children. It was a tragic incident but they bore it with courage. MNA Ispahanyar Bhandara said the barbarism and cruelty shown by attacking innocent children shows that the attackers had no religion.



Civil society activists stage a rally in Islamabad on Tuesday in connection with International Women's Day. — Photo by Tanveer Shahzad

Women have something to cheer about!



ISLAMABAD: People from different walks of life participating in a rally to mark International Women's Day. — APP

Myra Inam
Islamabad

Rallies, workshops, seminars, roundtable discussions and launches of literary material on women's resilience marked International Women's Day on Tuesday.

People from different sections of society participated in these events where women's rights activists and role models championed the extraordinary work done by Pakistani women at national and international level besides highlighted the need to take assertive measures for bringing women in the mainstream. They agreed that work environment could become conducive for women only with change in the social mindset.

Women of strength shared their inspiring stories, government representatives talked about the digital divide, initiatives taken by the government and women's rights activists highlighted alarming statistics about current situation of women. Women participants encouraged each other with one or the other form of experience sharing, feminist-ability and more than half of this population is that of women who are segregated from the society.

Joint Secretary from Ministry of Law and Justice Humna Chughtai shared with the

participants that with the effort of Advisor to Prime Minister Adhfar Anand and Women Parliamentary Caucus, the government has decided to include separate column for persons with disability in the census form. Nighat Siddiq from Election Commission of Pakistan shared that the Commission has formed a special working group to suggest measures for maximum participation of persons with disability in the next elections.

The event also featured launch of 'Brilliant and Resilient - Pakistan Version', a story book of women leaders with disability written with an aim to celebrate the achievements of women with disabilities in Pakistan.

Launching of Trainees Manual for Women Empowerment Centres (WECs) of Pakistan Built-al-Mal (PBM) took place in Auditorium of National Library of Pakistan, Speaker Balochistan Assembly Haleemah Durranj granted the occasion as a chief guest while Managing Director PBM Director Abul Wahed Sheikh experience sharing, feminist-ability and more than half of this population is that of women who are segregated from the society.

While paying tribute to women, Speaker Balochistan Assembly said that women of Pakistan have really come forward and proven their worth

in all walks of life. She applauded the efforts of PBM in order to provide socio-economic rights to the women of Pakistan.

Harisat Abid Wahedi Sheikh said that PBM was taking tangible measures for the promotion and protection of women rights by accommodating them in the fields of health care, education, economy, re-habilitation and self-reliance.

With its 157 Women Empowerment Centres (WECs), PBM is enabling women of the country to lead an honourable life in the society. Presently about 11,000 trainees are enrolled countrywide and more than thousands of females have been passed out from these centres since 1985.

He said that these centres are now in the phase of upgradation and to equip the women with information and communication skills, modern computer labs are also being established in each centre.

In Rawalpindi, a seminar titled 'Empowering Women for Social Accountability' was organised by the District Government in collaboration with Sustainable Social Development - Organisation (SSDO). Women serving in public offices, civil society representatives and media shared their experiences on

this occasion.

The seminar was addressed by District Coordination Officer Sajid Zafar Dali Assistant Commissioner Rawalpindi Const. Dr. Saleem Javed, District Officer Human Resource Management, Rawalpindi Naria Furveen Sultan, Social Activist Fatima Siddiq and Executive Director SSDO Syed Sanaullah.

Sajid Zafar Dali said that women are making their mark in every field and the time has come to finish quota system as women of Pakistan are now capable, equipped and confident enough to compete with men in all professions.

The day ended with a torch-bearing rally participated by women and men belonging to different sections of the society. The rally was held on the call of Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls (EVAWG) Alliance.

The participants were carrying placards inscribed with slogans in support of equal opportunities for women. The rally started from Super Market and ended in front of National Press Club.

The slogan-chanting crowd sang feminist songs until they reached the press club where women rights activists shared with the media a position paper prepared by EVAWG Alliance for the forthcoming Commission on the Status of Women conference.

Later, women rights activists such as Nasreen Akhtar, Farzana Bari, Abla Akram, Rehana Hasham and Farzana Ahsan addressed the rally and stressed for measures to improve mechanisms for protection and empowerment of women. They expressed support for Women Protection Bill passed by the Punjab government while also pointing out certain gaps in the bill. At the end, they shared the position paper of civil society prepared for the Commission on the Status of Women conference.

The position paper appreciated the enactment of pro-women legislation in recent years and announcement of Action Plan for the Improvement of Human Rights in Pakistan. The paper termed establishment of national commissions on women and human rights a positive step. It also praised increase in number of women possessing Computerized National Identi-

ty Cards (CNIC) and the fact that more women have taken part in the political process. However, the paper expressed concern that in specific areas, women were prevented from voting and participating in elections.

The paper expressed concern that women have not been included as stakeholders in crucial decision-making processes such as the National Action Plan (NAP), negotiations on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and annual budget-making process.

The paper highlights the fact that the laws which are pro-women and girls, lack teeth and enforcement while a patriarchal, misogynist, discriminatory, corrupt and anti-women and girls narrative and concern over girls' and women's health, education and skills training issues. The paper says that overall, social and girls

International Women's Day

Women ride to reclaim public space



'Changing Lanes' sees women reclaim the social space

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD

The capital saw a flurry of cyclists, young and old, women and men, come out to mark International Women's Day.

This is fourth year citizens came out to be part of the activity titled 'Changing Lanes'. The Do Good Mob organised the activity with the aim to encourage women to reclaim the public space, and to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Changing Lanes 2016 is an attempt to empower women. The event was open for all; calling on both men and women to join and show that women empowerment is a unifying cause for everyone.

The ride started with a casual gathering at the Faisal Mosque. Volunteers cheered on cyclists and tied balloons to their bicycles. The ride ended at the Trail 3 parking area. On the way, passersby greeted the riders with smiles and traffic police gave way for the riders to pass.

"Isn't it strange that women cycling are now considered a novelty? Whereas in the 1960s, women could cycle to schools and college; it was normal" said Shama Butt, who cycled along with her three children.

"The response by people of Islamabad has been amazing. And what's important is that we all had a good time," said Fatimah Shah, co-founder of the Do Good Mob.

The event has seen increasing popularity every year, and has gathered the support of Critical Mass Islamabad and the Islamabad Cycling Association.

'Lets stand together'

Meanwhile, The USAID supported Gender Equity Programme of the Aurat Foundation celebrated the achievements of Pakistani women at a joint event titled "Lets stand together", in collaboration with the UN.

"I have been amazed by the many strong



UNIFYING CAUSE: The event was open for all; calling on both men and women to join. PHOTO EXPRESS

women and girls in Pakistan who fight everyday battles against taboos and stigmatised social roles," said UN Women Representative Jamsheer Kazi. "The majority of these women remain unsung heroines. Today I want to recognize Aisha, a 15-year-old child who challenged the tribal traditions through her education and is now half way through her PhD. I

want to highlight the struggles of Durdana, a landless woman and farmer who has freed 1,200 landless women and received land tenancy through a UN Women project, a first for Pakistan," he added.

Aurat Foundation CEO Naeem Mirza said there is a need to implement women empowerment laws in Pakistan. "We have made the

laws and now the debate should be focused on enforcement mechanisms and implementation, because that is not an easy question, particularly in a country like Pakistan where the culture of law does not exist. However, we must do some critical thinking to ensure implementation and enforcement of laws," Mirza said.

Attiya Naseer, a Rawalpindi based domestic worker spoke about her struggle of not being able to find employment despite being educated. "A few years ago, my husband faced some problems and I had to work. After not finding work anywhere I started doing packaging while at home and now my work has grown so much that I have involved other

"I have been amazed by the many strong women and girls in Pakistan who fight everyday battles against taboos and stigmatised social roles

UN Women Representative Jamsheer Kazi

people and even my husband has joined me to increase our output," she said.

Fazeelat, a Kasur home based worker told that she was a teacher, but that her income as a teacher was not enough to support her family. "I got in touch with an NGO that was supporting home based workers and then I gathered other women with me to register a group with 500 members. We work on aadras and produce different kinds of traditional products. This has helped us work on social issues in our region and has generally improved the situation for women in our region," she said.

Students of NCA also performed a beautiful mime on women empowerment, highlighting the struggles of women.



AURAT PUBLICATION AND INFORMATION SERVICE FOUNDATION

ISLAMABAD (Head Office): House No. 16, Main Embassy Road, G-6/4, Islamabad, Pakistan. Tel: 051-2831350-2 Fax: 2831349

LAHORE: House No. 5-6/3, Raja Kamla State Canal Park Gullberg II Lahore 54000, Pakistan. Tel: 042-35959027-9, Fax: 042-35764275

KARACHI: D-3/1, Block-7, KDA Scheme 5 Clifton Karachi 75600, Pakistan. Tel: 021-35874718-35824694-35830195, Fax: 35864885

PESHAWAR: House No. 42-B, Sahibzada Abdul Qayyum Road, University Town, Peshawar 25000, Pakistan. Tel: 091-5704581-2, Fax: 5704576

QUETTA: House No. 57/4 Meeri Fourt Road off Zarghoon Road Quetta, Pakistan. Tel: 081-2821282, Fax 2820957

INFORMATION: <http://www.af.org.pk> - Mail: PO Box No. 1105, Islamabad, Pakistan