



Government of Pakistan
Ministry of Human Rights

HUMAN RIGHTS AWARENESS PROGRAMME



POST -EVENT REPORT

Project: Human Rights Awareness Programme

Activity: Awareness-Raising & Sensitization Session on Women's Rights and Gender-Based Violence for communities in Quetta

Date: 5th September 2023

Venue: Baluchistan Boy Scouts Association, Quetta

Introduction:

Human Rights Awareness Programme, Ministry of Human Rights held an awareness-raising & sensitization events on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) for the local communities of Quetta. The event was organized in line with *activity # “7: Community mobilization at grass root levels through networking and strategic partnerships with NGOs and community-based organizations and local stakeholders to support the organization of events”* mentioned in PC-1 of the project.



As MoHR has its regional offices in all provincial capitals but for district-level outreach, collaboration with the provincial government and district administration was required. To conduct these activities, HRAP collaborated with the Women Development Department, Baluchistan, Baluchistan Commission on the status of women, Social welfare Department and a local NGO namely Aurat Foundation. Aurat Foundation was selected on the basis of their profile, geographical coverage area of intervention, reputation in the communities and quality of services provided by them.

The city of Quetta was identified through the data extracted from HRIMS based on the maximum number of reported and documented GBV cases. HRIMS is a database for documenting Human Rights violations/abuses throughout the country.

The objective of the event was to enhance the understanding of communities regarding the rights of women and girls, GBV, its negative impact on society and ways in which it can be addressed through community-based measures and the role of MoHR in addressing these issues.

The event focused on areas like women's and girls' rights, pro-women laws, institutional, rehabilitation, referral & other protective measures in place for the survivors of GBV.

Almost 145 participants from various communities including women, civil society representatives, lawyers, police officers, education officers, health officials, district administration officers and media participated in these session.

Each event comprised of three main session:

Session-1: Women & Girls Rights and GBV:

Session-2: Pro-Women Laws:

Session-3: Institutional, Rehabilitation, Referral Mechanism and other protective measures

The format of all four events remained the same, and is as follows:

Welcome Address

The session started with the recitation of the Holy Quran. **Mr Adeel Akbar, Assistant Director (HRAP), Ministry of Human Rights** welcomed participants for attending the session and gave a brief overview on the significance of Women's Rights and mandate of Ministry of Human Rights in ensuring the protection of Human Rights.

Session-1

Women & Girls Rights and GBV

This session was facilitated by the following representatives of the Women Development Department, Quetta.

Facilitators:

- 1) Ms. Ambreen Gul, Deputy Director, Women Development Department, Quetta facilitated the session.
- 2) Ms. Rubina Zehri, Manager Women Crises Centre, Quetta



The session was facilitated by a representative of the **Women Development Department, Quetta** who gave a detailed overview of the Women Development Department followed by a comprehensive presentation on Gender-based Violence, covering every aspect of the subject matter. The representative explained in detail the types, causes and outcomes of GBV. While

explaining the types of GBV, **Ms. Ambreen Gul** said that violence isn't only physical, there are other kinds of Violence as well, like Economic and Psychological violence. **Ms. Rubina** said that women constitute more than half of the population of Pakistan. Economic, physical and psychological violence prevents them from joining the formal or informal economy which not only causes harm to the victims and their families but it also hinders the economic progress of the nation as a whole. A woman from the community asked Ms Ambreen, Deputy Director (WDD) about the procedure for registering a complaint with Women Development Department, Quetta to which she replied by explaining in detail the whole procedure.



Session-2: Pro-Women Laws:

This session in all events was facilitated by the following representative of MoHR:

Facilitator:

Mr Shahzad Ahmad Khan, Director-IC, Ministry of Human Rights

A detailed presentation on pro-women laws was delivered by a representative from the Ministry of Human Rights. ***Mr Shahzad Ahmad Khan, Director-IC*** explained in detail the Primary Legislation on Violence against Women that included The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013, The Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010 etc. He explained in detail the laws for protection against GBV, their sections, offences and punishments. These included Anti-Women Practices (Customs), Offences related to marriage, Offences related to property, Protection against rape crimes, Offences related to rape, Offences related to Trafficking and Kidnapping, Offences related to hurt, Prevention against Acid Crimes, Protection against Harassment, Protection against honour killing, Protection of Women against Violence.



- The session on various laws in Baluchistan related to women's rights and GBV was also facilitated by ***Ms. Fauzia Shaheen, Baluchistan Commission on the Status of Women*** and ***Ms. Farkhanda Aurangzeb NCHR, Member Baluchistan***.



Session-3: Institutional, Rehabilitation, Referral Mechanism and other protective measures

This session was facilitated by the following representative of the NGO (Aurat Foundation) that collaborated with MoHR for this activity:

Facilitators:

1) Mr Alahuddin Khilji, Resident Director, Baluchistan

A brief session on the role of the following departments; Women Development Department, Quetta, National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR), Social Welfare Department Quetta was facilitated by *Mr Alahuddin Khilji, Resident Director Aurat Foundation*.

He explained in detail the established Referral System and the Internal Provincial Dept., National Commission for Human Rights, Provincial Commission on the Status of Women, Office of the Honorable Ombudsperson, Law Department Women Development, Department Social Welfare, Literacy and Special Education Department Police, Anti-Narcotics,



Dar-ul-Aman, Shelter Homes (SBBWC), Child Protection Units, Drug Rehab Centers, PDMA, Help line 1089, Gender Desks, Women Safety Application. A directory of all Institutional, Rehabilitation, Referral systems and other protective measures including complete addresses, focal persons and helpline numbers of relevant departments and organizations throughout the province was distributed among the participants.

Questions and Answers Session:

A Q&A session was held at the end of each event, where participants were encouraged to ask questions, participate and give feedback & suggestions.

Recommendations / Feedback / Suggestions:

- It was suggested by a community member that although there are laws addressing almost every crime in Pakistan, their implementation is very poor. The community member suggested forming better implementation and enforcement agencies.
- A community member suggested that though there are heavy penalties for violations of laws, very seldom the perpetrators are punished, citing examples from her community.
- A community member said that along with women empowerment, the government should also initiate programs on poverty eradication, since it's the prevalent cause of violence in Quetta.
- A community member suggested that such session should also be held in far flung areas in Baluchistan among various communities in Pishin, Mastung, Nasirabad etc. where the awareness level is very low and violation rate is very high.

- A Transperson from Quetta also attended the session. She suggested that Government of Pakistan should take steps to stop the reversal of Transgender Protection laws, without which transgender and gender diverse people will be even more at risk of harassment, discrimination and violence.

Media Coverage

State media was also invited to the session as it helps in reaching a broader audience and includes not only local audiences but potentially global ones through online platforms. The session was given media coverage by Voice of America VoA, Hum News etc. Moreover, the post about the session was also shared on MoHR's social media handles i.e. Twitter and Facebook etc.

Significance & Projected Impact

The impact of the session on the prevention of gender-based violence (GBV) and promotion of pro-women laws in Quetta is significant and far-reaching. The session contributed to raising awareness and understanding of the issue of GBV and the laws that are in place to protect women. By engaging with local communities and stakeholders, the session helped to create a dialogue and foster a culture of zero-tolerance for GBV.

Moreover, the session provided survivors of GBV with a sense of empowerment and a platform to share their experiences, which can be instrumental in promoting healing and recovery. The session also provided valuable training and resources for law enforcement officials, community leaders, and service providers, enabling them to better respond to and prevent GBV.

Overall, the impact of the session is likely to be long-lasting and will contribute to a safer and more equitable society for women in the region of Quetta.