

AURAT Newsletter

January - June 2015

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AF strengthening community engagements and promoting local actions

Social mobilization of local communities to form their groups and networks is a major focus area of Aurat Foundation work under a rights-based framework. AF perceives social mobilization as a strategy as well as an objective to create, develop and preserve social capital in Pakistan. AF has engaged and mobilized 1.1 million people including 1.0 million women under different projects during January-June, 2015. LISTEN and LATEW has engaged 9,656 people including 5,240 women through youth front campaign on women representation in local government elections and trainings on gender responsive budgeting.

Under AAWAZ, 48,106 people including 23,128 women have been engaged in local AAWAZ Village/Union Council/Tehsil and District Forums including 3,056 women leaders who have been elected as office bearers in the forums and 130 women who runs the AAWAZ Aagahi Centre in 130 Union Councils of 13 AF's Districts of AAWAZ. In addition, 12,126 people including 6,218 women have been given awareness raising sessions on citizen state relationship, governance and accountability.



Social Mobilization Waseela-e-Taleem Program has mapped 603,521 women, registered 355,964 women, formed 30,921 BISP Beneficiary Committees and enrolled 532,337 children (5-12 years) in public and private schools.

National Sensitization Workshop



Sitting Ground Row (R to L): Sumera Malik, Shireen Khan, Shirin Javed and Shumaila Jan, AF.

Sitting (chairs) Row 2(R to L): Ms. Nusrat Sehar Abbasi, MPA (Sindh) PML-F, Ms. Nafeesa Inayatullah Khattak, MNA PTI, Ms. Shahida Akhtar Ali, MNA JUI-F, Ms. Mussarat Ahmed Zeb, MNA (Indep.), Ms. Shaista Pervaiz, MNA PML-N and Secretary WPC, Ms. Kishwer Zehra, MNA MQM, Shaheen Shafique, MNA PML-N, Ms. Jamila Gilani, Ex-MNA ANP and Ms. Zareen Zia, MPA (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) PTI.

Standing Row (R to L): Mr. Asad Mehmood, AF, Mr. Danish Bhutto, WPC, Mr. Wasim Kazmi, WPC, Mr. Muhammad Mushtaq, Joint Secretary Law, National Assembly Secretariat, Ms. Rabeea Hadi, Director Advocacy and EVAW AF, Ms. Shazia Ashfaq Mattu, MPA PML-N, Mr. Younas Khalid, CSP AF, Naeem Ahmed Mirza, COO AF, Ms. Surriya Asghar, MNA PML-N, Ms. Naila Syed, In-charge Women Political Cell JI, Ms. Uzma Zarrin, Director Programs AF and Dr Rakhshinda Parveen, Consultant and Founder Creative Anger by Rakhshi.

A two-day national sensitization workshop was held with women parliamentarians at Pearl Continental Hotel, Bhurban on April 1st and 2nd, 2015. Members of National Assembly (MNA's) representing different political parties from the four provinces and federal region and Members Provincial Assembly from Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as well as political and civil society leaders participated in the workshop. Women Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) facilitated parliamentarians from different parties for participation in the workshop.



Ms. Kishwer Zehra, MNA MQM is asking a question. To her right is Ms. Mussarat Ahmed, independent MNA and on her left is Ms. Jamila Gillani, ex-MNA, senior politician and Joint Sec. Central Committee ANP.



Ms. Nafeesa Inayatullah Khattak giving her remarks during the role play on networking.

The workshop was organized to enhance the knowledge of newly elected women parliamentarians on legislative process (moving bills or resolution) and to develop a network mechanism among women caucus. Total of 40 participants including thirteen women MNAs and two women MPAs were trained and informed on drafting and moving bills, resolutions and motions, raising calling attentions notices and point of orders, putting questions and asking supplementary questions, primary and secondary legislations, gaps in the current laws, network and alliance building and UN SDGs and MDGs through presentations, group discussions and role plays.

National Strategic Planning Workshop

On June 25, 2015, one day strategic thinking workshop was held consisting of 44 key staff members comprised of directors, program, managers/leads M&E and QA team and senior team members from finance, admin and operations from national and regional offices of AF. Among major highlights of the workshop included context analysis (expert opinion followed by groups reflections on changing context), status update of the previous strategic plan – revisiting strategic directions, sharing internal and external strategic directions, stakeholder analysis (awareness, sensitization and input of various stakeholders on GE&WE, update on women's movement and its role in current and future scenario, AF's Outreach, networking and partnership management and how it is linked to advocacy, key advocacy issues and challenges.

The workshop participants shared their thoughts on changing political economy's situation and trends and its impact on development agenda and future discourse. The workshop enriched the team's vision which is transformative to the future programme directions and strategic guidelines after some further deep down internal and external discussions and analysis.



The Women Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) and Aurat Foundation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Tuesday, May 19, 2015. Under this MoU, the parties have agreed to collaborate, on a non-exclusive basis, with each other, to address critical issues of concern for women including eradication of gender based violence. They will hold joint conferences and briefings according to a mutually developed schedule and will hold discussions on existing pro women laws, procedural and implementation gaps and required actions.



MoU with Women Parliamentary Caucus

ECP declares PK-95 by-election null and void for barring women from voting



By-elections were ordered in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa constituency of PK-95 (Lower Dir-II) for KP assembly after Jamaat-e-Islami leader Siraj-ul-Haq vacated his seat for a position in the Senate. JI's candidate Izazul Mulk Afkari won the elections as Awami National Party's Haji Bahadar Khan came in second place. However, around 54,000 women in Lower Dir were barred from voting in the by-elections which goes against Pakistan's Constitution in which every woman has fundamental freedom, like men, to offer their opinion and cast vote.

Aurat Foundation, civil society organizations and human rights activists raised their voice against this act and said that further legislation should be proposed for future elections. Casting of women votes was cited as mandatory and re-election should be announced after declaring the by-elections as null and void. AF's Saima Munir said that if the issue of women's disenfranchisement had been resolved by the Supreme Court in the 2013 by-elections then this case of not granting women their basic right to vote would not have emerged.

The Election Commission of Pakistan ordered re-polling in PK-95 on 2nd June but that decision was stayed by the Peshawar High Court on 16th June.

Updates on Local Government Elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

As LG elections were announced in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, therefore major activities and focus during the reporting period in KP under AAWAZ program was towards initiating and implementing the AAWAZ UTHA campaign. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa all 5 districts carried out dialogues with mainstream political parties and community for enhanced participation of people as voters.

The purpose of the campaign was to increase the participation of women and excluded groups as candidates. The dialogues in the local government elections focused on nomination of more women to contest election on Tehsil and District level on general seat.



- The political parties representatives shared the mandate of their respective parties
- They shared the status of women according to their party manifesto
- They assured that they will support women at every stage of political participation
- The women of all parties will contest the election for women special seats
- At village level political parties would support the female candidates



Women Candidates who submitted nomination papers in KP districts of AAWAZ is given below



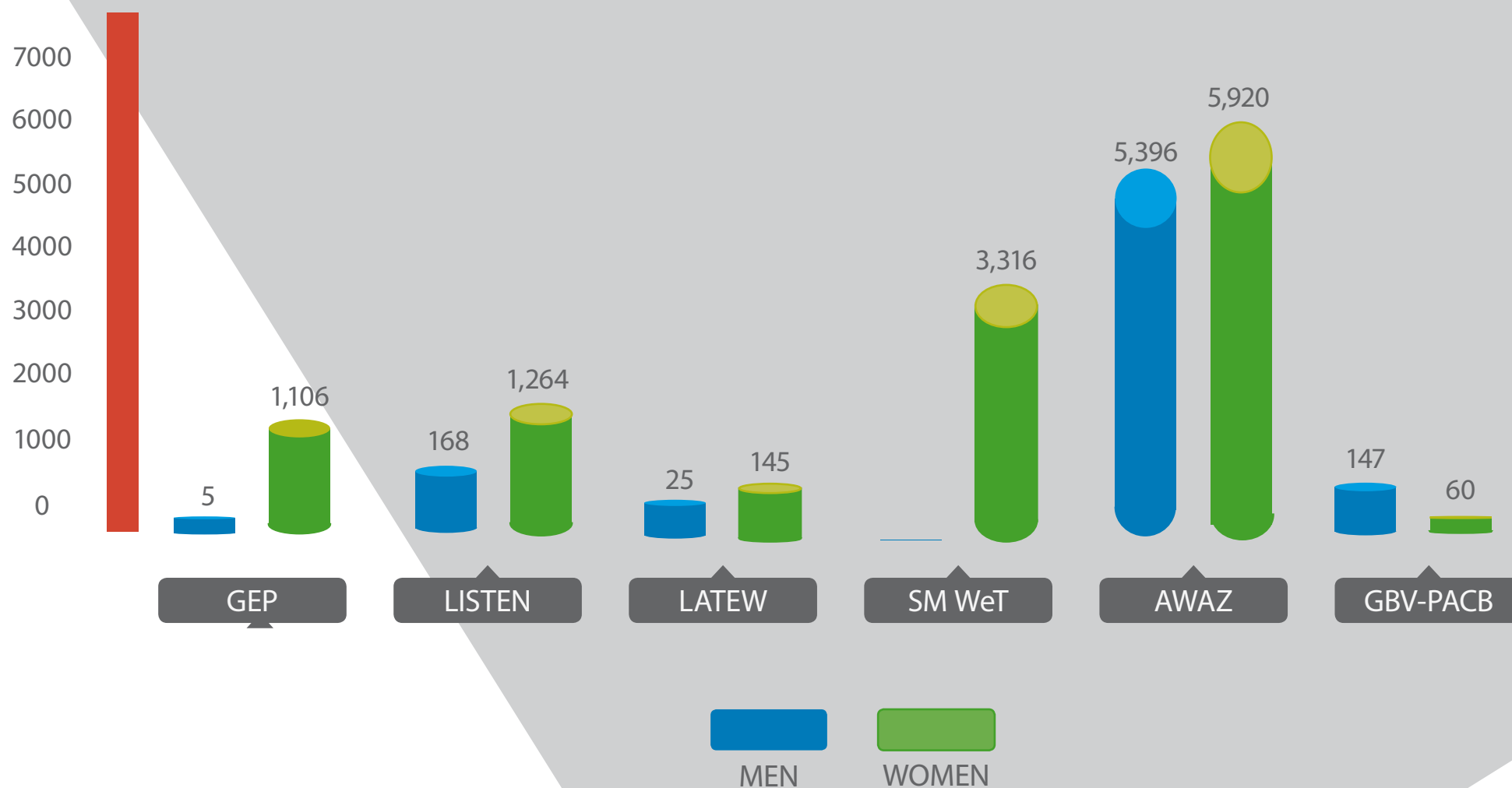
Enhancing capacities



Aurat Foundation has facilitated 16,441 people including 10,705 women to increase their knowledge and skills under different projects. Under LISTEN, 1,432 people including 1,264 women have been given awareness on community governance, social accountability, gender budget tracking, early child marriages and violence against women. In GEP 1,111 people including 1,106 women have been trained. Under LATEW, 145 women including 50 women leaders have been trained on gender responsive budgeting, accountability and transparency.

Under social mobilization Waseela-e-Taleem program, 3,136 women leaders have been provided awareness on WeT program, case management, role of women leaders and BISP Beneficiary Committees in child enrolment and linkages of women leaders with Tehsil and District offices of BISP. In AAWAZ program, 12,126 people including 6,218 women have been given awareness raising sessions on citizen state relationship governance and accountability. In GBV Policy, Advocacy and CB program, capacity building sessions have been conducted with 207 people including 60 women from police, judiciary, medical and legal institutions.

The figure below shows the number of people received trainings in different projects



Study circles to promote cross-party consensus on gender-based legislation

Based on the findings of Anti Women Practices Act (AWPA) research, the gaps identified served as a guide to work on the effective implementation of AWPA at national, provincial and district level.



For this purpose six study circles were organized, where the scope and theme were not confined to AWPA only because in last study circles in Islamabad and Peshawar region the focus was on sensitizing parliamentarians and relevant officials on Gender Responsive Budgeting at the national and provincial level.

Visit of Chairperson BISP

Ms. Marvi Memon, Chairperson, Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) visited AF Loralai field unit along with Federal Secretary BISP, Provincial and Regional Directors. She met with the field staff and with BISP Beneficiary Committee (BBC) members. The Chairperson met with both active and pending beneficiaries and beneficiary mothers at the venue and discussed the benefits and impacts of the project and assured them of BISP's long term support to them.



“My special focus and serious intentions are towards education. I want to visit each village but the busy schedule does not allow me to do this but I am ready for every kind of support to the mothers and ask from all of you to enroll your children in school and I need your help and support to achieve primary education for all.”

Marvi Memon
(Chairperson BISP)

Updates on GEP Grant Cycles

Grant Cycle 7A

Under Grant Cycle 7A entitled, "Promoting livelihoods for informal sectors workers and awareness-raising and policy advocacy on women's rights and labor laws for women workers" GEP awarded 27 grants. GEP is training Home Based Women Workers (HBWWs) on Product Ideation & Designing, Product Development & Prototype and Sample Production & Input Supplies Integration to expand their businesses and earn profits on their sales. Furthermore, the Trade Facilitation Community Centers being developed under Grant Cycle 7A provide a space where HBWWs can display and sell their products. Furthermore, HBWWs are being empowered via trainings on labor laws and women's rights. The activities for the 27 sub-grants are successfully underway. The completion date of these activities will be between October-December 2015.

Grant Cycle 7B

Grant Cycle 7B has three themes: 1) advocacy campaign for allocation and rehabilitation of women-friendly spaces; 2) supporting women graduates access to IT sectors through internship programs; 3) innovative approaches to promoting women economic empowerment. A total of 19 sub-grants are functional under grant cycle 7B with three on hold until incremental funding is received from USAID.

Grant Cycle 8

Grant Cycle 8 focuses on "Strengthening district bar associations and setting up facilitation kiosks in district courts." Formal approval for the 13 sub-grants under this cycle came through from USAID and GEP finalized their program descriptions. These revisions have been made to incorporate slight modifications in the format arrangement of the program description and feedback from Monitoring Evaluation and Research unit to synchronize program description with the budget.

Grant Cycle 9A

Grant Cycle 9A focuses on "Strengthening Seamless Service Delivery" and is envisaged to consolidate the grants of Grant Cycle 6A. Grant Cycle 9A focuses on filling in gaps in provision of seamless service delivery to GBV survivors that were not part of the piloted scheme under Grant Cycle 6A. GEP has encouraged public/private partnerships by supporting both private and government shelters. Based on the experiences of cycle 6A, GEP has developed GBV seamless service models in 6 regional hubs during cycle 9A. These hubs include Lahore, Karachi, Islamabad, Baluchistan, Khyber Pukhtunkhwa, Southern Punjab and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. From April-June 2015, Islamabad, Muzaffargarh, Karachi & Azad Jammu and Kashmir hub packages were completed.

Grant Cycle 10

GEP held a Pre-Grant Orientation Meeting on 8th June, 2015 at Aurat Foundation's Head Office in Islamabad. The objective of the meeting was to discuss the sub-grant for "Strengthening & Consolidating Gender Equity Program's Pakistan Gender Coalition (PGC)." GEP will award a sub-grant to a Pakistani organization with the objective of streamlining and facilitating engagement with approximately 250 member organizations of the Pakistan Gender Coalition, a key initiative of GEP.

Grant Cycle 11

Grant cycle 11 on "Expanding women's access to justice" was solicited on 5th April, 2015. Five pre-grant orientations workshops were conducted for grant cycle 11 in Islamabad, Lahore, Quetta, Peshawar and Karachi AF office. A total of 126 proposals were received against 11 sub-grants.

Grant Cycle 12A

Grant Cycle 12A will focus on engagement with 13 public universities on a non-competitive basis. GEP has finalized its Terms of Reference that were endorsed by Program Steering Committee on 22 May, 2015. The objective of this grant cycle is to strengthen and support gender and women's studies departments, as well as other departments running gender studies and related courses, at identified public sector universities across Pakistan.

Grant Cycle 12B

On great demand from men lawyers after the success of GEP grants awarded under the theme of "Supporting Women to Join Law Enforcement and Judicial System", a second set of repeat sub-grants to 'Encourage both women and men lawyers to provide services to GBV survivors' will be awarded under grant cycle 12B. The objective is to link them with shelters and helplines, strengthen GEP's resource pool of lawyers and use the resource material developed under cycle 2 for a 3-month paid internship with law firms. The Terms of Reference of grant cycle 12B are currently being finalized and will be solicited in June-July to start in GEP Year Six (Oct. 2015-Sept. 2016).

National Advisory Forum Meeting

The National Advisory Forum (NAF) serves as an advisory body for GEP consultation and brainstorming on strategies for gender equity and equality. It offers broad policy guidelines to GEP and aligns the program with the government of Pakistan's national and international commitments to gender. The Ninth National Advisory Forum (NAF) meeting was held on 25th to 28th May, 2015.

The meeting proved to be a highly successful event which effectively addressed the overall agenda which was to ensure more synergy between NAF and GEP's regional teams. Provincial ministers presented on the initiatives underway in their provinces in context to women's empowerment. Provincial/regional work plans also emerged from the group work done during the meeting between NAF members and GEP staff. Furthermore, job descriptions of GEP team staff members were also revised during this meeting.



(l to r) Ms. Simi Kamal, Chief of Party – GEP, Justice (r) Majida Rizvi, Dr. Masuma Hasan, President – AF, Mr.Naeem Mirza, Chief Operating Officer – AF on Day – 2 of the Interaction of NAF at Provincial/Regional Level meeting.

International Women's Day Activities

On 3rd March, 2015 a press conference was held by Aurat Foundation in which representatives of civil society organizations were invited to launch the activities of International Women Day under the umbrella of WDD in Quetta.



From left to right: Asma Sherazi (Senior Journalist and Anchor Person), Meraj Khan - (MPA, QWP-KP), Senator Rubina Khalid (PPP), Anbreen Ajaib (SPO), Tahseen Fawad - (MPA PML-N-Pubjab), Nusrat Sehar Abbasi - (MPA, PML-F-Sindh), and Naeem Mirza (COO, AF) at International Women Day Celebration in Islamabad

Together We Reached!

Our beneficiary Base

The table below shows the beneficiary base of the each project during this reporting period. AF has provided support to 39,592 people to register their CNICs and 12,643 people for registration of their votes. LISTEN has benefited 9,000 people through radio campaign on women representation in Local Government elections and legislation on Domestic Violence Bill. Social Mobilization Waseela-e-Taleem program has registered 355,964 women and enrolled 532,337 children (5-12 years) in public and private schools. AAWAZ has engaged 41,874 people by increasing its membership in AAWAZ Forums and benefited 40,572 people by resolving 397 issues related to service delivery. 9,625 people have been benefited from preemption of 344 disputes and 26,838 people have accessed AAWAZ Aagahi Centers in the reporting period.

| Categories | LISTEN | LATEW | BISP | AAWAZ | Total |
|---|--------|-------|---------|---------|-----------|
| CNICs Registered | | 576 | 26,392 | 12,624 | 39,592 |
| Voters Registered | | | | 12,643 | 12,643 |
| People benefited from GRB Trainings | | 80 | | | 80 |
| Youth Front Radio Campaign | 9,000 | | | | 9,000 |
| Registration of WeT Women beneficiaries | | | 355,964 | | 355,964 |
| Enrolment of Children (5-12years) | | | 532,337 | | 532,337 |
| Membership in AAWAZ Forums | | | | 41,874 | 41,874 |
| No of people benefited by Improved Service Delivery | | | | 40,572 | 40,572 |
| No of people benefited from Dispute Preemption | | | | 9,625 | 9,625 |
| No of people accessed AAWAZ Aagahi Centers | | | | 24,498 | 24,498 |
| Total | 9,000 | 656 | 914,693 | 141,836 | 1,066,185 |

Program Case Studies

AF building social models for women development and ending VAW

Aurat Foundation has been experimenting social models for change that are conducive for citizens of Pakistan and has set precedents of success in shape of setting up Information Network Centers across Pakistan. Even if the projects supporting these centers had been ended yet these centers remained sustainable in some form or the other. Applying the same philosophy and combining it with a theory of change in AAWAZ Voice & Accountability programme, 450 AAWAZ AAGAH centers (AACs) had been set up in 45 districts of Punjab and KP. It is a UC level centre equipped with information available on issues of women rights, women and law, right to vote, how to get civil registration with prominent feature of CNIC and women's registration for vote. Furthermore the focal person is enabled to guide the visiting women and girls around issues of GBV and connect them to the most relevant facilities professionals.

The experiment of AAC incorporated elements of diversity thus mobilized communities access to the centre by devising several techniques such as holding Khuli Kachehri (open court) and inviting officials to respond to people's demands for delivery thus promote citizen state dialogue. Women mobilized around their practical gender needs around service delivery took confidence in exploring the AAC for other needs. A close monitoring the terms and patterns of women seeking information revealed that women used to access it for CNIC, birth registration, BISP card / facilitation, Zakat fund, family disputes and information about school admission and general information too. Exploring further on family disputes, it was found that women used to access the focal person of AAC to share their personal problems which indicates a gradual trust on the woman at the centre and seek moral support. AAC while mobilizing AAWAZ forum members at UC also mediated a number of family disputes; few of course were referred to legal institutions/lawyers for legal advice. The most prominent form of violence, though varies from district to district include domestic violence and women facing the burden of emotional and mental depression. The severe circumstances also include physical harm where women do not want to report but hide it as a private matter.

The gradual women's access and utilization of the AAC has potential to a transforming AAC into a safe space which women of the area feel comfortable to access and seek information to solve issues in their personal lives especially related to reduce the burden of emotional violence by sharing it with a woman outside home who is trustworthy. Other mobilization strategies applied in the AAC is the study circle and holding women meetings. The process aspires to build trust and promote woman to woman interaction in coming days which is key to women's participation in public life outside home. AAC is the first small step into a long journey of transformational process for social change and women development.

Program Case Studies

Women can lead from the front

In a male dominated society like Pakistan, women face resistance from men in almost every sector of society. Most men do not accept women as leaders and decision makers. Sumaira faced this hurdle when she decided to contest elections for President seat of AAWAZ District Forum in Swat. Sumaira's story started when a review meeting of the ADF's Swat wing was organized. The participants included fifteen men, seven women and two transgendered people. After discussions on the role and responsibilities of the ADF, it was decided to hold re-elections for new leadership to emerge and to include more women and excluded groups as represented in the forum executive body.

The response of some forum members was not welcoming, some resisted change while others welcomed the idea. In a region like Swat, for women to even contest for any leadership role is a big step itself. Sumaira broke all cultural barriers, contested election and secured 11 out of 21 votes. She was elected as President of AAWAZ District Forum Swat and proved that women can also be leaders and decision makers.

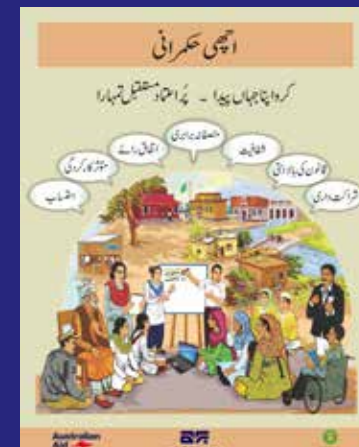
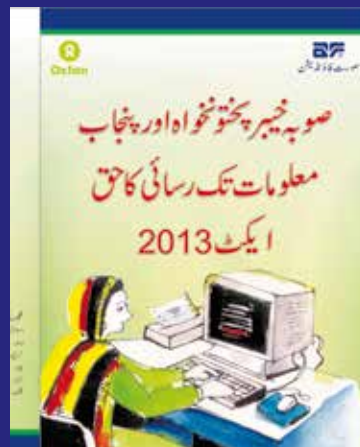
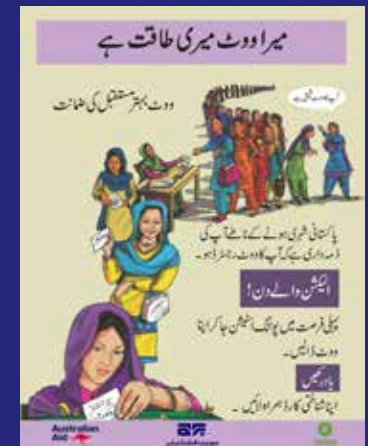
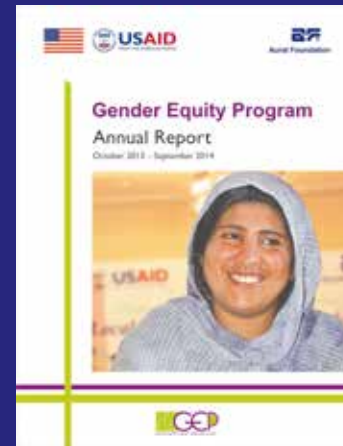
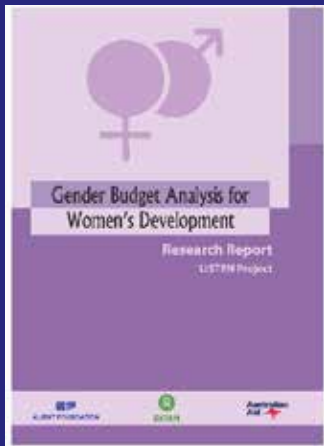
Program Case Studies

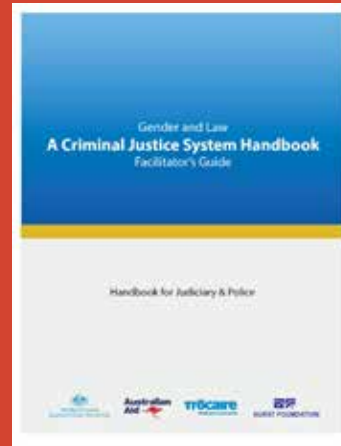
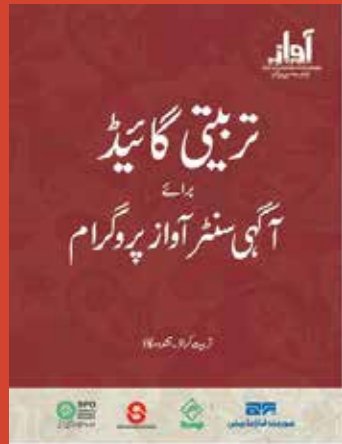
Enabling to bridge between human rights and women's development

To encompass standards of global human rights in development and legislative processes, it is very important to ogle on the progress of implementation of international Human Right standards made through ratifying international HR convents and treaties by the state. AF's advocacy and legislative oversight work thus undertook review of key international convents including Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discriminations Against Women (CEDAW) and Universal Periodic Review (UPR) following a consultative process with relevant stakeholders (civil society and relevant govt ministries) held in year 2012. The recommendations helped review HR situation in a holistic manner and helped in enriching the legal analysis of all domestic legislation on women rights. Furthermore, the review processes enabled the legislative advocacy work to set its directions appropriate and with relevant allies and stakeholders. Similarly technical review of Convention against torture brought gap analysis of legislative measures needed to reform procedures of prosecution, gender responsive policing, transparent investigation, easy access to justice and judicial reforms associated to combat torture in police custody. Furthermore, organizational engagements with other civil society as part of in country Beijing +20 review process that advocacy and awareness raising made through dissemination of review documents also helped setting dimensions for human right education through various ongoing programs of AF.

Bridging between the human right processes within country and outside (in South Asia and above), the national review and development of alternative (shadow) reports on CEDAW and UPR facilitated organizational influencing work through engagements with regional and international processes such as Beijing +20 (Asia Pacific) and CSW (global). Thus expanding analysis about top down and bottom up issues and concerns of human rights enabled understanding of developmental agenda formulation through MDG and SDG framework and integrate human right dimensions while programme designing, implementation and oversight.

Knowledge Products, Content Development and Management







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