

## Second Network Meeting of Women-led CSOs in Balochistan Quetta, 03 May, 2016 Meeting Report





## Table of Contents

I-Introduction .....	2
II-Summary of Proceedings.....	2
III- Project's Round-Up.....	3
IV-Establishing Linkages- Implementation of Women Protection Laws in Pakistan and the Need for Collaborative Efforts.....	3
V- Way Forward .....	6
Annex-I.....	8
Annex-II.....	9

## I. Introduction

The second Network Meeting for the women-led CSOs in Balochistan under the Sisters' Voice project was held in Quetta on 03 May, 2016.

The meeting brought together women from 12 civil society organisations (Annex-I) to share progress on the network's activities and discuss the way forward. The other eight (08) members could not attend the meeting due to unforeseen personal or professional commitments. They assured their presence when followed-up by CAMP.

The meetings was also an opportunity to introduce the Sisters' Voice Network to key stakeholders, police, lawyers/judiciary, relevant government officials/departments and parliamentarians so that both the network and the stakeholders can work together for improving the enforcement of pro-women laws in Balochistan province.

## II. Summary of Proceedings

The proceedings started with recitation from the Holy Quran and welcome. This was followed by an overall round-up of project progress by CAMP. Ms. Mahwish Zeeshan, President of the Sisters' Voice network-Balochistan made a brief presentation on the Sisters' Voice network.

The Panel of guest speakers including Ms. Masooma Hayat, Member Provincial Assembly, Balochistan; Ms. Salma Qureshi, Deputy Director, Women Development Department; Mr. Sajjad Haider Tareen, Senior Superintendent Police (SSP) (Crime & Legal), Balochistan; and Ms. Farzana Khilji, General Secretary, Balochistan Bar Association reflected on the role of their respective departments in improving the implementation of pro-women laws.

Ms. Saima Haroon, Deputy Director Aurat Foundation was invited as guest speaker to share her experiences regarding "Sustaining Networks: Opportunities and Challenges".

At the end of the meeting, the network members shared experiences gained from the network and planned the future activities, especially coordination meetings. A tentative schedule for coordination meetings was chalked out and it was assured by CAMP that all the possible support will be provided to the members to conduct these meetings. (For complete agenda please see Annex-II).



Ms. Mahwish giving presentation on the introduction of the Sisters' Voice Network

### III. Project's Round-Up

The meeting started with a summary of project activities by Ms. Fareeha Sultan, Project Manager. She briefed the participants about the activities held under the project since the first network meeting of women-led CSOs in Balochistan in June 2015. These included an assessment and selection of women-led CSOs in Punjab, capacity building workshops and two network meetings. She also talked about the coordination meetings held in Punjab and highlighted the outcomes of those meetings.

### IV. Establishing Linkages- Implementation of Women Protection Laws in Pakistan and the Need for Collaborative Efforts

The project aims to improve enforcement of pro women laws in Balochistan and Punjab provinces. Therefore coordination meetings and establishing linkages with relevant stakeholders constitute an important part of the project. While planning the second network meeting for women-led CSOs in Balochistan, efforts were made by CAMP to invite all the relevant stakeholders. Panelists consisted of representatives from police, lawyers, parliamentarians and government officials who shared their views on the need for collaborative efforts in order to ensure that laws are better understood by citizens, and implementation of these laws is strengthened.

The session started with a presentation by Ms. Mahwish Zeeshan, President of the Sisters' Voice network. She shared the idea behind forming a network of women-led CSOs working in Balochistan and introduced the network, its mission, vision, objectives and office bearers. Ms. Zeeshan also highlighted the future activities planned under the network.

#### IV (a) - Implementation of Women Protection Laws in Pakistan and the Need for Collaborative Efforts: A Perspective from the Lawyers

Ms. Farzana Khilji, General Secretary, Balochistan Bar Association summarised the laws made for the protection of women at both federal and provincial level and presented an overall situation regarding implementation of pro-women laws in the province. She highlighted lack of awareness as the main hurdle in making sure that laws are properly enforced. She said even lawyers were not up to date on several laws, so we cannot expect the common men and women to know about laws unless information is shared widely.



Ms. Farzana sharing her thoughts with the participants

She also talked about some of the challenges that restrict lawyers, especially women lawyers, from ensuring effective implementation of pro-women laws. She focused on the recently approved law "Harassment against Balochistan Women at Workplace Bill 2015".

Although harassment of women is a stark reality and even female lawyers are harassed by male colleagues, she said women lawyers are finding it difficult to convince the higher judiciary to form a committee, which is mandatory under the newly approved law. There is resistance from certain people in the judiciary who believe that justice providers cannot violate laws, hence, no committee is needed.

Ms. Khilji offered her support and cooperation to the members of the Sisters' Voice network.

#### **IV (b) - Implementation of Women Protection Laws in Pakistan and the Need for Collaborative Efforts: Role of the Police**

Mr. Sajjad Haider Tareen, Senior Superintendent of Police (Crime & Legal), Balochistan elaborated on the Women Protection Law 2006, which is the main law under which police deal with cases. Protection Law talks specifically about women as contrary to Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) that covers both men and women.



Mr. Tareen talking about the reforms made in Police department to help victim women

Mr. Tareen said that many reforms have also been introduced in the provincial police system – there is a women police reporting centre in Quetta that works round the clock and other police stations in the city provide assistance to this reporting centre. He also proudly shared that the number of women police officers has been increased to 150 in Quetta city.

Mr. Tareen said the police department is making efforts to improve the treatment of women at police stations. For example, when a woman needs to be investigated, an officer of no less than the rank of Deputy Superintendent is allowed to carry out the investigation and the presence of a woman police officer during the investigation is compulsory. If the nature of crime demands that a woman needs to be kept at a police station or lock-up, a female relative of the accused must accompany her.

While sharing the statistics of violence against women (VAW) in Quetta he said that in 2015, 12 cases of murder, 17 cases of beating, four (04) cases of rape and 42 cases of kidnapping were reported. While, till 30 April 2016, three (03) cases of murder, five (05) cases of beating, one (01) case of honour killing, two (02) cases of rape and 10 cases of kidnapping have been reported.

As far as implementation of laws is concerned, police has no direct role in this regard, according to Mr. Tareen. However, he believed police can improve the system for the redressal of women victims. He also said that with the passage of time many laws for the betterment and protection of women have been made, however, more awareness needs to be created. Women generally and rural women specifically don't know about these laws. Moreover, our traditions also restrict women to approach the police if needed.

He highlighted that police officials in the province need training on new laws. It was suggested by the members that linkages should be established between police and the Sisters' voice network. This suggestion was appreciated and agreed upon by Mr. Tareen and he also assured network members his full support in discussing how police can play a role in improving the status of women in the province.

#### **IV (c) - Implementation of Women Protection Laws in Pakistan and the Need for Collaborative Efforts: A Perspective from the Government Officials**

Ms. Salma Qureshi, Deputy Director, Women Development Department (WDD) discussed the role of relevant government departments to ensure implementation of pro-women laws. The Women Development Department was established in 2009 to review existing laws, policies and

international commitments for uplifting status of Pakistani women. Other objectives of establishing the department are to draft new laws; create awareness on women rights and create women friendly environment and spaces in Balochistan.



**Ms. Salma apprising the participants about the steps taken by WDD**

Regarding important pro-women laws drafted by the department, she told that after the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment, the department has worked on and lobbied for many laws. The most recent example is “Harassment against Balochistan Women at Workplace Bill 2015” Law that was passed in January 2016. However, now the procedures of this law have to be made and translated into Urdu, but the department is lacking sufficient funds. Similarly, rules of business for Balochistan Domestic Violence Act 2014 have been revised and finalised by the parliamentarians. Consultative sessions with relevant stakeholders are needed to be held in all 32 districts of the province. She stressed that the department requires support by the civil society to execute advocacy campaigns to increase awareness, conduct consultative sessions and ensure implementation of pro-women laws.

**IV (d) - Implementation of Women Protection Laws in Pakistan and the Need for Collaborative Efforts: A Perspective from the Balochistan Government**

Ms. Masooma Hayat, Member Provincial Assembly was invited to brief the participants about the various steps taken by the provincial government to enact pro-women laws or to improve implementation on existing pro-women laws. She said that present government is working to improve the overall legislation for women since last three years. The most recent example is the approval of Balochistan Protection of Women against Sexual Harassment Law that was on hold since 2007.



**Ms. Masooma Hayat sharing her thoughts at the meeting**

She further said that the primary responsibility of parliamentarians is to make laws; however, it requires collaborative efforts from all stakeholders to ensure that these laws are implemented. She advised the members to connect with the communities at grassroots level and respect their traditions and culture. Civil society organisations can raise the level of awareness among masses only if they win the trust of the local communities. She also offered her complete assistance and availability to facilitate network members in their endeavors to improve

implementation of pro-women laws and spreading awareness masses especially among women.

## V. Sustaining Networks: Opportunities and Challenges

This session was facilitated by Ms. Saima Haroon, Deputy Director, and Aurat Foundation Quetta. While sharing her thoughts on sustaining networks she said that networks are needed in any society as they help in connecting synergies, energies and finding solutions and play an important role in bridging the gaps that hinder the inclusion of vulnerable groups such as women into mainstream.

In the same context, the tradition of networks working on women rights in Pakistan is quite old. A lot of the networks are also formed in Balochistan. However, since most of them are deliverables of some project, therefore, they split after a while. A lot of them are also not effective as they don't follow a monitoring and record keeping mechanism. Moreover, there is also a lack of commitment and focus on real issues.



Ms. Saima talking about Sustaining Networks: Opportunities & Challenges

She further suggested that members of the Sisters' Voice network must focus on putting together their synergies and look at things from a positive mindset. Challenges are part of the process, therefore, they should not be discouraged, rather devise strategies to overcome these.

She also assured complete assistance by Aurat Foundation to support the network.

## VI. Way Forward

In this session the network members shared their experiences regarding the network. CAMP representatives shared their concern over the delay in coordination meetings. After a detailed discussion, it was agreed upon that considering the problems in arranging coordination meetings in Balochistan, the number of meetings can be reduced from five (05) to three (03). It was also decided to hold these meetings on priority basis. Planning in this regard was also done.

Network members also suggested that some Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material specific to the Sisters' Voice project should be developed so that it could be used for distribution among the relevant stakeholders. This could also facilitate introduction of the Sisters' Voice network at a wider level.

This was the last network meeting planned for network members in Balochistan. The first meeting was held in June 2015. These network members will now be invited for the national network meeting in September 2016 along with some of the stakeholders with whom they will conduct coordination meetings. Network members from Punjab will also be invited. It is hoped that this national meeting will provide women leaders the opportunity to share their experiences and lessons learned, as well as create linkages for the network at the national level.



Network members at the meeting

Annex-I

List of Participants

S. No.	Name of Participant	Organisation
01	Saba Khaliq	Balochistan Social Development Program (BSDP)
02	Razia Kakar	DANESH
03	Asiya Asif	Initiative for Development (ID)
04	Sana Durrani	Today's Women Organisation
05	Natasha Sabir	Social Development of Human
06	Jamila Baloch	Gichane Development Society
07	Shahid Irshad	DAWN
08	Bineesh Sikandar	New Hope for Life Foundation (NHLF)
09	Fatima Baloch	SEHERA Organisation
10	Mahwish Zeeshan	Intensifying Power of Deprived Humans (IPDH)
11	Zulekha Raisani	Baluchistan Education & Economic Development Society(BEEDS)
12	Siemeen Mariam	Uni Help Foundation

Annex-II

Programme Agenda

Time	Programme/Activity	Facilitator
09:30 AM -10:00 AM	Registration & Arrival Recitation from Holy Quran	
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM	Welcome & Update on Network's Progress	CAMP Team
10:30 AM - 11:00 AM	Sustaining Networks :Opportunities and Challenges	Ms. Saima Haroon, Deputy Director, Aurat Foundation, Quetta
11:00 AM - 11:15 AM	Tea Break	
11:15 AM -11:25 AM	Presentation : "The Sisters' Voice Network- Objectives and Progress"	Ms. Mahwish Zeeshan, President -The Sisters' Voice Network ( Balochistan)
11:25 AM -11:35 AM	Presentation : "Advocacy Briefs: Main Hurdles in Implementation of Pro-Women Laws"	Ms. Zahida Munir, Vice President-The Sisters' Voice Network ( Balochistan)
11:35 AM -11:45 AM	Implementation of Women Protection Laws in Pakistan and the Need for Collaborative Efforts: A Perspective from the Lawyers	Ms. Farzana Khilji, Vice President, Bar Association, Quetta
11:45 AM-11:55 AM	Implementation of Women Protection Laws in Pakistan and the Role of the Police	Mr. Sajjad Haider Tareen, SSP (Crime & Legal), Balochistan
11:55 AM-12:05 PM	Implementation of Women Protection Laws in Pakistan and the Need for Collaborative Efforts: A Perspective from the Government Officials	Ms. Salma Qureshi, Director Women Development Department, Government of Balochistan
12:05 PM-12:15 PM	Implementation on Women Protection Laws in Pakistan and the Need for Collaborative Efforts: A Perspective from the Balochistan Government	Ms. Masooma Hayat, Member Provincial Assembly, Balochistan
12:15 PM-13:00 PM	Q&A Session/Discussion	
13:00 PM-02:00 PM	Lunch and Prayer Break	
2:00 PM - 2:30 PM	The Sisters' Voice Network: Progress , Challenges & Way forward	Open Discussion
3:00 PM- 3:30 PM	Group Work	
3:30 PM- 3:45 PM	Presentation of Group Work	
3:45 PM- 4:00 PM	Wrap Up /Concluding Remarks	