

Consultation Workshop on Rural Women Day

Date	Venue	No. Participants	Name of Speakers
12-10-10	Sheeza Inn Hotel Multan	Fifty Two	Shaista Bukhari Bushra Naqvi Rana Faraz Noon Sajida Langa

Objectives:

- ❖ To ensure the ownership of land to flood effected women
- ❖ To involve women in decision making process for rehabilitation
- ❖ To concentrate on women and children health and education
- ❖ To give awareness about women rights in rural areas
- ❖ To establish complaint cells for ending violence against women
- ❖ To make sure the help of rural women at Govt. level with regard to agriculture and micro entrepreneurship
- ❖ To create the sense of transparency and accountability in flood relief efforts

Agenda:

- ❖ Welcome to the participants
- ❖ Introduction of the speakers
- ❖ Speaker's contribution
- ❖ Concluding remarks

Proceeding:

The meeting started with the warm welcome of the participants by Shaista Bukhari. At the start of the meeting the guests were invited on the stage along with the announcement of their designation and organizations. **Shaista Bukhari** "Executive Director of Women's Rights Association" explained the agenda of the workshop and gave details the objectives of the workshop. She said that is Rural Women Day organised by civil society organisations, she said without education rural women would be further pushed into poverty, exclusion and suffering by the patriarchal society.

Women's Right Association- Multan

Hundred of rural women converged on Islamabad in a historic gathering to share their experiences and highlight their issues in a bid to create awareness among the masses that despite their handsome contribution to the country's economic and social development, they were denied their basic rights and excluded from the decision-making processes. She further talked about the WRA and said it is a registered (under Social Welfare Registration ACT) not-for-profit organization, founded in 1999 striving for social, political and economic rights of underprivileged women in Southern Punjab region. The mission of WRA is to organize and capacitate all the sections of society especially women and youth, provide them economic and social opportunities, develop their linkages, promote democratic institutions so that they could establish a collective and peaceful struggle for a just society. She said that the goals of WRA are:

- To capacitate women and youth groups and institutions by providing social and political education and training opportunities and promoting voluntary actions.
- To provide economic and social opportunities especially to women and youth groups for their development and enabling them for a collective peaceful social and political struggle.
- To develop WRA as a rights-based institution serving people specially the marginalized, organizing and capacitating organizations and providing quality social and economic services.

Due to worst flood situation in Pakistan, millions of people have been displaced from their homes from the areas of Southern Punjab mainly Muzaffargarh, Khan Garh, Shah Jamal, Rajanpur, Dera Din Panah, Kot Abdu, Dera Ghazi Khan, Sanawan, Wisandaywali, Rohilanwali, Jatoi and Alipur eminently show that a large number of faithful failed to fast due to communication links between them and the rest of the country and the figure is rapidly increasing with the passage of time.

Dozens of the affected people, who despite being surrounded by multiple hazards created by flood and heavy rains, however, there is need to support them in a huge level and provide them the equipments and technology for rehabilitation of the affected people.

Shakeela from Sanjh organization Muzaffargarh, appreciated the workshop objectives and thanked to all the participations. She said most of us do not know about the violence against women. It is reported from different parts of the areas In Pakistan, various stakeholders have been actively involved, at different levels, in efforts to reduce violence against women through service delivery, policy advocacy, research etc; and it is envisaged that effective coordination between the stakeholders will Lead to stronger impact. Keeping in line with its objective to reduce violence against women, with the aim to end violence all forms of violence against women through:

- i) Strengthening coordination between stakeholders working on violence against women and
- ii) Identification of common areas of intervention.

Shahida Zaffar, shared her ideas and feelings with regards to the rural women day. She said we celebrated the women international day on 8th of March every year but now we are together for the sake of our rural sisters and this is fact that they are doing dual duty as compare to urban areas. In our society those women who are working in home, means house ladies, are not considered as working women. It's considered that these are their responsibilities and they have to fill it in every condition. So there is need to train them in business entrepreneurship and marketing. Through this we will be able to support the rural women. The main objectives of the event are:

- Highlight human rights challenges facing women in Pakistan
- Celebrate the leadership of women in defending human rights

Shaista agreed with Shahida and said there is also important and essential that we have to concentrate on the education of the females because the one reason of violence is low literacy rate among females. She said in Pakistan, the women's access to property, education, employment etc. remains considerably lower compared to men's. The social and cultural context of Pakistani society is predominantly patriarchal. Women have a low percentage of participation in society outside of the family. Despite the improvement in Pakistan's literacy rate since its independence, the educational status of Pakistani women is among the lowest in the world. The literacy rate for urban women is more than five times the rate for rural women. The school dropout rate among girls is very high (almost

Women's Right Association- Multan

50 percent), the educational achievements of female students are higher as compared with male students at different levels of education.

At the end, **Ms. Bushra Naqvi** shared her thoughts and said that we are celebrating this day every year, and despite the fact that women play an active role in Pakistan's economy, their contribution has been grossly underreported in some censuses and surveys. The 1991-92 Labour Force Survey revealed that only about 16% of women aged 10 years and above were in the labour force. The World Bank's reports of 1997 stated that women constituted only 28% of the country's labor force. According to the 1999 report by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, only two percent of Pakistani women participate in the formal sector of employment. However, the 1980 agricultural census stated that the women's participation rate in agriculture was 73%. The 1990-1991 Pakistan Integrated Household Survey indicated that the female labour force participation rate was 45% in rural areas and 17% the urban areas. Pakistani women play a major role in agricultural production, livestock raising and cottage industries.

When we talk about the land and property rights around 90% of the Pakistani households are headed by men and most female-headed households belong to the poor strata of the society. Women lack ownership of productive resources. Despite women's legal rights to own and inherit property from their families, there are very few women who have access and control over these resources.

Observation:

- This has been observed that females were very excited about the celebration of the rural women day.
- It is noted that they felt themselves a part of the society and comfortable in the meeting environment.

Output:

- Fifty two females attended the meeting and came to know about their rights and the back ground of the celebration of rural women day.
- The flood affected females shared their problems with facilitators and feel the sense of unity being a part of Pakistan.