



**REPORT ON  
ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (EVAW) EVENTS  
UNDER UNIFEM/ERRA GRRN PROJECT**

IN COMMEMORATION OF 16 DAYS ACTIVISM FROM NOV 25 TO DEC 10, 2008

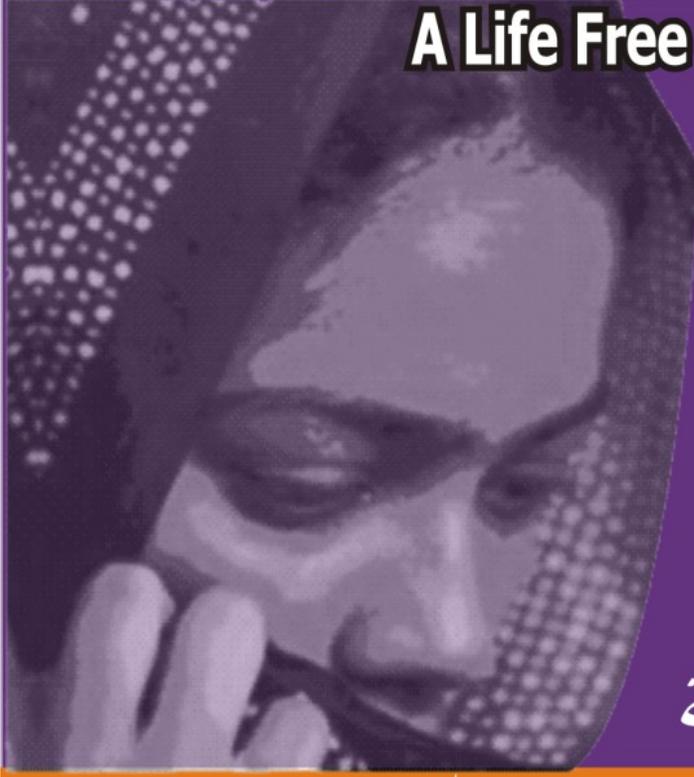
**A Life Free of Violence is our Right**

اور اپنی عورتوں  
کے معاملے میں  
اللہ سے ڈرو  
(خطبہء حجہ الوداع)

عورتوں پر تشدد کو روکیے

25 نومبر 2008

عورتوں پر تشدد کے خلاف اقدام کا عالمی دن



**GENDER PROGRAMME  
State Earthquake Reconstruction & Rehabilitation Agency (SERRA)  
Azad Govt of the State of Jammu & Kashmir**

## **Background:**

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence is an international campaign originating from the first Women's Global Leadership Institute sponsored by the Center for Women's Global Leadership in 1991. The 16 Days of Activism campaign is commemorated each year from 25 November to 10 December across the world. This also marks the following days:

- 25<sup>th</sup> November (International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women)
- 1st December (International AIDS Day)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> December (International Day for the Disabled)
- 10<sup>th</sup> December (International Human Rights Day)

To commemorate both the International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women and International Human Rights Day, November 25 and December 10 respectively were chosen in order to symbolically link violence against women and human rights.

Although natural disasters do not distinguish between genders, they do have a different impact on men and on women. The 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2005 earthquake that rocked the northern areas of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir was no exception. The earthquake affected women physically, mentally and socially. Confronted with such a large tragedy, in which 87,000 people were killed and 3.5 million lost their homes, the government and other agencies made all efforts to address the needs of women, who faced an increase in violence and had limited access to aid and had special unmet needs relating to health, shelter, livelihood and protection.

To raise awareness among all stakeholders about women's rights, the campaign provided an opportunity to organize different activities in AJK. The major source of funding for these activities was UNIFEM. National and local NGOs working in the respective districts also contributed in terms of human and financial resources.

Under UNIFEM/ERRA-GRRN Project, 03 events were planned in District Muzaffarabad, Bagh and Poonch during 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence. The district-wise details of the EVAW events are given below:

### **I) EVAW EVENT IN DISTRICT MUZAFFARABAD**

ActionAid Field Office Muzaffarabad took the lead in organizing this UNIFEM sponsored EVAW activity in coordination with SERRA and DRU. The orientation session on "Code of Conduct for Gender Justice at the Work Place" was held on December 6, 2008 in Neelum View Hotel Muzaffarabad.

A total of 24 officials from Government line departments and I/NGOs (Education Department, Health Department, Social Welfare & Women Development Department, Forests Department, DRU, SERRA, SUNGI, AJKRSP, and UN-HABITAT) participated in the session. The list of participants is provided at Annexure-A.



The key objectives of the session were:

- Sharing of code of conduct for gender justice at workplace with policy makers/appointing authorities.
- Sensitising head of the departments and senior officers on the issue.
- To promote safe and secure working environment for women at workplace.
- To motivate the participants to adopt this code of conduct in their respective organizations, institutions and departments.

After the recitation from the Holy Quran by a participant, Ms Nosheen Gillani, Women Rights Focal Person, ActionAid Field Office Muzaffarabad requested participants for their introduction. Then she briefly discussed the objectives of the session and invited Program Manager (PM), Mr. Bashir Mughal for opening remarks. The PM gave an Islamic perspective of the code of conduct and referred different Surahs and Ahadith to its support his point of view. He said that Islam was the first religion which emancipated women. He further said that in many other religions, women have had to fight for their rights and dues, and their struggle, in many cases, is still ongoing with limited success. Islam, on the other hand, has justly granted women their rights without them having to ask, let alone demand and fight.



After the opening session, the Resource Person, Ms. Aqsa Khan, gave a background on the Code and informed participants that the Federal Ministry of Women Development took the lead in evolving the code through a participatory process, with broad based consultations in all four provinces, with representation of trade unions, employer's associations, academia, jurists and lawyers, government organizations and civil society. Technical meetings were held with experts and ILO, and the Ministry of Labor was instrumental alongwith other key stakeholders in carrying this effort upto Cabinet. Therefore, the Code is a result of a strong and wide ranging partnership.

The second session was very interactive. Participants explored the definitions of 'gender harassment' and 'workplace'. This session was very important to understand the different clauses of the Code. The RP then presented the standard definition of the Gender Harassment and explained the mechanism for its effective implementation. Informal way of dealing with Gender Harassment at the workplace was also discussed in addition to the formal approach. While closing her session she said that in the interest of the well being of the employees and the employers and to create a work environment free of intimidation and abuse for collective productivity and individual job satisfaction, all the government, semi-government and private sector organizations are mandated to incorporate this Code as part of their management policy.

The participants expressed that this kind of orientation sessions are required to be conducted in all districts of AJK to create awareness on the Code among officials from government/semi-government/private organizations.

The workshop was closed by the Senior Gender Coordinator. She briefly described the on-going and planned activities under UNIFEM/ERRA project, the background of the campaign and the importance of the orientation on the Code. She thanked ActionAid for their cooperation in organizing this activity and the participants for their interest and active participation.

## **II) EVAW ACTIVITIES IN DISTRICT BAGH**

A series of activities were designed to raise awareness about "*Ending Violence against Women*". In addition to the main financial support from UNIFEM, the local partners including IKI, ActionAid, Human Aid Focus, SPO, Press for Peace shared their financial and human resources to organize the following activities. DRU played an important role in ensuring coordination and integration among all implementing organizations to achieve the desired results.

### **1. *Radio Panel Talk regarding the Subject:***

A Radio programme 'Aurat Ki Awaz' was recorded at VOK FM-104 Muzaffarabad. Mufti Nazir sahib, Prof. Taqdees Gillani-Chairperson HOPE, Additional Secretary Law Mr. Idrees Abbasi and Deputy Director SWWD Mr. Sarfraz Abbasi participated in the Radio Programme. The programme was aired on November 25, 2008 at 06:00 pm. The objective of the programme was to raise awareness of the masses about women's rights and state and individual obligations about ending violence against women. (CD of the Radio Program can be provided on demand).

## 2. Development and dissemination of awareness raising print material:

IEC material was developed and disseminated regarding women's rights and ending violence against women. Different sources (internets, EAW material published by UNIFEM etc) were used for the development of material. Following are the two posters developed for this purpose.

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Logos: IKI Foundation, UNIFEM, act:onaid, ERRA, SPO, Human Aid Focus, Peace for Peace.

Seminar on

**STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

Ending Violence Against Women

UNITED NATIONS DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN  
25 November 2008

Logos: UNIFEM, act:onaid, ERRA, SPO, Human Aid Focus.

**UN Declaration on Ending Violence against Women**

Violence affects the lives of millions of women worldwide, in all socio-economic and educational classes. It cuts across cultural and religious barriers, impeding the right of women to participate fully in society.

**Defining Gender-based Abuse**

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women is the first international human rights instrument to exclusively and explicitly address the issue of violence against women. It affirms that the phenomenon violates, impairs or nullifies women's human rights and their exercise of fundamental freedoms.

The Declaration provides a definition of gender-based abuse, calling it "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life".

The definition is amplified in article 2 of the Declaration, which identifies three areas in which violence commonly takes place:

- Physical, sexual and psychological violence that occurs in the family, including battering; sexual abuse of female children in the household; dowry-related violence; marital rape; female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women; non-spousal violence; and violence related to exploitation;
- Physical, sexual and psychological violence that occurs within the general community, including rape; sexual abuse; sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere; trafficking in women; and forced prostitution;
- Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.

Seminar Organized By  
**IKI Foundation & DRU Bagh**

IKI Foundation  
House # 55A-A, Lane 6, Street # 18, Chakiala Scheme, Rawalpindi.  
Ph. 051-5382307, Fax. 051-4852136  
headoffice@iki.foundation.org

DRU Bagh  
Ph. 058720-491175

### ***3. Seminar for Key Stakeholders Sensitization on Violence Against Women in the context of disaster and R & R activities:***

A one day seminar was also planned to be organized in District Bagh on December 2, 2008. The event was postponed due to the non-availability of GC-Bagh and non-conducive environment there. The event is now planned to be conducted in January 2009.

#### **III) EVAW Event in District Poonch**

Theatre performance on “**Forced Marriages**” was planned to be held at Jandala, district Poonch on December 3, 2008 by the Implementing Partner, Women Welfare Organization Poonch (WWOP). At the scheduled time and date the State Planning Expert (SPE) and Senior Gender Coordinator (SGC) SERRA reached the venue of the programme. There were over 60 participants present at the venue from community besides representatives of DRU. However, to avoid any conflict and future backlash, the programme was deferred on the strong demand from some representatives of community. It was further decided that the event will be redesigned and will be conducted at some other location soon.

#### **Lessons Learnt:**

1. The issue being so sensitive in nature needs to be handled very carefully and skillfully. Although this is a social issue and has nothing to do with Islam (rather no religion sanctions violence on any gender), it needs to be addressed through religious platform also.
2. In areas where severe resistance from the community can be expected on holding such events, directly highlighting the issue may result in backlash. In such areas it may be a better approach to address the issue in the first phase indirectly by initiating some priority programmatic/developmental interventions under Gender component of the Reconstruction Program leading towards the empowerment of women and once things start to improve direct interventions can be made.

**Annexure A.****List of Participants:**

S#	Name	Designation	Organization/Department
1	Muhammad Tahir Khattak	Gender Coordinator	District Reconstruction Unit Muzaffarabad AJK
2	Zaffar Khurshid	Seceretary General	Sarban Development Foundation
3	Aourangzeb Mughal	Coordinator	National Programme Muzaffarabad
4	Surfaraz Ahmad Abbasi	Deputy Director	Social Welfare & Women Development Department AJK
5	Muhammad Asif	Monitoring & Evaluation officer	Sungi Development Foundation MZD
6	Abdul Rauf Qureshi	Conservator	Forest Department, GoAJK
7	Muneer Hassan Khan	Zonal Coordinator	ERRA
8	Syed Nisar Ahmad	Director General	Agriculture Department, GoAJK
9	Mahnaz Kant	Senior Gender Coordinator	SERRA
10	Tasneem Yaseen	Deputy Director	Education Department, GoAJK
11	Saeeda Sultana	Senior Subject Specialist	Directorate of Education, GoAJK
12	Saddiqa Kausar	Social Welfare Officer	Social Welfare & Women Development Department AJK
13	Samina Batool	Assistant	District Reconstruction Unit Muzaffarabad
14	Shaheen Gillani	Social Mobilizer	UN-HABITAT Muzaffarabad
15	Saeeda Gillani	Deputy Director	Education Department, GoAJK
16	Saeeda Shabir	Deputy Director	Education Secondary
17	Nasreen Feroz	Assistant Director	Education Department Elementary MZD AJK
18	Safia Bano	Field Coordinator	Action Aid Pakistan Muzaffarabad
19	Amna Kamran	Gender Officer	Azad Jammu & Kashmir Rural Support Programme (AJRSP)
20	Mir Zaman	Network Assistant	State Earthquake Reconstruction & Rehabilitation Agency (SERRA)
21	Nosheen Gillani	Women Rights Focal Person	Action Aid Pakistan Muzaffarabad
22	Waqar Shah	Women Right Focal Person	Action Aid Pakistan Muzaffarabad
23	Sumaira		Action Aid Pakistan Muzaffarabad AJK

