



WOMEN'S REGIONAL NETWORK
AFGHANISTAN • PAKISTAN • INDIA

WRN Pakistan

Community Conversations

2018

2nd Launch

HRCP Office, Aiwan -e Jamhoor, 107- Tipu Block, New Garden Town, Lahore
October 12, 2018

SHATTERED SOULS

INTERNALLY DISPLACED WOMEN
FROM PUNJAB, PAKISTAN



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Program

Time		Facilitator
03.pm	Registration	
3:15 pm	Welcome remarks and Introduction to WRN by Ms. Rukhshanda Naz, Member of the Board WRN Pakistan	
3:15-4:20 pm 4:20 -5:00pm	Sharing of findings and recommendations of the report by Ms. Saima Jasam Panel Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I A Rehman (Director HRCP) • Mr. Peter Jacob (Executive Director, Centre for Social Justice) • Sardar Kalyan Singh, (Lecturer, Writer and Minority Representative) • Participants intervention 	Rukhshanda Naz
5-5:15 pm	Concluding Remarks	Mr. Tariq Masih Gill-MPA
5:15-pm	Tea	



Introduction / Report Findings

After a successful launch of *Community Conversations 2018* in Islamabad, WRN Pakistan organized its second launch in Lahore, the capital city of Punjab province. The report “Shattered Souls: Internally Displaced Women from Punjab, Pakistan” is written by eminent women’s rights activist and development professional Ms. Saima Jasam. This report is part of a larger series of launches happening across the 3 countries as well as across cities in Pakistan.

The focus of this report is on IDP women from Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and some districts of Punjab displaced as a result of religious extremism/militancy or ethnic and sectarian conflict who are now residing in Punjab Province. WRN used “Community Conversations”- as a tool to reach out to conflict affected women in this case — IDP women

“In Pakistan military operations were conducted in various districts of KPK and Balochistan to root out extremism and insurgencies. The operations pushed the human tragedy of displacement to a new level and left millions of people displaced and in many instances their basic rights violated,” the report reveals.

According to the report, 1.6 million people were displaced in 2015 alone. Earlier, a large number of people moved to reside in numerous host communities, a total of 77, 516 families

(46 percent women), while 14, 668 families (91, 004 individuals of which 49 percent were women) moved to transitional IDP camps.

In 2008, 1.7 million people were displaced due to a military operation in South Waziristan, while in 2004-2006 some 84,000 people were displaced due to an ongoing conflict in District Dera Bugti, Balochistan, the report said.

The *Community Conversations* also highlight displaced women's marginality in a new environment as well as their concerns and perspectives on issues of militarisation, security, peace and justice. Their fears, insecurities, priorities, and most importantly their roles as peacemakers in rebuilding their families and communities, formed the basis of the discussions.

Panelist's Remarks

Expert panelists invited to the report launch expressed their views with regard to the conditions of IDPs in Punjab and held the state responsible for their plight. They said that state is not recognizing them as IDPs and has coined the term TDPs (Temporarily Displaced Persons) instead, which misrecognizes the miseries of IDPs in Pakistan and spares the government of any international bindings and pressure.



Mr. I A Reman, Director HRCP lauded the effort of WRN to highlight the problems of minority women IDPs in Punjab because members of minority communities are counted nowhere. He said that main strength of the report are 'interviews' conducted with the women IDPs and stressed upon the active role of civil society in promoting such a cause.

Peter Jacob, Executive Director, Centre for Social Justice, said that rule of law must be ensured to address the issues of minority communities. He said that indigenous people also have their stakes and we need to redefine homeland in order to resolve the issues of displaced persons. He pointed to the sufferings of IDPs from minority communities and said that state's response to the issue is usually need blind. He said that this report will be greatly helpful for all the stakeholders in addressing the problems of IDP women from minority communities in a specific manner.



“Absence of any national policy and legal framework to address issues of IDPs (Internally Displaced Person’s) in line with the United Nation and Pinheiro Principles on housing and property restitution for refugees and displaced persons is one of the main reasons for the invisibility and plight of the IDPs living in Punjab” reiterated Ms. Rukhshanda Naz, Executive

Director, Legal Aid and Awareness Services and a WRN board member. She also stressed upon the need for a legal framework which can be greatly helpful in changing the plight of IDP women particularly from minority groups.



Satwant Kour from the Sikh community shared her experiences of becoming an IDP woman in Punjab but said she was happy to have been able to get higher education with her family's support. Sardar Kalyan Singh, a writer and minority rights activist said that "we were the affectees of 1971 war and people didn't accept our presence in Nankana Sahib. When Babri Masjid incident took place in India, we faced a lot of hatred and victimization here in Pakistan. In fact, whenever something bad happens between India and Pakistan, Sikh and Hindu community comes under attack here" he regretted.

Discussion by the Participants

It was a vibrant gathering of civil society activists from Lahore in which a number of media persons were also invited. Participants asked questions from the author of the report and pledged to undertake the cause of women IDPs by pushing the provincial government to adopt a framework and make laws for the protection of IDPs in Punjab.

Recommendations



The recommendations of the report are aimed at bringing the concerns of women to the forefront and are being used by those involved in humanitarian response, civil society and other actors working with displaced persons. The report will also be used as an advocacy tool to build relationships with state actors to better address the needs of displaced women. Main recommendations coming out from the discussion at the report launch were that the all the stakeholders and civil society should be mobilized to pressure the government to recognize the women IDPs from minority communities as a separate category and make state institutions and

agencies accountable in line with the United Nation and Pinheiro Principles on housing and property restitution for refugees and displaced persons so as to protect these basic needs of IDPs.



Media Coverage

A number of media channels presented the launching of report on T.V. and it was also printed in some of the leading English dailies of Pakistan. The links the media reporting are given below:

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/380198-framework-for-idp-women-stressed?fbclid=IwAR0t9eG3rBhoJObQ24t2P16Eejq9OpA2g3zISLkrwyE0HYIY3MEshuAZcqI>

https://nation.com.pk/18-Oct-2018/report-on-internally-displaced-women-from-punjab-publicised?fbclid=IwAR025Q6sS7sO_YhawQhHAMWZC60OVZt9hkYVew-je2dqViKNoviB5vRg30E