

Multi facet story of change

At Institutional Level

Due to the challenges related to shrinking of overall civil society spaces, struggling to get registered with 'Economic Affairs Division (EAD)' was the main challenge organization was facing from last few years. Nevertheless, the process of getting registered with EAD while working on the agenda of SRHR across Pakistan was the most challenging and time taking process but we are pleased that after putting lots of continuous effort since inception of Ujala, AwazCDS-Pakistan has finally signed MoU with 'Economic Affairs Division' for the period of 3 years in September 2020. In this regard, the process of clearance was also done from security agencies in 46 districts with 48 partners in Pakistan where there is presence of Ujala network. For verification purpose, all 46 partners were contacted by the security agencies to take information on nature of work they are doing under Ujala Network. Partners were also asked to provide relevant documents related to Ujala project and their respective organizations. It is important to highlight that during the verification process, the support of Ujala partners to remain engaged with the agencies for the timely provision of project related and other information is highly appreciated.

The registration with EAD has brought certain responsibilities on the organization that are important to be fulfilled. In this regard, as per the major requirement of EAD, it is mandatory for all the partners to must follow the legislative requirements of Government including to get registered with Charity Act Commissions. It will further strengthen the Network by following all legal requirements vis-à-vis working on important but so called sensitive issues like SRHR. Signing of MoU with AwazCDS-Pakistan also shows that the Government is now opening up the discourse on SRHR and SGBV.

Moreover, to compliance, Ujala partners are informed to share their organization's registration certificate, audit reports and relevant documents with us for record and for the continuation of partnership in future.

At Network Level

While sharing about **Success at Network level**, with support of funding partner 'AmplifyChange', Awaz Foundation Pakistan and its 48 partners across the country successfully coped up with the difficult situation of Covid-19 and all the milestones of Ujala Corona Emergency Program were timely and effectively achieved. It would be considered as a great success that even though during this difficult time of corona period, partnership with the partner organizations did not get effected and turned out to be even more stronger where tremendous efforts by the partners were carried out in their respective districts for the timely execution of UCEP activities. It also shows the strength of

partners to follow multidimensional approaches targeting Ujala's primary group including TGs, Women headed families, PLWDs, Young people etc. even in emergency situation.

Though in Ujala struggle, we need to go long mileage because Women in Pakistan are often advised by family members or relatives not to be out late at night, or to make sure they have a male companion with them for their safety. At around 3am on 9 September, the woman ran out of fuel on a motorway leading out of the eastern city of Lahore. Her two children were with her. She called her relatives in Gujranwala who advised her to call the motorway emergency numbers and also set off to help her.

According to the complaint registered with the police by one of the woman's relatives, the car was broken into by two men in their early- to mid-30s who stole money and jewelry she had on her. They raped her in front of her two children in a nearby field, and then escaped. Then during briefing the police official, implied the victim had been partly to blame for being out after dark alone, it ignited anger.

Further, we all know that the cases of sexual abuse in Pakistan are increasing every day especially with women and children, Ujala partners have decided that we will continue raise voices against such heinous acts and will continue do the advocacy until some legislative measures and implementation of law would be ensured. Under Ujala network has also decided to highlight these issue in cross cutting along with raising the voice for vulnerable groups i.e. persons living with disabilities and transgender community on any platform, Awaz Foundation Pakistan and its partners will also ensure that the cases related to sexual abuse must also be discussed and highlighted. We have also written letter to Ministry of Human Rights endorsed by all Ujala partners for urgent legislation for protection of women and children from sexual abuse/molestation and also reminded them about the commitment of their government regarding upholding the rights of women as committed in manifesto of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf and pledged by the Prime Minister Imran Khan shb during his maiden speech. We are also conducting TV shows to highlight this serious concern and different press conferences across 44 districts would also be held on it.

It is pertinent to mention that recently the Prime Minister of Pakistan was also briefed regarding the creation of special courts to prosecute-gender based violence crimes, which include rape and sexual abuse against women, children and transgender community. Now, the PM directed the law ministry to separately move a comprehensive proposal to bring amendments to the existing laws and establish the Special Gender Based Violence (GBV) Courts across the country, after due consultation with the relevant stakeholders.

At Global level

One last but not the least success that we want to highlight is the addition of our SRHR study “Status of Sexual & Reproductive Health & Rights in Pakistan” that is selected and placed in US Library of Congress. The inclusion in the library collection of foreign digital materials is advocacy success at global front.

Publication is available at <http://awazcfs.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Ujala-book.pdf>
