



GODH

GRASS ROOT ORGANIZATION FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Grass Root Organization for Human Development (GODH),

is a Lahore-based not-for-profit civil society organization working on the rights of indigenous people (gypsies) with a particular focus on women and children since 1998. The organization is considered to be one of the pioneering organizations in Pakistan that has been functioning as an instrument in bringing issue of the nomadic class into the mainstream development sector.

Females of indigenous communities play a vital role in household earnings by working as domestic workers, garbage pickers and beggars. These women often face discrimination and harassment at their workplace which reflects in their personality, growth, and development as a human. There is no focus on girls' education and early child marriage is very common.

GODH was selected as one of the short-term grantees under the Issue-based responsive funding mechanism of the Women's Voice & Leadership – Pakistan (WVL-Pakistan). The Project is funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) and implemented by Oxfam Canada (OCA), in collaboration with Oxfam in Pakistan (OiP).

WVL-P
Short
Grantee



WVL-P Short Grantee

The project targeted female between the ages of 12 to 35 years from 15 gypsy communities of district Lahore, with the objective of eliminating GBV. Additionally, the project also envisioned eradicating practices of social injustice and inequalities, including early child marriage, girls' education and empowering young gypsy women to stand for their rights and social injustice collectively.

Community mobilization was done, where two female social mobilizers visited the communities on regular basis to increase awareness among the target communities on early child marriage and girls' education. Consultative meetings were held where significant issues related to women's rights and gender inequality were identified in a participatory manner and discussed with all women. Theatre performances were organized through a contextualized approach in the 15 target communities based on the key messages of the project. The voice artists were taken from the local sub-culture to ensure that the people could understand the message in their own language and accent. All vocalists and puppeteers were given an honorarium for their performance and rehearsals.

A Young Women Committee Against Social Injustice (YWCASI) was made by selecting two females from each community to address the issues of female inequality. These committee members were given training on women's leadership and management by a gender consultant to gain a deeper insight into the issues related to women.

A line department meeting was also organized by GODH which was attended by the YWCASI members and relevant stakeholders including representatives from NADRA, Human Rights Ministry and National Commission of Pakistan. Since Gypsy women have a lot of issues regarding birth certificates and nikkah registrations, NADRA representatives shared different mechanisms for the registration of ID cards and Nikah. Several referral mechanisms were introduced by the officials to the gypsy women including women safety apps and helplines.

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"I have never casted vote in my life and running for Secretary Information from my community was something that I never imagined. Not only did i stood up for elections but i also won through majority votes. It feels like a dream. Now i want to resolve the issues of my community through working in close collaboration with other community members and GODH officials. "

Iqra - Secretary Information

A Snapshot of GODH Activities under WVL-P Grant

450

Direct beneficiaries
reached through puppet
shows

5000

Indirect beneficiaries
reached through puppet
shows

30

Female trained on Women
leadership and
Management

30

Women selected as
YWCASI members

15

Women Based
Organizations Formed

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Key Highlights of GODH Activities under WVL-P Grant

450

Women participated in elections

15

Women elected as Presidents

15

Women elected as General Secretary

15

Women elected as Information Secretary

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"Early child marriages are very common in our society. The trainings held under the project helped me understand the importance of girls education. I have now started paying attention to my daughters education and send them school regularly. I feel that education has the power to mould their future and that marriage is not their only destiny."

Zainab bibi - mother of two daughters

