Revival of Stage Drama

During extreme wave of violence SPO D.I.Khan started Intersect and Interfaith harmony dialogues, conferences, formed Peace Committees to promote Social Harmony messages harmony and culture of tolerance with the support of all sects religious scholars (ulema), Media, Law enforcement authorities, Trade Union, Lawyers, NGO and Political parties etc. In this connection, SPO organized a Stage Drama/Theatre on Social issues in which local drama writer/director and local actors were chosen for the performance.

In Solidarity with Malala Yousafzai
PeaceConference

The youth and women of Pakistan should be encouraged to seek a solution to the conflicts faced by the country.

It was stated by participants of the conference, held at the Lahore College for Women University’s Gender Studies Department in collaboration with the Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO).

The conference’s aim was to encourage people to seek peaceful solutions to conflicts in the country, promote justice, equality and social harmony through the participation of disadvantaged groups. Another objective was to make the youth, primarily students, part of the dialogue by making them aware of the facts, the statement said.

Neelam Hussain, the Sinorah Women Resource and Publication Centre executive coordinator opened the conference and talked at length about the history of wars. Humaia Sheik, the Shiraz city’s Peace and Conflict Programme director, Dr Sabiba Mansoor, the vice chancellor and SPO Regional Director Salman Abid spoke in the event.

Over 400 students and representatives of various civil society organizations attended the conference.

At the end of the day’s proceedings, Suneha Theater group staged a play Navein Rukh (New Directions). The play touched upon the importance of peace and resolving conflicts. It also addressed discrimination against women and low spending on health and education sectors and the spending on military budgets.
Anti Torture Campaign

SPO along with its Women Protection Forums (WPF’s) under the project of “Ending torture and ill Treatment of Women in Police Custody” organized a weeklong anti-torture campaign in three of its target districts Islamabad, Lahore, and Rawalpindi. The activities were designed with theme “Rehabilitation through anti-torture legislation”, to promote public awareness on the right to have a torture-free society and to persuade the Govt. authorities for anti-torture legislation in accordance with Convention Against Torture (CAT) in Pakistan.

The overall objective of the week was to establish sensitivity and responsiveness among the State, police, Darul Aman officials as well as general public especially youth and mobilize them to raise voice for the erasing torture including that on women and demanding Anti-Torture legislation.

All Activities of the Week were focused to popularize the right, to be free from torture:

- Cultural Evening with Torture Survivors
- Signature Camps
- Dialogue with Supreme Court Bar Association Lahore
- Radio Programme
- Media Briefing with feature writers, columnist
- Visits of Police Stations
- Visits of Dar ul Aman and Fun Gala with residents of Dar ul Aman Rawalpindi
- Social Evening for Police Officials at Rawat Training School.
- Women Art Council and Stage performance at National Art Council Rawalpindi
- Culmination Seminar at National level

Signature campaign to mark the need of anti-torture legislation was one of the main components of all events. Hundreds of civil society activists, political workers and common citizenry visited signature camps and demanded all law-enforcement agencies should be held accountable for picking up or torturing people on suspicion or in the name of national security. They asked government to ratify the optional protocol and respect all obligations of UN Convention against Torture. About one hundred thousand individuals signed the petition for demanding anti-torture legislation.
AAWAZ Voice & Accountability Programme

Pakistan is faced with numerous conflicts that stem from religious, political and social divide as well as constant inequalities and exclusion from state mechanisms and development opportunities. Needs of Pakistani citizens, especially women, youth and excluded groups remain unaddressed by state actors, exposing these groups to social and economic insecurity. Lack of accountability, transparency and political commitment hinder provision of civic services to the citizens.

AAWAZ Voice & Accountability is DFID-funded, five-year long programme, implemented through 5 leading Pakistani NGOs, well skilled at advocacy and research for governance reforms, in 45 district of Punjab and KPK provinces. The programme seeks to impact on the promotion of a stable, tolerant, inclusive, prosperous and democratic Pakistan. The programme is seeking to achieve this through the following four outputs:

1. Women’s safe participation in political and public spheres.
2. Peaceful resolution of disputes working together for common solutions.
3. Capacity building of citizens for constructively voicing demands for services and holding government accountable for its performance in service delivery.
4. Improved evidence generated, synthesized, and communicated/championed to political leaders

Through the Aawaz Voice & Accountability programme, SPO together with its consortium partners seeks to strengthen citizens’ voices to help them articulate demand for an equitable, inclusive and a meaningful democracy.