

Enjoying the Rights is Possible for Minorities

Pastor Sharoon Yousif S/o Pastor Muhammad Yousif is 21 years aged youth resident of Christ Baptist Church, Quetta Road, Jacobabad. He has passed his bachelors and also attended Pastor ship training from Faisalabad. Bishop has authorized him as a Pastor to deal religious activities at Jacobabad.

Pastor Sharoon shared that Christian community is deprived and marginalized; almost engaged in labour work and very few community members have the government jobs as a sanitary worker. Due to minority, enjoying the basic rights and acquiring the basic facilities as per citizen of Pakistan were beyond their reach and expectation. Their Christian community was facing several issues related to basic rights and interfaith harmony and even violence of women by other communities. He added that Christian community was looking forward to him for support being a Pastor but he was also unable to deal with the issues because of unawareness and frustration. *Pastor Sharoon* shared that he didn't know that with whom these issues to be discussed and approached to be addressed. The Feudal system was also the main hindrance in their community development and they were also reluctant to enjoy their rights due to lack of awareness regarding legal rights.

According to *Sharoon*, it was blessing for their community when a staff member from Civil Society Support Program (CSSP) and a member from Voice of New Generation (VNG) conducted meeting in the month of July 2015. They briefed about the project, "Empowering Youth for Improving Social Harmony and Protection of Civic Rights" under EDACE – DAI interventions. Initially he shared that he was not much impressed and assumed that it may be traditional activities, but on the proper briefing he realized the need and purpose of the interventions and participated in the events and also involved youth from the community to be part of the interventions. Initially 07 youth including 05 female and 02 male from their community were selected for training; these youth attended 08 days training workshop successfully



Figure 1 Pastor Sharoon from right on Christmas Celebration



Figure 2 Session with Minority on Freedom of Information

and acquired a very comprehensive knowledge regarding Freedom of Information, Para Legal, interfaith harmony and violence against women. These trained youth are now engaged to deliver session in their religious and general gatherings. Following the training different awareness raising activities on Ombudsman Office, Right to Information and Paralegal are conducted. These activities remained worth for community because it has raised their confidence level and emphasized the importance of unity.

Pastor Sharoon shared that on the basis of the trained youth in different trainings, they have submitted application under Freedom of Information and received information about budget of their Church, and their drainage issues are also resolved. He further shared that they are also resolving issues of salaries of sanitary workers, if they face any. He also shared that their security issues are also resolved now in the Church and even they have the police security.

Sharoon shared that keeping in view the organized community, political parties are also coordinating and offering their political support. Mr. Aijaz Jakhrani – Member National Assembly (MNA) from Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) have also conducted meeting and ensured his political party support for their community development and also about resolving the issues.

Sharoon added that they believe that this all is made possible with the blessing of project interventions, their community and youth are now aware regarding rights and they are also supporting community at larger scale regarding the rights. He said he is thankful to CSSP and VNG for giving them the opportunity to be a part this DAI EDACE humanitarian project that has provided them with the strength and value in the society and make them capable to enjoy heir rights.



Figure 3 Sharoon Emphasizing on Legal Rights