Society for Human Rights & Prisoners' Aid

Monthly

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2026





SHARP-WOMEN

FIVE-DAY CAPACITY-BUILDING PROGRAMME FOR YOUNG WOMEN LAWYERS AT FEDERAL JUDICIAL ACADEMY ISLAMABAD

Supported by:

GERMANY EMBASSY

Implemented by SHARP-Pakistan



PAKISTAN'S GBV CHALLENGE:

What the Official Data Shows

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a serious human-rights and social concern in Pakistan. Official police data shows that more than 20,000 cases involving crimes against women were registered across Punjab in the first six months of 2026, about 4.8% of the province's 420,251 registered criminal cases. These included 4,446 rape cases, 940 gang-rape cases, 53 cases of robbery with rape and murder, and 14 cases of rape with murder.

Official survey data points the same way: according to the Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017–18, 28% of women aged 15–49 have experienced physical violence, 6% have experienced sexual violence, and 34% of ever-married women have experienced spousal violence.

More than half of the women who experienced violence did not seek help or tell anyone. Registered cases represent only part of the reality, as stigma, fear of retaliation, economic dependence and limited access to justice keep many survivors from reporting. Stronger implementation of existing laws, survivor-centred services, prevention measures and access to justice remain essential.

SHARP's Commitment to Gender-Responsive Justice

SHARP is responding to gender-based violence through a combined approach of awareness, legal literacy, capacity building and advocacy. This work is carried out in Sindh, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, so that women and communities in different social and geographical contexts are reached.

Building legal capacity: SHARP trains young female lawyers on human rights, gender-responsive justice and GBV prevention. Practical sessions use case studies, group discussions and legal exercises. They help participants understand the barriers women face in accessing justice and promote a survivor-centred, rights-based approach built on confidentiality, dignity, informed consent, non-discrimination and survivor safety.

Raising awareness in communities: SHARP's legal literacy sessions help communities understand their legal rights, the protection mechanisms available and how to recognise and prevent workplace harassment. These sessions challenge harmful social norms and promote respect, equality, dignity and zero tolerance for violence.

Strengthening pathways to justice: SHARP informs participants about the legal and institutional channels available for reporting violations, seeking protection and supporting survivors. This helps women move from awareness to action.

Building a network of advocates: Through its work, SHARP is developing a network of women legal professionals and human-rights advocates who provide legal support, facilitate referrals and advocate for the rights of women and girls.

These efforts contribute to a more inclusive, accessible, survivor-centred and gender-responsive justice system, in which women and girls know their rights and can seek support and protection.

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From Lawyers to Leaders:

SHARP-Women Five-Day Capacity-Building Programme in Islamabad

SHARP-Pakistan organized a five-day capacity-building programme for young women lawyers in Islamabad on Human Rights, Gender-Responsive Justice and the Prevention of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). The programme was held with the support of the **Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany** and in collaboration with the **Federal Judicial Academy (FJA), Islamabad**. Its aim was to strengthen women's legal leadership and equip young lawyers with the knowledge and practical skills needed to advance human rights.

A Strong Start: The programme opened with remarks by **Mr. Hayat Ali Shah, Director General of FJA**. He welcomed the initiative and stressed the importance of strengthening access to justice and developing a new generation of women legal professionals. **Chairman SHARP Syed Liaqat Banori** highlighted the need to address the under-representation of women in Pakistan's justice system and to develop women lawyers capable of leading meaningful reform.

Learning from Leading Experts: Over five days, participants engaged with legal practitioners, judicial experts, academics, psychosocial professionals, forensic specialists and human rights advocates. The sessions covered:

- Women's rights under international law and SDG 5
- Gender-based violence and Pakistan's legal and constitutional framework
- GBV legislation
- Leadership and professional ethics
- Trauma-informed legal support
- Medico-legal procedures, evidence and procedural safeguards
- Strategic litigation and judicial decision-making
- Survivor-centred justice

Practical Learning: The programme combined interactive discussions, role plays, group activities and peer feedback. Participants practised trauma-informed communication and survivor-sensitive interviewing. These exercises built their confidence in handling sensitive cases with empathy and confidentiality, guided by the principle of do no harm.

Climate Justice and Gender: A dedicated session looked at how climate-related disasters, displacement and resource scarcity affect women and girls disproportionately. It also highlighted the role women lawyers can play in advancing climate justice and protecting vulnerable communities.

Exposure Visits: On the fourth day, participants visited key justice and protection institutions:

- Supreme Court of Pakistan
- National Forensic Agency (NFA), Islamabad
- Federal Ombudsperson Secretariat for Protection Against Harassment (FOSPAH)

The visits gave practical insight into judicial processes, digital and chemical/biological forensics, evidence-based investigation, workplace harassment laws and the institutional mechanisms available for protection and access to justice.

Community Awareness and Child Protection: The final day focused on community legal awareness, public speaking, child protection at borders and technology-facilitated trafficking. Participants completed practical public-speaking exercises and discussed the vulnerabilities of children on the move, including exploitation, trafficking, unsafe migration and online risks.

Concluding Ceremony: **Chairman-SHARP Syed Liaqat Banori** appreciated the successful completion of the programme. He thanked the Federal Judicial Academy, the German Embassy and the SHARP team for their support and dedication. Reflecting on the programme's vision, he said the participants "came as lawyers and went back as leaders."

Mr. Arno Kirchhof, Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, encouraged the participants to contribute to the rule of law and civil rights. He said that meaningful change can begin with small and consistent actions. **FJA Director General Mr. Hayat Ali Shah** congratulated the participants and appreciated SHARP for implementing the programme successfully. He encouraged the young lawyers to continue contributing to human rights, justice and the rule of law.

Looking Ahead: SHARP Pakistan expressed its sincere appreciation to the Federal Judicial Academy and the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany for their valuable support and collaboration. It also congratulated the participating women lawyers on completing the five-day journey. SHARP reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening women's leadership, access to justice, human rights protection and gender-responsive legal practice in Pakistan.



SHARP-Pakistan Hosts Networking Dinner in Islamabad





As part of the **SHARP-Women Capacity-Building Programme** for Young Women Lawyers, SHARP-Pakistan hosted a **networking dinner in Islamabad**, bringing together participating young women lawyers, institutional partners and key stakeholders to strengthen collaboration and advance a shared vision for inclusive justice.

The gathering was attended by Mr. Syed Liaqat Banori, Chairman; Mr. Arno Kirchhof, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany; Ms. Van, Deputy Head of UNDP; and Mr. Muhammad Mudassar Javed, CEO, SHARP-Pakistan and Ms. Huma Chughtai, MNA; and distinguished representatives of the Federal Judicial Academy (FJA), IOM, UNHCR, ECHO, the Canadian High Commission, federal prosecution authorities, the Ministry of Human Rights and other partner institutions.

The evening offered a valuable platform for dialogue, experience-sharing and professional networking, reinforcing collective efforts to strengthen women's leadership, the rule of law and equitable access to justice.

Mr. Kirchhof appreciated SHARP's leadership and SHARP-Pakistan's continued contributions to human rights and justice. SHARP-Pakistan sincerely appreciates all partners and stakeholders for their valued participation and support in nurturing the next generation of women legal professionals and advancing a more inclusive, accountable and resilient justice system in Pakistan.












PROMOTING LEGAL LITERACY & WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Under the SHARP-Women Project, SHARP-Pakistan, with the support of the **Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany**, conducted a series of Legal Literacy Sessions at universities and colleges in **Peshawar, Karachi, and Lahore**. The sessions focused on Gender Equality, Prevention of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Workplace Harassment, Legal Rights, Protection Mechanisms, and Access to Justice.

In Peshawar, sessions were held at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar (SBBWUP) and the University of Peshawar, engaging students from various departments and affiliated colleges. The sessions provided interactive platforms to discuss GBV, workplace harassment, legal protections, reporting mechanisms, & challenges faced by survivors. At SBBWUP, Mr. Javed Khan, Legal Practitioner, facilitated the discussion, while Ms. Tashfee Zia, Deputy Registrar, & Ms. Shahla Zahoor, Assistant Professor, Department of Law, supported the initiative. Ms. Memoona Batool Khan, Project Director KP, SHARP-Pakistan, highlighted the importance of legal awareness in preventing GBV and creating safer & more inclusive communities.

In Karachi, SHARP-Pakistan organized sessions at the University of Karachi and NED University of Engineering & Technology. At the University of Karachi, the session carried the theme "Know Your Rights – Empower Your Future" and was facilitated by Advocate Qurat Ul Ain, Advocate Somia Afsheen, and Advocate M. Aiman Ibrahim, with the participation of GBV Expert Ms. Parishey Amin. Students engaged in discussions and practical activities on legal rights, referral mechanisms, coping strategies, workplace harassment, and access to justice. Dr. Muhammed Tufail Jokio, Vice Chancellor Karachi University & NED University, was recognized for his support, while Dr. Ghazal Khawaja was appreciated for her valuable cooperation.

At NED University, The session was facilitated by Advocate Qurat-ul-Ain, Advocate Somia Afsheen, and Ms. Nudrat Nazir, PCM Supervisor. The session was attended by senior university officials, including Mr. Sayed Ghazanfir, Registrar, along with representatives from Student Affairs. SHARP-Pakistan presented a commemorative shield to the Registrar in appreciation of the university's support, while the SHARP team received a token of appreciation from NED University.

In Lahore, SHARP Lahore conducted a Legal Literacy Session at Superior Law College, engaging young women and men from the legal fraternity. Ms. Arooj shared information on legal remedies and the socio-legal protection of women. The session began with remarks by Dr. Aabida Yasin and concluded with remarks and thanks by Dr. Aabida Abdul Khaliq. The young participants expressed their commitment to becoming advocates for women-friendly and safe environments within the legal profession, challenging discrimination, and serving as safe spaces for women.

Across all sessions, students actively participated through discussions, questions, and practical examples. The activities strengthened awareness of legal rights and encouraged young people to contribute to safer, equal, respectful, and inclusive communities.





SHARP-Pakistan was pleased to host Mr. Marco Mogiani, Researcher at the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), at the SHARP Islamabad office.

Mr. Mogiani was warmly received by SHARP-Chairman Mr. Syed Liaqat Banori and CEO Mr. Mudassar Javed. The meeting featured an in-depth exchange on critical regional and global issues, including migration governance, human trafficking, irregular migration, and regional research collaboration along the Silk Routes.

SHARP-Pakistan greatly appreciates ICMPD's global leadership and evidence-based approach to advancing safe, orderly, and regular migration in line with international norms and the EU's external migration priorities.

SHARP values ICMPD's work on irregular migration, border dynamics, and migrant decision-making, and looks forward to exploring avenues for research collaboration and programmatic support to better protect vulnerable people on the move.



It was an honour for SHARP-Pakistan to host a distinguished delegation from the Canadian High Commission in Islamabad at the SHARP Head Office. The delegation, led by Ms. Lauren Shykora and Mr. Faisal Javaid Khokhar, was warmly received by SHARP-Chairman Mr. Syed Liaqat Banori, CEO Mr. Mudassar Javed, and PD Mr. Aatif Afzal.

A productive dialogue was held on strengthening the justice sector, enhancing the protection environment, and advancing collaborative solutions for vulnerable and forcibly displaced persons in Pakistan and the region.

The discussions reaffirmed our shared commitment to protection, human rights, and sustainable humanitarian solutions. SHARP-Pakistan deeply appreciates the Government of Canada's continued support for humanitarian and development initiatives.

As a token of mutual respect and partnership, souvenirs were exchanged during the visit. SHARP-Pakistan looks forward to further strengthening and deepening its collaboration with the Canadian High Commission.





SHARP was pleased to host the Denmark Donor Mission Mid-Term Review at our office in Islamabad, bringing together key protection partners for a focused discussion on legal aid, protection services, and the impact of our collective efforts.

The interaction provided an important opportunity to share experiences from the field, discuss emerging protection needs, and reflect on how partnerships can further strengthen access to justice, legal protection, and dignified solutions for vulnerable communities.

We deeply appreciate the engagement of the Government of Denmark, UNHCR, and our partners, whose continued support enables organizations like SHARP to deliver meaningful protection and legal assistance where it is needed most.

At SHARP, we remain committed to principled, rights-based and accountable protection programming, while continuously strengthening partnerships to ensure that no one is left without access to justice and protection.



SHARP was pleased to welcome the UNHCR Multi-Functional Team to its office today. The delegation, comprising representatives from various UNHCR departments, reviewed the progress achieved under UNHCR-supported interventions and engaged with the SHARP team on key programme priorities.

The visit also provided an important platform to discuss planning for the final quarter, ensuring a shared understanding of priorities and approaches in response to the evolving operational context. The technical insights, guidance, and diverse experience brought by the UNHCR team from across different provinces provided valuable perspectives for further strengthening the quality, reach, and responsiveness of services delivered by SHARP.

SHARP deeply values its continued partnership with UNHCR and remains committed to working together to ensure effective, accountable, and protection-centred support for communities in need.



CEO SHARP Mr. Muhammad Mudassar, along with the senior HR & Finance team, had a productive meeting with Mr. Ayman, Senior Manager Operations at Toll Group.

The discussion focused on operational excellence, global mobility, and potential avenues for future collaboration, with a shared commitment to developing transparent, ethical, and efficient services and solutions. At SHARP, we believe that strong systems build stronger futures. Partnerships with global organizations like Toll Group bring valuable expertise and world-class standards to this vision.



Mr. Mudassar Javed, CEO-SHARP & Co-Chair of the Civil Society Alliance on Migration (C-SAM), joined fellow civil society leaders and key stakeholders at the launch of C-SAM in Islamabad, bringing together 50+ civil society organizations from across Pakistan around a shared commitment to safer, more informed, and more dignified migration.

Guided by the collective resolve “ — کوئی قدم اکیلا نہیں No Step Taken Alone,” C-SAM aims to strengthen coordination among civil society, government institutions, international organizations, and development partners to ensure that the voices and needs of migrants, displaced communities, and vulnerable families remain at the centre of migration policy and practice.

The launch brought together key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Climate Change, IOM Pakistan, Overseas Employment Corporation (OEC), FIA, and representatives of international and development partners, highlighting the importance of coordinated approaches to migration, displacement, climate-related mobility, protection, and access to rights.

As a member of this collective platform, SHARP-Pakistan brings its experience in protection, migration, displacement, legal assistance, advocacy, and community-based interventions, contributing to efforts that connect policy, practice, and the lived realities of communities.

With technical support from IOM and the secretariat hosted by OxDev, with support from the Government of Canada/IRCC, C-SAM now moves from launch to action, from evidence to policy, and from protocols to people.

The real work begins now.



The CEO of SHARP Pakistan, Mr. Muhammad Mudassar Javed, participated in a consultation on the National Referral Mechanism, convened by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Pakistan.

The consultation brought together key stakeholders from the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Law and Justice, Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Ministry of Interior, and ICMPD, with a focus on strengthening coordinated responses to human trafficking and migration governance in Pakistan.

The discussion highlighted the importance of developing coordinated, data-driven and survivor-centred referral systems that strengthen protection for vulnerable individuals, improve access to justice, and ensure effective coordination among relevant institutions.

SHARP Pakistan appreciates IOM and all participating government and international partners for their continued efforts towards strengthening protection, accountability, access to justice, and survivor-centred responses to human trafficking in Pakistan.





CEO-SHARP, Mr. Mudassar Javed, participated in the Reception Dinner marking the 10th Anniversary of Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs) and the Budapest Process Working Group on Legal Pathways for Migration, held in Islamabad.

The event provided an opportunity for SHARP-Pakistan to engage with senior representatives of ICMPD, IOM Pakistan, and other key stakeholders and exchange views on safe, legal, and rights-based migration.

CEO SHARP, Mr. Mudassar Javed, congratulated the Migrant Resource Centres on 10 years of impactful work and reaffirmed SHARP-Pakistan’s commitment to continued collaboration in promoting protection, informed migration, and human rights.



SHARP Pakistan Organizes One-Day Capacity-Building Training on Human Rights Based Sentencing and Due Process for Justice-Sector Professionals of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Under the EU-funded project "Enhancing Access to Justice and Protection of Vulnerable Detainees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan," SHARP Pakistan organized a one day capacity-building training on Human Rights Based Sentencing and Due Process for legal professionals and key justice sector stakeholders across the province. The training brought together representatives from the KP Police, Prosecution Service, Prisons Department, Probation Directorate, the Directorate of Human Rights, Government of KP, and the legal fraternity with a shared objective of strengthening institutional capacity and promoting human rights compliant practices in line with international standards.

The event was formally inaugurated by Mr. Ghulam Ali, Director General Human Rights, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while Mr. Rehan Gul Khattak, Inspector General of Prisons, KP, graced the occasion as Chief Guest.

Addressing the participants, Mr. Ghulam Ali underscored the significance of such initiatives in the context of Pakistan's GSP+ status emphasizing the need to strengthen human rights protection, uphold due process, and align institutional practices with the country's international human rights obligations. The Chief Guest appreciated SHARP-Pakistan's initiative and its continued commitment to promoting human rights, strengthening justice-sector capacity, and ensuring access to justice for vulnerable detainees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



Under the EU-funded project “Enhancing Access to Justice and Protection for Vulnerable Communities in Charsadda and Nowshera, the SHARP-Pakistan EU Project Team conducted community-based legal awareness clinics for male and female community members in District Charsadda and Azakhel, District Nowshera.

The sessions focused on raising awareness of fundamental human rights, prisoners’ rights, and available avenues for accessing justice and legal assistance. In Azakhel, Nowshera, a dedicated Psychosocial Support (PSS) session was also conducted for female participants to promote mental well-being and provide holistic support to vulnerable community members.

Through these initiatives, SHARP-Pakistan continues to strengthen access to justice, enhance protection mechanisms, and promote the rights, dignity, and well-being of vulnerable communities across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



A stakeholders coordination meeting on “Complementary Interventions for Displaced Women, Girls, Children, and Persons with Specific Needs” was held in Lahore to strengthen coordination and improve referral pathways for vulnerable and displaced communities.

Ms. Arooj, Field Manager (FM) Lahore, gave an overview of SHARP Pakistan’s portfolio and its human rights initiatives, highlighting SHARP’s partnership with UNHCR for more than two decades. Ms. Huma Aziz, Project Manager, presented the project’s objectives and key interventions, stressing the need to identify gaps in protection services and build a strong referral mechanism. She also highlighted the role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in awareness, advocacy, coordination, and access to essential services.

Participants included child protection organizations, women-led organizations, Child Protection & Welfare Bureau/CAR Punjab, Dar-ul-Aman, the Education Department, and other stakeholders, who discussed existing services, protection concerns, and referral gaps.During the session, Mr. Usman Ghani outlined CAR’s support initiatives and government policy on undocumented refugees. Dr. Kalsoom Akhter emphasized sexual and reproductive health rights for at-risk women and girls. Mr. Khalid Qureshi called for inclusive services and accessible reporting mechanisms for persons with disabilities, while Ms. Uneeza Qureshi advocated for secure, non-discriminatory safe spaces for women, children, and persons with special needs.



SHARP-Pakistan conducted a Training of Community Volunteers (COVs) for the newly established male and female Community Networks in Khan Sher Gari Cluster, District Nowshera. The session was facilitated by Protection Officers Hamid Latif and Sara Israr, along with Lawyers Maimoona Afridi and Asad Aman.

After an introduction to SHARP and IOM, the training covered the roles and responsibilities of Community Volunteers and their contribution to community-based protection, including timely identification of protection concerns. Key topics included confidentiality and informed consent, key protection approaches, Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD), the Do-No-Harm principle, Psychological First Aid (PFA), referral mechanisms, and the Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM).

Through practical examples, interactive discussions, and role-play exercises on appropriate communication, safe information sharing, identifying protection concerns, and referring vulnerable individuals, participants built the skills to apply these concepts in their communities.



SHARP's Child Protection teams held Referral Working Group (RWG) meetings in District Mardan and Timergara, Dir Lower, to strengthen interagency coordination, improve referral mechanisms, and ensure timely access to protection and support services for refugee children.

15 representatives from the Child Protection Unit Mardan, District Administration Mardan, SPADO, Inspire Pakistan, and Saiban Organization attended. Mr. Asif Saeed, Head of Office, Inspire Pakistan KPK, also contributed to the discussions. 12 participants from the Child Protection Unit Timergara, District Probation Center, Inspire Pakistan, Al-Khidmat Foundation, Education Department, Sada Foundation, Dar-ul-Aman, and Social Welfare Department attended.



SHARP conducted an awareness-raising session at the Community Centre, Timergara, for male and female POCs from the migrant community.

The session focused on Protection Services and Legal Assistance available through SHARP. Participants were informed about their rights and available support, while IEC materials were distributed to strengthen awareness and understanding.



The CP team conducted a recreational activity session at Peshawar. The activity used engaging and interactive approaches to raise awareness among participants about child protection and the importance of creating a safe environment for children.

Another CP team conducted an awareness session in Nowshera, using audio & animated visuals. The session also encouraged community members to contribute to creating a safe, supportive environment for children.