

DASTAK CHARITABLE TRUST

ACCESS TO JUSTICE PROGRAM

IDRC PROJECT

Project Completion Report

Project Title: Building partnerships for scaling access to justice for survivors of sexual violence in Pakistan

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Contents

1. Introduction and Background	4
2. Project Structure	4
3. Framework of the Report	5
4. Project Completion Overview	6
5. Preparatory Activities:.....	9
5.1. Survey of the Punjab Women Protection System (PWPS)	9
6. Stakeholder’s Consultations	10
6.1. First Stakeholder’s Consultation	10
6.2. Second Stakeholders Consultation – Stakeholders Roundtable.....	11
7. Training Manuals	12
7.1. Practitioner’s Training Manual	12
7.2. Paralegal Training Manual.....	13
8. Workshops on PPR Services for Government and Non-Government Stakeholders	14
8.1. Practitioner’s Training: Mutual Learning Workshop	14
8.2. Paralegal Trainings.....	16
8.3. Lawyers Workshop.....	18
9. Monitoring and Case Observation in GBV Courts.....	19
10. Building Public Support for and Awareness on PPR Services with a Human Rights Approach.....	21
11. Overall Assessment and Recommendations.....	23

Abbreviations

DMS	Data Management System
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
GBV	Gender Based Violence
MLW	Mutual Learning Workshop
PWPS	Punjab Women Protection System

1. Introduction and Background

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is a prevalent issue faced by vulnerable segments of the population and disproportionately impacts women in Pakistan. While legislative and policy reforms have been endorsed at the state level to protect women their activation and implementation remains in a limbo. Focus on legislation and policy reform remains greater than enforcement of such laws and the establishment of protection mechanisms contained within. This and other factors including lack of resources, lack of awareness and inter-departmental coordination and under trained staff directly contribute to the weak response and underreporting of GBV.

Having a strong understanding of the key challenges and hurdles in survivors' access to justice and protection through Dastak's extensive work in the field, this project was designed to focus on promoting the activation and/or usage of existing services within the Punjab Women Protection System (PWPS), increase interplay between Dastak's work and state mechanisms, develop tools that to aid responders in the field to use WPS more effectively and improve the quality of response given to survivors of GBV. The Punjab Women Protection System is not a centralised structure and comprises of a range of services across government departments and this project has attempted to capture the full extent of the WPS in the province and push for shared understanding of this system among maximum responders.

The Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Act 2016 enacted and the Punjab Women Protection Authority Act 2017 are two key laws in the Punjab which establish a Provincial Protection System to deal with GBV. The Project has examined the mechanisms within these laws as well as those applicable in this context from the overall criminal and civil justice system in the country.

2. Project Structure

Project Outputs, Activities and Outcomes

The broad goals of the project were:

1. Activating the Punjab GBV Protection System
 - a. Enhancing knowledge on use of existing mechanisms
 - b. Building a cadre of well-trained practitioners and volunteers to provide PPR services to survivors
2. Access to Justice for GBV Survivors taking refuge at Dastak: Crisis Management & Emergency Response
 - a. Improving the design of protection policies to enhance effectiveness
3. Building Public Support for and Awareness on PPR Services with a Human Rights Approach
 - a. Creating community support for initiatives to eliminate incidence of GBV, and
 - b. Creating efficient channels and communication systems to disseminate and share knowledge and information on GBV related issues

To work towards the aforementioned goals, the project was divided in to a set of five Outputs, to be achieved through a defined set of activities and that would eventually lead to a five key outcomes reproduced below. The aim of the present project was not to push for policy reform but to mobilise and showcase use of existing protection mechanisms and available GBV response services.

3. Framework of the Report

The present report is structured in accordance with the Activities undertaken in the Project as described in Table below (based on the project proposal). Since each project activity feeds into multiple Outcomes and Outputs, each activity's narrative and description including its status of completion and relation to the Outcomes and Outputs of the Project are provided separately.

Note: Various project activities had to be reevaluated and adjusted in light of changing circumstances and rising challenges due to Covid-19. A two month No Cost Extension was also approved for the project (extending the project from December 2021 to February 2022), to overcome some of the delays caused by the pandemic.

4. Project Completion Overview

Goal	Outputs	Activities	Target	Achieved
Activating the Punjab GBV Protection System	Output 1	Stakeholder Consultations	2 Stakeholders Consultations	Outcome 1 Completed
	Output 2	Training manuals on Training of Practitioners and Volunteers on the Protection System	Produce One Training Manual	Outcomes 1 Completed
		Develop a Paralegal Training Manual for community level services and legal first aid	Produce One Training Manual	Outcomes 1 and 2 Completed
		Training Workshops on PPR services for government and non-government stakeholders	35 service providers and practitioners from 2 Districts of the Punjab trained in 2 different sessions to provide quality services and make effective interventions for relief to GBV survivors.	Outcomes 1 and 2 Workshop organised with 35 practitioners
			An estimated number of 40 lawyers, prosecutors and police investigators from Lahore and neighboring districts trained on GBV laws and related criminal procedures in 2 workshops	Outcomes 1 and 2 38 lawyers, prosecutors and investigation officers from Lahore and Multan were trained under the project.
		Training of Paralegals for community level services and legal first aid developed and in use for the respective trainings	40 paralegals from 10 different communities in 2 districts of the Punjab trained in 4 training sessions held during the Project Period.	Outcomes 1, 2 and 5 42 Paralegals from 28 communities in Lahore and Multan
	Output 3	Case Observation in GBV Courts Data Management System comprising information on the Protection System	Judicial decisions of GBV courts will be collected for evidence based study of trends. The observation of monitors will be appropriately	Outcome 4 Completed. 44 Judicial decisions of GBV courts collected for

		Mechanisms, standards and protocols, legal and other interventions in GBV cases, case studies, monitoring observations, and case law compilation established for use by stakeholders	documented and used for advocacy on legislative and/or procedural reform.	evidence based study of trends. The observation of monitors documented in a form that can be used for advocacy on legislative and/or procedural reform. 18 case studies documented and all interventions carried out the project recorded in a database and an analytical report produced. Data Management system upgraded as Dastak and one government shelter
Access to Justice for GBV Survivors taking refuge at Dastak: Crisis Management & Emergency Response	Output 4	Provision of free legal aid, legal consultation and advice; family mediation services; psycho-social counseling; and special assistance in navigating the legal and administrative forums for redress to women and children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 25-30 women receive free legal aid; + 50 women are given free legal consultation and advice; + 25-30 women receive family mediation services; + 100 women and accompanying children receive psycho-social counselling; + 15-20 women special assistance in navigating the legal and administrative forums for redress. 	<p>Outcomes 3 and 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 81 resident women and 54 non-residents received legal aid + 25 women received family mediation services + 131 women received counselling + 68 women provided special assistance

<p>Building Public Support for and Awareness on PPR Services with a Human Rights Approach</p>	<p>Output 5</p>	<p>Stakeholders in the implementation of GBV Protection system created at the community level</p>	<p>Stakeholders in the implementation of GBV Protection system created at the community level in 10 communities in 2 districts of the Punjab.</p>	<p>Outcome 5 Stakeholders established in 26 communities in Lahore and Multan through an awareness campaign</p>
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5. Preparatory Activities:

5.1. Survey of the Punjab Women Protection System (PWPS)

Since the primary objective of the present project was to enhance usage of and knowledge on existing GBV Protection, Prevention and Response (PPR) mechanisms, the first activity conducted under the project was mapping PWPS in Punjab i.e. the entire network of existing GBV response services available to survivors of GBV within the province of Punjab under the two key legislations as well other applicable laws.

For this purpose, a survey of the protection GBV protection mechanism and PPR services was carried out in Lahore and Multan. Due to the rising Covid-19 cases during the project period, field work for the WPS survey mechanisms in Lahore and Multan could not be carried out as planned. As an alternative, a survey questionnaire was used to conduct primary research through phone calls to relevant personnel working in various departments relevant to GBV to gather information pertaining to existing WPS mechanisms. In addition, key gender experts were also consulted from the government and non-government sectors to review the findings and for their comments, corrections and suggestions. The key questions asked were related to status of the response mechanisms, their mandate, how they could be accessed by survivors and the process of complaint registration and resolution.

Through this exercise, it was found that 16 government departments, along with their subsidiary services and wings, are the key actors in the provincial WPS, which also included some mechanisms active only in Lahore and Multan. This covers departments that provide direct response services to survivors such as the police and shelters and those that undertake research advocacy and monitoring such as the Women Development Department (WDD). In addition, law makers also play a role in the WPS system particularly the Parliamentary Standing Committees focusing on gender and human rights. The survey report also diagrammatically captures the breadth of WPS mechanisms in the province to collectively view the different element of the system, described in the narrative. It identifies key personnel within these response mechanisms and who will be part the Practitioners training under the project. All information collected was received and verified by authentic sources within these departments. The narrative and the map can be seen in the Findings Report (See Annex 2 and 3).

Note: As the PWPS continues to evolve the present map and supplementary document can be adjusted to reflect new developments.

To ensure credibility and precision of the information gathered during this survey, only officials who were currently serving at relevant departments and service providers were contacted. For example, for information on the Punjab Police department a serving Gender Focal Person of the police was contacted. She was able to provide a full depiction of the Police Department services relevant to GBV response which included hiring of all female Investigation Officers (IOs) for the investigation of GBV cases within Punjab. Additionally, information that was collected from

alternate resources such as official websites of the various departments was also vetted by relevant personnel first to confirm its reliability and then included in the survey. An example of this is the official website of the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) which advertises ‘Transitional Housing for Women’ to provide women across Punjab a safe and protected living alternative so they may not have to continue residing in abusive households. However, on further probing it was found that this project was active only temporarily and currently no such housing is being provided by PCSW to survivors of GBV. Similarly, the Punjab Prosecution Department was to set up a Legal Aid Agency under the Punjab Legal Aid Act 2018. While the Legal Aid Agency is part of the Punjab Prosecution Departments portfolio online, it remains inactive and thus far the Agency has not started operations. This is reflected in the supplementary document to be read alongside the map of the PWPS that describes the services of each department/organization identified as part of the PWPS.

(Survey report shared with the Second Interim Report)

6. Stakeholders’ Consultations

Output/Outcome	Description and Goal	Status of Completion and Other Comments
Output 1	First Stakeholders Consultation to understand the PWPS, identify gaps, create partnerships etc.	The first Stakeholders Consultation was conducted in the first quarter of the Project.
	Second Stakeholders Consultation to assess progress and widening the scope of implementation to other districts.	The second stakeholders Consultation termed as the ‘Stakeholder’s Roundtable Consultation’ was conducted in the last quarter of the Project with a moderately revised objective

6.1. First Stakeholder’s Consultation

- a) Know the system as created under the two key legislations
- b) Assess the capacity of the authorities responsible for its operationalization and functioning
- c) Identify existing gaps and to mark out areas of advocacy on policy/legal reform and practical/technical assistance necessary to fill those gaps
- d) Identify expertise in the relevant areas of action and to create partnerships to strengthen the Activation Plan and to give it sustainability beyond the Project period

The first Stakeholder’s Consultation was successfully carried out on 9 December 2020. This consultation was attended by a range of individuals representing key departments and organizations in GBV response including judges, prosecutors, police officers, representatives from the Social Welfare Department and Women Development Department etc. The primary purpose of this consultation was to introduce key GBV response stakeholders to each other who often work in silos, discuss challenges and bridge any information gaps prevalent in the GBV PPR network and build consensus on the Rights-based Approach (RBA).

Stakeholders engaged in in-depth dialogue and based on their experience concluded that the primary challenges faced by the women protection system were lack of awareness amongst survivors of their rights and available response services, lack of coordination amongst service providers, a low conviction rate in GBV cases due to resiled witnesses and out of court compromises, incomplete or deficient evidence collection which results in unfair acquittals of perpetrators, weaknesses and gaps in investigation which weaken the survivor's case and an overall lack of resources and funding to improve practices and standards to benefit survivors.

Participants agreed on action points to help alleviate the abovementioned challenges which included, improving coordination and creating linkages amongst each other, training practitioners and service providers to promote an effective response, refining data collection and setting up smaller centers unlike the VAWC in Multan that are easier to manage. This consultation was a beneficial learning exercise based on the expertise and experience of service providers which carved the way forward for the present project.

(Report shared with Second Interim Report)

6.2. Second Stakeholders Consultation – Stakeholders Roundtable

- a) Assess the progress achieved and measures necessary to ensure sustainability
- b) Identify the means and methods for progressive widening of the scope of implementation to other districts and provinces

The second Stakeholder Consultation or the Stakeholders Roundtable Consultation was organised in February 2022 to share the project findings with GBV stakeholders. The consultation focused on discussing the findings of the Mutual Learning Workshop (MLW) (See) and on urgent measures needed to facilitate the functioning of the WPS in the Punjab. Representatives from all key departments involved in GBV response attended the roundtable including Police, Prosecution, Health (Medico-legal), Social Welfare, Cybercrime Wing as well as members of the legal fraternity and Civil Society Organisations.

Drawing from its learnings from project, particularly its workshops with practitioners, it presented a set of challenges and recommendations. The attendees were made aware of the gaps and concerns related to their departments in regard to GBV response and some recommendations were also proposed to address the identified gaps. Recommendations included developing a training schedule for police officers who deal with a high ratio of GBV cases to ensure their continued sensitivity and empathy towards survivors, increasing staff hiring so that existing staff members at departments such as the FIA are not overburdened and burn outs may be prevented, as well as giving the Punjab Women Protection Authority the role focal coordination body for all GBV related interventions. Through this Consultation departments responding to GBV were also able to clarify various misconceptions like the Surgeon-Medico Legal confirmed the validity of medico-legal examinations conducted without judicial orders.

It was stressed that coordination between public and private sector services is critical for effective response to GBV and the need to understand the challenges faced by each actor in he

WPS in delivering their mandates. All departments agreed that they have learnt to value the value of engagement and cooperation and to support each other in addressing their challenges instead of only criticising for non-performance or lapses. The participants agreed that no the GBV responder can operate in isolation.

It was agreed and proposed by the attendees that Dastak with their support will develop a policy action paper that will outline these gaps and solutions which can be used for advocacy and action at the legislative and administrative levels.

(Report on Key Takeaways attached as Annex A)

7. Training Manuals

7.1. Practitioner’s Training Manual

Output/Outcome	Description and Goal	Status of Completion and Other Comments
Output 2	Training manual for GBV Practitioners.	A Practitioner’s Training Manual for the training of practitioners was developed and used to organise learning sessions with practitioners.

In order to build a cadre of well-informed practitioners acquainted with PWPS, appropriate laws, the Rights-Based Approach (RBA) and the principles of survivor handling as envisioned in the Outcomes of the project, a training manual has been developed which is a culmination of essential information and services on GBV response and intended to be used for training of practitioners or as a resource that is of direct benefit to the practitioners for testing and enhancing their knowledge.

GBV response is a complex and highly sensitive field of work and calls for multi-sectoral cooperation and collective action. All practitioners interacting with survivors must possess specialised skills and a set of core competencies to be able to provide a response to GBV that meets the needs of the survivor and in line with human right principles. Often times, GBV response services are offered in silos and many GBV survivors slip through the cracks due to the lack of linkages between various service providers. Despite separate roles in the system, a basic set of information is relevant to all GBV responders, which includes but is not limited to relevant laws and legal remedies, survivor handling, the rights-based approach, existing response services etc. The Manual was created with this context in consideration and therefore incorporates an essential set of information accessed by practitioners in the form of a single resource and used to guide their response to and interaction with survivors.

The Manual produced under the project provides information as well engages the users in activities and self-assessments to make to easier for trainers and practitioners to evaluate their existing and post training concepts and perceptions surrounding GBV prevention and response. The key areas covered in the manual include:

- Gender - Basic gender concepts, power structures and the impact of GBV
- Punjab Women Protection System- the state’s role and existing GBV services
- Human Rights-Based Approach- local and international law
- Laws and Procedures
- Key Competencies of Practitioners
- Survivor-handling Ethics and Tools
- Collecting, Storing and Analyzing Data

Focus Group Discussion: The manual outline and proposed topics were first reviewed and discussed through a FGD to ensure it encapsulates all necessary content by directly involving the target users in the development of the manual. FGD was attended by selected representatives of the PWPS including a Prosecutor, Social Welfare Officer and representatives of the government run shelters, crisis centers and provincial Cybercrime Wing. The structure and overall contents of the manual were shared and their feedback noted with regards to the contents and organization of information within the manual. Some key recommendations were:

1. The manual should include content that addresses prevention of GBV and educate those using the manual on how to incorporate awareness as part of their work to reduce incidence of GBV.
2. The manual should have information that enhances the knowledge of the practitioners on available services and who to contact to avail a particular service.
3. Practitioners must also learn the significance of data management and to use data for decision-making and drive their interventions.
4. Digital/online harassment should be covered in the manual.
5. The manual must contain sections on gender concepts and gender sensitivity as this where approach of many GBV practitioners lacks.

The Practitioner’s Training Manual was researched and developed by Dastak with the support of the Digital Rights Foundation (DRF); a private sector organization working for the rights of women and girls with a special focus on cybercrimes and GBV in online spaces and with previous experience of developing handbooks and manuals on different aspects of GBV response.

(Manual is attached as Annex B)

7.2. Paralegal Training Manual

Output/Outcome	Description and Goal	Status of Completion and Other Comments
Output 2	Manual for the training of Paralegals	A Paralegal Training Manual for the training of Paralegals was successfully developed and used for trainings.

In the context of Pakistan’s social and legal realities, support to community level actors is an essential element to facilitate access to state mechanisms and to other services related to GBV. In its long experience in providing legal and social support to women in distress, Dastak has

observed the efficacy of paralegal workers in ensuring outreach of legal and quasi-legal initiatives. Paralegals have proved to be a valuable support for women’s access to justice and provide not only an important source of information and awareness on processes for relief, but also empower communities and enhance their self-sufficiency.

Dastak has developed a training manual as well as trained a group of 35 community workers as paralegals through a set of two 3-day workshops curated on the basis of the Manual. The Paralegal Manual is divided into four sections parts; Human Rights Framework, Introduction to Family and Inheritance Laws, Crimes against Women and Criminal Justice System; and Dealing with GBV Survivors/Victims. Section on family law is dedicated to topics such as marriage contract (nikah), divorce, khula, maintenance, guardianship, inheritance and custody of children etc. while criminal law pertains to topics such as physical hurt, sexual assault, police procedures etc. The Manual also describes the judicial systems and remedies available in both family law and criminal matters and uses case studies to describe how remedies were availed in previous cases, how courts interpret different articles and clauses of various laws and the processes undergone.

The Manual was developed in consultation with a law and human rights expert Sohail A. Warraich who has extensive experience in women right research and training. He has also served as a member of the National Commission on the Status for Women and has been conducting paralegal training for over fifteen years. Sohail Warraich also conducted the training of paralegals based on this Manual.

(Manual is attached as Annex C)

8. Workshops on PPR Services for Government and Non-Government Stakeholders

8.1. Practitioners’ Training: Mutual Learning Workshop

Output	Description and Goal	Status of Completion and Other Comments
Output 2	An estimated number of 35 service providers and practitioners from 2 Districts of the Punjab trained in 2 different sessions to provide quality services and make effective interventions for relief to GBV survivors.	Approximately 35 Practitioners who interact with survivors of GBV were part of the three-day Mutual Learning Workshop and benefitted from learning about the PWPS. Most participants were from Lahore as permission was denied to prosecutors and police officers from Multan by their departments due to Covid 19.
	A well-informed cadre of service providers with all the relevant expertise essential for institutionalizing good practices in GBV response.	35 Practitioners were provided a mutual learning platform to understand the PWPA, identify gaps in service delivery, improve coordination through referrals and engage in meaningful dialogue aimed at improved GBV response.

To put the Practitioners Manual to use, a **Mutual Learning Workshop (MLW)** was organised to acquaint and introduce existing GBV responders and practitioners with the knowledge compiled in the Manual. MLW comprised of a mixture of plenary discussion with PWPA representatives and breakout sessions on human rights approach and gender sensitivity.

Using the findings of the PWPS survey, participants and speakers were identified for the present workshop to ensure representation from the full spectrum of PWPS. The workshop was attended by 35 practitioners and sessions were led by 15 speakers representing both the public sector and civil society organizations including Punjab Police, Punjab Prosecution Department, GBV Court, Health (Medico Legal), Social Welfare Department (SWD), Punjab Women Protection Authority (PWPA), Child Protection and Welfare Bureau (CPWB), Punjab Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW), Federal Investigative Agency (FIA) Cyber Harassment, Human Rights Commission Pakistan (HRCP), Digital Rights Foundation (DRF), Bali Memorial Trust (BMT) and Dastak Charitable Trust (Dastak). The workshop was conducted over three days in Lahore. Discussants in each panel were provided with a copy of the Practitioner's Manual prior the workshop who curated their presentations/discussion accordingly, focusing on their department/organization's mandate, services and role in GBV response.

Workshop Outcomes:

The workshop was able to contribute towards i) creating awareness amongst Practitioners regarding the PWPS and alternative services that exist within GBV response ii) improving coordination in the PWPS by creating connections and linkages that could be relied on for referrals and guidance of survivors and iii) identifying and revealing gaps in the PWPS that could be taken up and shared with stakeholders.

1. This workshop was able to educate the attendees on the full role of aforementioned departments of GBV.
 - + SWD, for example, has a diverse portfolio and offers services for female survivors of violence, widowed and divorced women, underage girls in need of protection and orphaned children that most participants were not aware of but became familiarized with as a result of the workshop.
 - + Practitioners in attendance were largely unaware of the FIAs role in curbing cyber-crime and harassment and the services available to survivors of such violence. Since the workshop, at least four practitioners/organizations were connected to the FIA including the Human Rights Crisis Centre for Women (Crisis Centre) operating under the SWD. In this way, the workshop contributed towards inter-departmental coordination by creating connections and linkages that could be used for referring survivors to relevant response services of GBV.
2. In addition to providing a forum for mutual learning, the workshop also allowed Practitioners to engage in meaningful dialogue which revealed gaps and good practices of the participating departments including underfunding and lack of resources of the police, designation of female investigation officers for all cases related to GBV. A full list of these

gaps with accompanying recommendations and good practices may be found in Annex. These gaps and recommendations were later shared and discussed with stakeholders at the Stakeholder’s Roundtable Consultation.

(Outcome report with the list of speakers, participants and agenda is attached as Annex D)

(For photographs: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CaUP98Sryuo/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

8.2. Paralegal Trainings

Output/Outcome	Description and Goal	Status of Completion and Other Comments
Output 2	An estimated number of 40 paralegals from at least 10 different communities in 2 districts of the Punjab trained in 2 training sessions	42 Paralegals trained from over 10 communities across Lahore and Multan Instead of 2 training sessions in total 2 training sessions were held in each district as it was thought it was best to cover civil and criminal laws in different sessions.
Output 5	Community level stakeholders created in the implementation of GBV Protection system	The Paralegals trained contributed in the efforts to enhance awareness and use of GBV protection systems in communities.
Outcome 5	Improving access of information about usage of GBV response services in communities leading to an increased interest in protection mechanisms and support structures and creating public support for them	Training Paralegals from various communities across two districts are committed to making information more accessible within communities. The feedback and overall participation of paralegals during trainings reflected an increased interest in understanding protection mechanisms and how they work in GBV response. Paralegal’s subsequent referral of survivors in communities to Dastak reflects that they are mobilised to create public support for the PWPS in their communities. They have also participated in the awareness campaign carried out this project and are part of the response group to support Dastak’s crisis center for court, police and Union Council accompaniments.

After the finalization of the Paralegal Training Manual, two sets of three-day trainings were organized in Lahore and Multan each to train community workers as paralegals equipped with the ability to guide survivors on matters related to GBV and accompany them to relevant

service providers such as police stations and courts. Given the high density of information contained in the manual, the trainings were split into two parts to ensure maximum comprehension and retention of participants.

By the end of the workshops, 42 paralegals had acquired fresh knowledge of laws, services, processes related to GBV and were in a position to guide survivors in communities with regards to their best interests and the options available to them in GBV response. The trainings were aimed at creating a holistic understanding of the human rights framework in Pakistan and the civil and criminal laws related to protection of women rights. The trainees learnt concepts such as gender sensitivity, gender binary, orientation, gender biases, fundamental rights, the rights-based approach to GBV response and principles of survivor handling.

Participant Feedback: At the end of all 4 sets of trainings in Multan and Lahore participants were asked to share their feedback with regards to what they learned and how they will use this information. This feedback was collected in written form and participants were free to remain anonymous. The feedback reflected that most participants found sessions related to underage marriage, nikkah, types of violence, laws and resources where survivors of violence could be directed particularly useful and felt they were in a better position to protect their own rights as well as guide others. One participant who was the Secretary of a Union Council stated that with these trainings she is much better informed to guide women frequenting her office related to their rights and options in case they wish to report violence against themselves.

Participant Feedback

"After this training, I feel I am at a better position to help women who are facing violence and abuse in our communities and will actively look for opportunities to help"
Nasir Iqbal Alvi Lahore

"As a social worker and paralegal, the information provided in the workshop has direct relevance with our communities which we pass on to them, especially about services where they can seek relief" Muhammad Abbass Rajput Multan

"Learning about changes in law, particularly on domestic violence sexual harassment, was very useful" Amjad Khan Lahore

"I gained much more clarity on how government processes work, particularly Union Council" Saima Benjamin Multan

"We saw, studied and learnt about laws and procedures related to violence against women protection. This will allow us to act as bridge between services and communities and contribute to reducing the challenges to women and child rights in our communities" Sikander Hayyat Lahore

"It has taught us about laws, procedures and services which can help women feel much more secure." Durr-e-Shehwar Multan

"We hope to continue receiving such trainings and imparting knowledge in our communities" Danial Lahore

“This workshop has guided us in details as where we need to go in case in any there is any problem in our community related to GBV” Shaheen Daniel Lahore

Participants from Lahore were chosen via in-person interviews at Dastak’s Lahore office whereas for participants in Multan Dastak relied on its contacts in the district including Human Rights Commission of Pakistan Multan and links of its community contacts of Lahore in Multan. During participant selection it was ensured that that there was gender diversity, different communities from across Lahore and Multan were included, participants with varying occupations were involved and individuals from both the Christian and Islamic faith were represented. As a result, Dastak was able to engage an array of individuals from different age groups including students, teachers, pastors, employees of the Women’s Desk at the Church, Secretary Union Council and social activists. This was done to warrant greater access of survivors from different occupations, communities, age groups etc. to paralegals who can guide them in matters related to GBV. Another measure taken to ensure the paralegals to act responsibly emphasizing and reiterating that paralegals are not lawyers and cannot render legal advice, however these trainings will be equip them to provide information on rights and procedures and services, mediate conflicts, and assist communities in dealing with government and local authorities and organizing community members to undertake collective action against harmful social norms and customs.

Post Training Engagement: Dastak has engaged paralegals in various activities and field work to test their learning, knowledge, leadership and communication abilities and understanding of a human rights and gender sensitive approach. This engagement is also expected to create permanent linkages with communities for continuous feedback in order to make GBV mechanisms user friendly.

1. All female paralegals are part of an emergency response group through which they can provide services to affected women for quasi-legal and non-legal interventions and support Dastak’s shelter for accompaniment of its residents to forums, including court appearances.
2. Paralegals will provide resettlement assistance to survivors who are looking to live independently in safe neighbourhoods where they are supported by community members.
3. The paralegals were also tasked with promoting the awareness campaign organised under this project on women’s matrimonial rights and GBV response services.
4. Paralegals have also been selected to conduct awareness sessions for its residents e.g. one paralegal trained under the project is also a qualified homeopathic doctor will design a session on holistic healing and good health for the shelter residents.

(Trainer’s Briefing Report with the participants list and agenda is attached as Annex E)

(Photographs: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CXdGsLKMjgn/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

8.3. Lawyers Workshop

Output/Outcome	Description and Goal	Status of Completion and Other
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		Comments
Output 2	An estimated number of 40 lawyers, prosecutors and police investigators trained in 2 training sessions	2 trainings organised for 22 participants from Lahore and 16 participants from Multan on Improving Outcomes of Criminal Litigation in Gender Based Violence Cases

Two lawyers' workshops were organised during the project cycle which were attended by 38 participants (22 from Lahore and 16 from Multan). The workshops were held on separate days for Lahore and Multan participants. Police officials were also invited to ensure a comprehensive discussion on the process of GBV investigation and trial. The discussions at the workshop resulted in concrete suggestions to overcome the procedural gaps which all the participants agreed on and were willing to adopt in their practices. The key recommendations related to overcoming evidentiary weaknesses due to delayed reporting, value of DNA evidence, guiding survivors on Medico-legal process and the correct approach for victim questioning and language and tone of the counsels.

Participants feedback showed that the workshop allowed them to refresh their legal knowledge, particularly on the latest amendments in relevant laws, and revisit the intricacies of criminal laws involved in GBV litigation and response. In addition, it provided them a platform to hold informed discussions on the addressing challenges in the litigation process with other peers in the field.

The workshops were facilitated by Saroop Ijaz who is a practising criminal lawyer and also the country representative for Human Rights Watch in Pakistan. Saroop is also a part of the adjunct faculty at the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) Law School and regularly writes on legal matters in national newspapers.

(Workshop Report is attached as Annex F)

(See Photographs: https://www.instagram.com/p/CS_clvtLyZo/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=)

9. Monitoring and Case Observation in GBV Courts

Output/Outcome	Description and Goal	Status of Completion and Other Comments
Output 2	Monitoring protocols established for the GBV Courts and other mechanisms of the GBV Protection System. Data Management System comprising information on the Protection System Mechanisms, standards and protocols, legal and other interventions in GBV	44 Judgments and 14 court visit observations recorded in a report. 18 case studies developed and all interventions recorded in a DMS.

	cases, case studies, monitoring observations, and case law compilation established and in use by stakeholders.	
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As a part of Output 3 of the project, Dastak carried out a monitoring exercise of the GBV Court under the project to bring forward some of the key issues and highlight areas of concern that need to be addressed in the Punjab Protection System on GBV. Dastak engaged two practicing lawyers to carry out the GBV Court monitoring. In light of the Covid-19 situation, training and mobilizing multiple monitors, as originally planned, was no longer feasible due to which Dastak took the services of two lawyers who carried out this exercise under the project.

The monitoring methodology comprised of:

1. Compilation and study of GBV Court judgments

Over the course of the project Dastak compiled and reviewed 44 judgments of the court to assess how this court was delivering justice and where the specific gaps lie in the justice system. The review highlighted that trials at GBV court suffer from the same problems as regular courts and are often marred with delays, rate of victim resiling is high, prosecution and police investigation is deficient and court’s approach frequently oscillates between liberal to conservative.

2. Trial observations

Over the course of the project 14 observation visits were conducted for which monitoring protocols were established based on the notified Court SOPs. The observation visits were spread over a period 8 months from July 2021 to February 2022. Monitoring Protocols were developed based on the Court’s notified SOPs and tested through these visits.

An overarching observation was that the SOPs were not consistently followed and were mostly at the discretion of the judge. Specific observations included the non-performance of Female Protection Officers, frequent transfer of judges (none of the cases reviewed were presided over by the same judge from start to finish) and no defined method and process for the assignment of the cases to the court as no special procedural law has been passed yet for GBV courts.

(GBV Court Observations Report attached as Annex G)

Access to Justice for GBV Survivors taking refuge at Dastak: Crisis Management & Emergency Response

Crisis management and emergency response under this project involved provision of PPR services to resolve and/or mitigate the crises that women in distress confront. This includes legal aid, interventions with police and administrative authorities, provision of safe transport facility for the concerned women to appear for court hearings, family mediation, 20counselling, resettlement plans, and medical care for the resident population of the shelter.

Crisis management brought Dastak staff and decision makers in direct contact with the formal and non-formal justice forums as well as the systems for delivering relief to survivors of violence. It allowed Dastak to stay updated on challenges in access to justice in this area, but also continuously engaged with finding solutions which it tested internally. It has also allowed Dastak to bring forward some of the key issues and highlight areas of concern that need to be addressed in the Punjab Protection System on GBV which were subsequently raised at the stakeholder consultations and workshops with practitioners.

Quick Overview (Output 4)		
Indicator	Achieved (Persons)	Target (Persons)
Total admissions to women and girls (including 21 readmissions)	152	100+
Total children (including 17 readmissions)	124	-
Free legal aid (resident and non-residents)	135	80
Free Legal Consultations	133	50
Family mediation service	25	25-30
Psycho-social counseling sessions	131	65-68
Medical assistance (Nov 2022 - Feb 2022)	90	
Providing special assistance (interventions) in navigating the legal and administrative forums	68	30-35
Helpline response (Jan 21 - Feb 22) <i>Legal advice: 387</i> <i>Provided information about Dastak and its services: 81</i>	468	1000+
Children who received informal education	73	
Women attended Adult Literacy Classes	9	

Dastak's case resolution demonstrated the use of WPS mechanism at various steps including registration of cases and follow-up with the police, arranging identification documents and court documents and referrals to other services for assistance or shelter.

Interventions were also recorded in the form of case studies. 18 case studies were produced under the project which women's experiences surviving violence, interactions with state response mechanisms as well Dastak's collaboration and engagement with the different institutions to provide relief.

(Data Management and Crisis Analysis Report attached as Annex H)

(Case Studies are attached as Annex I)

10. Building Public Support for and Awareness on PPR Services with a Human Rights Approach

Output/Outcome	Description and Goal	Status of Completion and Other Comments
Output 5	Stakeholders in the	Outcome 5

	implementation of GBV Protection system created at the community level in 10 communities in 2 districts of the Punjab.	Stakeholders established in 26 communities in Lahore and Multan through an awareness campaign and the paralegal program.
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Parallel to efforts made for providing access to justice at the legal and administrative levels, Dastak also ran an awareness campaign to address factors which give impetus to GBV and prevents affectees from seeking help and creating stakeholders at the community level to use WPS. The project initially proposed conducting community awareness events with participation of locals, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), police and administrative officials, law makers, public health officials, lawyers and paralegals and social services in 10 communities selected from 2 districts of the Punjab. However, the activity design was altered to the resurgence of Covid-19 and the physical community events were replaced with IEC material as a means for awareness-raising through a targeted campaign and the paralegals were engaged to distribute material in their communities. Printed material was used to disseminate information on survivor rights and how to access to WPS mechanisms. Response were observed through Focus Group Discussions and small group meetings with volunteers/paralegals and community residents.

With the support of the paralegals trained under this project, Dastak initiated a community awareness campaign in Multan and Lahore. The campaign's topic was matrimonial rights of Muslim women and relief avenues available for restoration of violated rights. The campaign specially carried at beauty salons which are women-centric spaces and allow for information to reach a large number of women. A major portion of cases received by WPS service providers, particularly by shelters and crisis centers, are of women suffering mistreatment and violation of the fundamental rights in marriage which often escalates to domestic violence and abuse. It was, therefore, considered important to not only build awareness on WPS services to victims but also on the legal and constitutional protections available to women and girls so that campaign information targets both prevention and protection of GBV. During initial planning and research, a common concern identified was that women who are most in need of information have limited mobility and restrained social lives. Access to such women often proves a challenge unless door to door campaigns are initiated. Among the limited public spaces these women are can freely visit are local beauty salons, which are women-only, women-led safe spaces. Such salons are run by women residents of the communities in either small rented spaces or inside their homes. These salons are frequented by women and girls living in adjacent areas, who become regular customers and form a bond with the salon owners and/or staff. The salon becomes an intimate community space for women to discuss their personal stories and issues.

The campaign content aimed to educate women and girls on their rights related to marriage focused on clarifying the common misconceptions associated with marriage contract (*nikahnama*) as well basic information that all women should know before entering into a

marriage for e.g. the legally valid age of marriage, dower and consent. The campaign also shared information on WPS services included government centers as well private service providers such as Dastak. A directory of GBV service providers was a part of the campaign material.

The current campaign was executed in 50 salons in Lahore and Multan with over 500 pamphlets distributed till end of the project. The campaign message continues to be disseminated in salons as well other service providers including government shelters and crisis centers and campaign agents (and paralegals) are provided additional material for distribution as and when required. This campaign has provided an opportunity to inform women of their matrimonial rights and on the existence of services that can help affectees seek relief in case those rights are violated. At least 20 women have approached Dastak with queries and complaints as a result of the campaign. The campaign has the potential to be extended within minimum additional costs as there are several small scale salons all over the city. There are salon networks across the country where women come together which creates an excellent platform to build community interest and involvement in the usage of PPR services and the WPS. Campaign agents also now are permanent linkages that Dastak has created in communities, many of who are interested in working and supporting institutions like Dastak by referring women as well as promote and disseminate awareness material on securing rights of women. As more women become aware of and engage with women protection services, the expected long term effect is that the services will also improve with better informed complainants and beneficiaries.

(Campaign Report attached as Annex J)

11. Overall Assessment and Recommendations

This project has allowed Dastak to develop useful tools and liaisons to effectively deliver GBV response in the country. Dastak has been attempting to increase focus on research on GBV mechanisms and development of resources for awareness and advocacy in addition to directly responding to GBV affectees. Dastak's hands-on experience places it in a unique position to feed policies and practical research. This project provided Dastak with exactly this opportunity to synergise research with crisis response. Under this project, Dastak was able elevate institutional data management systems and create useful content to guide all those working in GBV response to make knowledgeable and well-supported decisions as practitioners often have to make real world decisions with limited information. To facilitate the process, two manuals have been produced under this project - one for all GBV practitioners and the second specifically for community paralegals.

The second most valuable aspect of the project, an inextricable element of effective GBV response, was developing strong interagency cooperation across the WPS sector. Under this project, Dastak was able to convene members of the WPS in the Punjab and provide mutual learning platforms to bridge some of the information and coordination gaps. As expounded in the project reports, this project demonstrates the benefits of mutual learning and the sound

recommendations that can emerge from jointly discussing challenges and experiences of handling cases.

Lastly, this project allowed Dastak to reach out to community level networks to advance uptake of GBV protection mechanisms. Through the paralegal training program and community awareness campaign, rolled out under the project, Dastak has established strong community contacts that will continue to play a role in spreading knowledge on women's legal rights as well as connect survivors to WPS mechanisms. Only continuous use of such mechanisms will reveal its practical limitations and allow for more meaningful advocacy to address systemic faults.

In terms of administrative aspects of the project, it is recommended that such projects should be at least 24 months to ensure smooth execution of the goals. With the pandemic taking up most of the project period, Dastak only had small windows between peak periods of the outbreak to implement activities. IDRC, however, offered Dastak the flexibility to make necessary modifications within the project design to adjust to changing social conditions and without burdening it with excessive reporting requirements.

IDRC should continue to fund projects which integrate research with practice as well that involve public-private partnerships and which also include an awareness raising component. Issues such as GBV are a culmination of multiple human rights violations and require approaches which draw from experiences of responders as well as established legal and human rights principles and cannot be holistically addressed with isolated actions.
