

# MINORITIES' CHALLENGES

## Assessment Report - 2021

Funded By: Minorities Right Group UK

Implemented By: Khwendo Kor

Consultants: (Malalai Akhtari & Subhash Chander)

Conducted By:

SUBHASH Educational Complex - Peshawar

Mob: 0092 0336 917 4489

Email: [info@subhash.edu.pk](mailto:info@subhash.edu.pk)

<http://www.subhash.edu.pk>

# CONTENTS

1. Preface	2
2. Introduction & Disclaimer	3
3. Backgrounds	4
4. Methodology	5
5. Issues Identified	6
6. Enhancing Education & Educational Opportunities	6
7. Need for improvement in Job Opportunities	6
8. Burial Facilitation	7
9. Misleading Educational Material & Curriculum	7
10. Provision of Legal Framework	8
Blasphemy laws	8
Certification of Religious Leaders/Institutions	9
Family Laws for Minority Communities	9
Gender Balance Representation	10
Political Representation under New Electoral Reforms	11
Illegal land occupation and evacuation	12
11. Priority Based Fund Utilization	12
12. Need for Interfaith and intra-faith Unity	13
13. Problem of Water and Sanitation	13
14. Need for Awareness and Synchronization	14
15. Forced Conversion to be Guarded	14
16. Educational Problems of School going Minorities	16
17. Life of Transgender	17
18. Recommendations	18
19. Questionnaire	19
20. List of Individual and Institutions Visited	20

## PREFACE

Although Pakistan is overwhelmingly Muslim majority country yet it is a multi-religious, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society. The demography of Pakistan from the local Indus Valley Civilization to modern times includes the arrival and settlement of many ethnic groups and their cultures from Central Asia, Middle East and Europe. All major ethnic groups in Pakistan have had thousands of years of rich shared history and interaction. Pakistan's diversity is our strength – it makes up the rich and beautiful mosaic of the social fabric of Pakistani life. However due to various and complex political, economic and religious influences, Pakistan during recent years have not enjoyed a sense of security with regard to its diverse citizens. Almost all groups of religious and social minorities have been targeted in negative ways and thousands have lost their lives.

Historically when we glance back, before partition of Indo-Pak Subcontinent and even after partition; till some 40 years ago, there was actually no question of majority and minority groups in the society in this area. However due to some prejudiced mindsets and sense of superiority and inferiority slowly this culture changed and reached to a climax where extremism took the place of brotherhood and oneness. Religious groups started to migrate from this area and those left, felt oppressed and pressurized that caused future generations to be unprivileged of their basic rights. However in the last two decades dedicated efforts have been made by both majority and minority stakeholders to take appropriate measure to guarantee the rights of equal citizen and to draw the attention towards the basic aim of formation of Pakistan and that of constitution.

**Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah** in his first address to the Constituent Assembly on 11 August 1947 special attention was given to the minorities in these words: “You are free; you are free to go to your temples. You are free to go to your mosques or to any other places of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed that has nothing to do with the business of the State. We should keep that in front of us as our ideal and you will find that in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State.”

## INTRODUCTION AND DISCLAIMER

Religious and social minorities of Pakistan are part of diversified beauty of this country and are equal in their rights and privileges. A lot of work has been done in enhancing and uplifting the living standards and participation of minority communities in Pakistan, however the way to justice is quite long and it needs continuous efforts. Many endeavors have been made by the majority and minority stakeholders, as well as the government of Pakistan in eradication of issues within the minority communities, whereas it's a matter of fact that only formation and approval of laws and regulations cannot guarantee the wellbeing of any society in isolation. A Pertinent area to be focused is that of behavior change, where every member of the society may feel the need and accept the laws and regulations and make the best effort to exercise it throughout.

This report is prepared on demand of "Minority Rights Group" through its implementing Partner "Khwendo Kor" (KK) in district Peshawar and is intended to highlight the core issues of religious minorities of Peshawar. Efforts have also been made to identify some way outs and solutions at the end of each main issue. Furthermore, this report might create some spheres for reflection and consultation for the organization itself as well as different stakeholders in resolving these social problems that goes back at to a century now.

The information gathered is solely the outcome of understanding of the consultants after interviews and consultations with different stakeholders in this regard, the list of which is being shared at the end of this report. SUBHASH Educational Complex (SEC) and the Consultants; Ms. Malalai Akhtari and Mr. Subhash Chander will not be liable and answerable to disagreement of any person or institution regarding any specific point, other than Khwendo Kor (KK).

## BACKGROUND

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), with Peshawar as its provincial capital, is the land of hospitable people and a gateway to many businesses and immigrations to and fro with the neighboring countries and even a nest for internally displaced persons. The history of co-existence of religious communities with majority goes back to before formation of Pakistan, where all five religious minorities of present Peshawar i.e., Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, Parsis and Baha'is were living together peacefully for many centuries, and the bonds of friendship, brotherhood and trust was well rooted. Hence it can be concluded that the main issues of religious minorities of Peshawar are not very deep rooted, it just goes back to few decades back when political and religious policies turned over in this area.

As it is narrated by many of the historians in their books and present elderly people of this city that different religious communities had a standard of living in common, their achievements and issues were almost common. They all used to commemorate each other's religious holidays and would celebrate festivals together. For example, during commemoration of ten days of Muharam all communities were unified on avoiding parties and weddings, rather they would take active part in supply and distribution of "Sabil" (beverages) to mourners. The Bishop of Catholic Church of Peshawar explained that previously the Nuns of their churches with their religious uniforms would easily roam around the city for their daily activities without any fear and hesitation. And the common residents would respect them by all means.

As per the record of Archeology department, KPK has the greatest number of Hindu and Sikhs religious places, which shows their most existence in these areas as well as the harmony and their co-existence with local people. Even today the Sikh and Hindu communities of Peshawar and its surrounding areas are known for their loyalty in businesses and treatment with herbs (Hikmat). Pakistan as a whole and Peshawar in particular can never disregard the educational services of Missionary Schools where everybody is welcomed and get the best education. The Missionary Hospitals have always been opened to all and outstanding Christian nurses have set a standard and example for the coming generations. The doors of Baha'i activities have always been opened to all, irrespective of their ethnic and religious background and despite being the smallest religious community; they have always contributed to the betterment of the society in

many diverse ways. Also, Baha'i community was the pioneer community who flowed the concept of religious harmony back in 1980s in Peshawar and they were the ones who gathered people of different religions under one roof and put the foundation of "Unity in Diversity". Unfortunately, in today's Peshawar we lack the presence of Parsi community.

The issues that have been identified and listed in next pages are an outcome of the interviews and consultation with stakeholders at different levels. Efforts have been made to cover the political, as well as the religious leaderships of all minority communities; activists working for the rights of minorities, stakeholders of majority communities, NGOs working for this cause and Council of Communal Harmony (CCH) in particular.

By analyzing the identified issues; it is deemed that they are not deep rooted and most of them can be solved through proper implementation of projects, plans and policies. Where ever possible some solutions/way outs have been provided against those issues. Some of solutions were stated by the stakeholders, other is merely proposal of the consultants themselves. It is hoped that this report will serve the stakeholders along with majority and minority communities in understanding the issues and finding the best way to fill the gaps through proper projection and implementation of their plans.

A part from religious minorities, a social minority group of Transgenders have also been analyzed and their main issues have been identified. Despite the fact that their issues are quite complex and might not be covered within the scope of minorities issues, but an effort is made to hear them and provide them a medium to raise their voices to the long-lasting problems of their community.

**Methodology.** Collection of reliable data for the finding of minorities' core issues from grass root level was challenging task. However, SEC utilized its rich experience of work in the social sector for the collection of data from the different faiths. Both primary and secondary data were used in this study and primary data was collected by the data collection team who visited different areas of Peshawar city for collection of data through questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussion.

## ISSUES IDENTIFIED

### **1. Enhancing Education & Educational Opportunities.**

This research study shows that the greatest reason behind the plight of minority communities is the lack of education at different levels in various forms. As a matter of fact, during past many decades due to unacceptance, prejudices and suppression, the minority community's people preferred to avail lower class jobs in Govt. Departments and to remain low profiled in their livings. As a result of which today many youths are uneducated or low educated. The common believe that overruled the mindset was that as their children will also avail jobs in the 4<sup>th</sup> category (i.e., Sweeper & peon), So they didn't feel the need to invest in their children's education; due to which significance of education gradually reduced among them. Despite this fact, during the past 20 years in general and after 2011 in particular, strategies changed to some extent and the living standards of minority communities have been enhanced to a great extent.

One of the main reasons behind the educational problem is the lack of educational opportunities for minorities. As majority of them have a low living standard, hence they can't compete with majority, therefore they remain behind in many fields and that is a great cause of depression and dissatisfaction among many youths today.

### **2. Need for improvement in Job Opportunities.**

In the light of above evaluation, it can be observed that when standard of education is low, uneducated or low educated lot of students cannot avail a lot of job opportunities. They have to limit their selves in very few fields of jobs. Despite the fact that the government in the year 2018 increased the job quota for minorities from 2% to 5% which was a great achievement, however due to low educational standards, a lot of work has to be done to fill and avail the 5% job quota.

Nevertheless, during the past one decade a great improvement can be seen among minority youths and different related projects by the government in general and private sector in particular that have contributed a lot towards better job opportunities for minorities.

### **3. Burial Facilitation.**

One of the main issues in minority communities of Peshawar is the of lack of graveyards for some communities. Despite the fact that during last few years, every year a huge amount is allocated in Annual Development Program (ADP) of the government, but community's internal issues so far this problem is not solved. Hindu and Sikh communities performed their funeral ceremonies (cremation) in Attock which is too far from Peshawar, that leads to heavy expenses for every family. On the other hand, Christian, Rajpoot Society and Balmekee demand for graveyard. The existing graveyards are not sufficient and have concerns about maintenance and security.

Several attempts have been taken by the local government to purchase the land, but despite the fact that such graveyards cannot be held within the residential areas due to many reasons one of which is the security and the other is level of comfort which cannot be achieved as a lot of strangers just come to watch the scenery of other people's funeral.

This issue can easily be solved if all stakeholders are taken into consideration and consultation after which a proper place for graveyard can be purchased. Other than that, till then the related department can allocate a budget for covering the expenses due to long way travel to another district.

### **4. Misleading Educational Material & Curriculum**

In the educational system of Pakistan, a minority student has two options when it comes to religious studies; i.e., either he/she should study the course of Islamiyat that is the study of Islam only or the he/she should take the option of ethics as a subject. As a result of which many students at their educational institutions feel the hatred of other students right from the beginning of their lives. Along with that feeling they have to read and write many things in their courses of study that are not true according to their religious principles. For instance; there are many articles and chapters in Islamiyat, Urdu and Pakistan studies where people of other religions are addressed as "infidel" and burden on majority population, as if they are outsiders and have to leave this country sooner or later.



As we know that educational material and educational institutions of any country or particular area is the best and accurate medium to teach and guide generations. Evaluation of overall educational material in this area does not seem to cover the gap and hatred between the majority and minority communities. There is a great need for three major actions in this regard.

- a. There should be a range of subjects for all students to study with freedom and without prejudice;
- b. Every student should be allowed to have the option to study his/her own and all other religions.
- c. There should be a ban on any anti-religious publications against any religion at all levels including, but not limited to educational material, common publications, internet and media contents and shares.

## **5. Provision of Legal Framework**

Although the constitution of Pakistan guarantees that all citizens are equal before the law, and in article 5 provides that adequate provision shall be made for the minorities to freely profess and practice their religious activities and develop their cultures; yet these provisions have never been fully implemented and allowed in practical. As Article 41(2) provides that a person shall not qualified for election as President and Prime Minister unless he/she is a Muslim.

Following issues need to be addressed and legislations are needed to be provided on priority basis:

- **Blasphemy laws**

A cohesive and prosperous Pakistan, in which a plurality of identities and beliefs is truly respected and celebrated, can only be founded on just and equitable laws, which have regard for due process in respect to the fundamental rights of freedom of religion or belief and freedom of expression. It is recommended to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to enact a law against blasphemy; a law that should apply equally to the revered Figures of all religions. The task of formulating and implementing such a law has to be approached with the greatest care since it has

the potential to be misused with the most far-reaching implications for religious freedom in Pakistan.

Therefore, any law against blasphemy must be so carefully worded as to not become the means for chilling the spirit of enquiry and investigation and, worse still, to be open to abuse, especially by extremist elements who may seek to use any vaguely-worded law to foment a climate of hatred, intolerance and violence in Pakistan.

- **Certification of Religious Leaders/Institutions**

One of the major stakeholders in all minority and majority communities is the person and role of religious leaders. They are the source of guidance and decision-making authority at all levels of social life. Religious institutions are the nests from where generations are nurtured and guided from their early age till their last breath. These institutions need to be protected and guarded properly. A close monitoring system is needed to be in place in all small and big religious institutions and proper education of the religious leaders leading those institutions is very vital. Religious leaders should be provided with opportunities to harmonize in modern world. There should be a legal framework in place by the government, to certify their education as well as the curriculum that is taught there. Since they are a major stakeholder and are influential people, hence they can play a pivotal role in minimizing the gap between majority and minority and they can bring a great change in behavior as to be able to implement the laws and obligations by the government.

- **Family Laws for Minority Communities**

A serious issue in KP is the lack of family laws for all communities existing here. Presently British family laws are used in the courts which are not very effective and lack many aspects of life to be addressed. As a result of many years of efforts Hindu and Sikh marriage acts have been approved by the government, however their rules of business are still not made and hence it cannot be implemented. Following this gap, there are a lot of problems entailed due to which Hindu and Sikh families face a lot of problems. For example, as a result of any domestic dispute, husband of a wife does not feel reliable

and responsible for the expenses of his wife and children until the time of resolution of a matter or even after separation. Secondly in a male dominating society a man feels free to go for more than one marriage and even sexual relationship; where there is no law that may prohibit him or make him bound to his marriage and true relationship. On the other hand as per the custom of many religious groups, a separated lady or a widow is not allowed to re-marry anyone for the rest of her life.

While considering the Christian family law, there is a bit of conflict within different sects of the community itself as well as incompetency of some of the stakeholders in compiling and approval of this law; however, efforts at different stages are made to make this law approved by the government.

- **Gender Balance Representation**

Equality between the rights of women and men is an aspect of human reality and not just a condition to be achieved for the common good. The province of KPK as per its culture has been supporting less participation of women in every field of community life. And this fact cannot be denied that in every society minority community always gets affected by the way of living and priorities of majority population. While analyzing the role of women in the upliftment and progress of the community life, results are not very positive and women participation is very low. Minority women are mostly high school graduates or bachelor degree holders; whereas very few of them opt for higher studies. This reality contributes to the fact that majority of women in Minority Communities avail the jobs of teaching, working in parlors, and nursing in hospitals; where they feel more secure from harassment at work place and the fear of forced conversion. Despite the fact that during last few years many young girls are trained and encouraged by some stakeholders to participate in decision making process and represent their communities at different platforms, so they may be able to avail other fields of job opportunities; yet there is no political representation in KP government and presence of women in policy making procedure is nil.

- **Political Representation under New Electoral Reforms**

As per the constitution of Pakistan every citizen is entitled to vote and select their political representative from the grassroot to the top level. However, the present procedure of reserved seats does not allow to be so. Political representatives have to follow the mandate and policies of their respective parties. Hence the demands and needs of minority communities remain at their places. Most of the community leaders and representatives at grass root level demand that there should be election instead of selection. There is a very weak link between those who occupy seats and those who play active role in communities.

Non-Muslim minorities are not given adequate representation in parliament and there is no legal framework that deals with issues related to them. Minorities are in favor of a separate electoral system which used to exist in Pakistan between 1979 and 2002, when retired Gen. Pervez Musharraf replaced it with 10 reserved seats. Instead, community leaders want a joint electorate, where minorities are allowed to vote for the MNA/MPA that will represent their physical constituency and a system where the 10 MNAs occupying the reserved seats are directly elected by the country's non-Muslims.

The assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa previously had 124 elected members, 99 regular seats, 22 seats reserved for women and 3 seats for Non-Muslims. After the merger of FATA with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, the assembly seats rose from 124 to 145 by adding 16 general seats, 4 seats reserved for women and 1 for a Non-Muslim. It is suggested that non-Muslims should be awarded dual franchise. They should be given two ballot papers, where they can cast one to a general seat candidate and the second to a member of their own community. Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) should implement a mandatory quota for each political party to nominate non-Muslim candidates. This will raise the chances of more non-Muslim representation in the assemblies instead of reserved seats.

- **Illegal land occupation and evacuation**

Evaluation shows that there have been many cases where properties related to minorities, whether personal or religious, have been occupied forcefully by some land mafias or common people and because of the low standing influence of minority communities they have been deprived of their own properties for many years and in some cases, they are still deprived. On the other hand, there are some cases where member of communities themselves have been involved in selling out the properties of their religious places without the necessary consent.

Lack of legal framework for such issues is very much mandatory, where people from neither majority nor minority communities may attempt to such an illegal action and there should be laws through which they can be condemn or questioned.

#### **6. Priority Based Fund Utilization.**

As it is studied, a huge number of schemes are being introduced each year by Hajj, Auqaf, Religious and Minority Affairs Department Government of KPK for developmental activities of minorities. Most of them are very beneficial and have contributed a lot to the betterment of religious minority communities. Around 35 schemes have introduced in Annual Development Program (ADP) 2021-22 by Auqaf Department KPK with allocation budget of 700 million PKR.

**Following are the major schemes of 2021-22.**

- Construction of Community Based School for Sikh Community in Peshawar
- Establishment of Planning Cell
- Renovation of Worship Places
- Purchase of land for Minority Graveyards & Shamshan Ghats
- Skills Development Scheme
- Interfaith Harmony Conference, Minority Youth Exposure Program & Celebration of Religious Festivals
- Welfare Package for Minorities
- Provision of small Grants to Minorities for Establishment of Enterprises and startups

However, there is a need for the government department and social sector to have a study of the realities of minority communities before proposing or implementing their projects. This study may be ranged from grass-root level to that of leadership and can contribute a lot to proper implementation and upliftment of lives of beneficiary populations.

Some priority-based recommendations identified by communities' representatives are:

1. Eradication of poverty from the minority communities through skill development programs for youths, adults, disables, widows etc.
2. Scholarships quota on higher education
3. Entrepreneurial Mindset Training
4. Separate Facilitation Center for Minorities
5. Community Based Enterprise Development Program
6. Construction of Community Hall for each community

#### **7. Need for Interfaith and intra-faith Unity**

Sense of superiority and inferiority always causes downfall of any society. A common problem that is observed by everyone around is disunity initially within communities, and later with other religious minority groups. Hatred develops its roots from a very young age in children and that hatred is either due to superiority or inferiority. This practice is not very obvious and proofs cannot be easily found, however through personal interaction and observance of many activities this issue can easily be identified. Government of KPK has introduced many projects to create the atmosphere of interfaith harmony through celebration of festivals, interfaith conferences and exposure trips, however a major part is to be played by the religious leaders and common people. There should be opportunities for community representatives; whether religious or political or just an activist; to learn different ways on how to create and maintain harmony. As creating harmony might be achieved by one way or the other but maintenance of it is a long way process.

#### **8. Problem of Water and Sanitation**

Studies show that majority of minority communities due to many social issues prefer to live in colonies, where they can have easy access to their place of worship, as well as they may be

surrounded with the people of their own faith as to be safe and be able to face social issues collectively. Due to many issues that have been discussed above, these colonies remained out of the sight and preference of many stakeholders and slowly and gradually their standard of living dropped down. Two of such issues are that of water and sanitation in these colonies. Severe health issues and diseases outbreak there and consequently, a lot of diseases and health issues arise from the lack of these two areas of basic need.

During the last three years a lot of efforts are made for provision of health card to all citizens in Pakistan by the government, including the minorities; whereas the root cause for so many health issues are merely neglected at many places. Urgent and proper attention needs to be given to clean drinking water and proper sanitization in the colonies of minorities.

#### **9. Need for Awareness and Synchronization**

Despite the fact of backwardness and low education, majority of the population in minority communities are unaware of their basic rights. It has been observed that a lot of people live in misery but are unable to identify the right department or proper channel to solve their problems. These problems are evident in almost all fields of life; from education to health and from poverty to businesses. As it was discussed above that even the educational institutions and curriculum are not supportive to fill the gap in practical life. Minority population not only needs to be aware of their rights and the constitution of the country, but also, they need to be synchronized with all those privileges and facilities that are available for them either by the government or by any other organization or institution.

#### **10. Forced Conversion to be Guarded.**

According to the laws of the Government of Pakistan, national law "strictly forbids forced conversions," as does Islam, however due to some incidents of force conversion around minority communities are afraid and try their best to protect their communities from conversion. Due to this fear women are the very first victims, and students the second target group. This fear causes the women not to get higher education and even may not avail different job opportunities, just to be safe and secure in their own faith and community.

The Peoples Commission for Minorities' Rights and the Centre for Social Justice compiled the

data of 156 incidents of forced conversions which took place between 2013 and 2019. A vast majority of the girls are minors, with numerous cases of girls as young as 12 years old.

According to Sulema Jahangir's report in DAWN on April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020; she states:

*The discrimination against women belonging to religious minority groups is worse; they become victims of rape, abduction, forced marriage and forced conversion. That it is largely underage girls who are 'converting' to Islam speaks volumes of the vulnerability of the converts, and the motivation of those behind the conversion.*

*Further, once the women convert, there is no going back, as apostasy would mean a death sentence. In many cases, women are also told that their families are 'kafirs' and they cannot meet them. This impedes their access to justice as they remain in the clutches of powerful men. No one hears from these women directly after they 'elope'.*

The government through its political representatives need to work on effective policy making, as to eradicate this fear from the minority communities and provide the rights of equal citizens as per its constitution.

#### **11. EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS OF SCHOOL GOING MINORITIES:**

Focus group discussion conducted various sessions with minorities' students of different schools/educational institutions to address their real time problems and findings. At primary level such cases are increasing and especially students of religious minorities are facing problems in accessing education. Although the constitution of Pakistan guarantees "education in relation to religion," but the public curriculum included derogatory remarks in textbooks against religious minorities, especially Hindus, Sikhs and Christians.

Actual educational problems of minorities have been existing and multiplying since the creation of Pakistan. Although social organizations are interested in improving the conditions of the minorities, they merely focused on issues of human rights and political aspects. They are not perfect in their educational development to the available constitutional guarantees, political opportunities and legal guarantees are based. Unfortunately the academia in Pakistan has non-serious attitude toward minorities' related subjects and issues.



Therefore, it is felt necessary to break the ice and conduct some effective assessment report which could highlight the actual educational problems faced by minorities in Peshawar and surrounding areas.

Some useful findings during group discussion and interviews with minorities' students and teachers:

- Involvement of religious scholars from different faiths at education policy level.
- Joint academic and co-curricular activities with faculty and students of other religion should be conducted.
- There should be training session for Public/Private sector school teachers and leadership to adhere to antidiscrimination policies.
- Training sessions should be organized to deliver the message of acceptance.
- Parental role should be highlighted during training sessions and their involvement with children can play vital role to minimize these types of prejudice cases.
- There is severe need for public sector school curricula reforms. In these reforms focus should be on religious tolerance and modernizing the text books.
- Interfaith Harmony quotes should be printed on walls and some posters in school premises.
- Experts from religious minorities should be involved while developing the curricula.
- Students of religious minorities should be allowed to celebrate and conduct functions on their religious events in school.

## **12. Life of Transgender.**

The life of transgender is inhuman and most of the transgender are rejected by their families and living miserable life. Beatings, insults and discrimination at work are a part of life for transgender people in Pakistan. They usually spent their lives with other transgender where gurus are their parents. They are mistreated because they have no family support and are weak, as nobody stands up for them.

Major issues faced by trans-community are insufficient enrollment in education sector, jobs, social acceptances, violence and harassment. The lack of legislation and attention in this area makes it hard to ensure transgender people are getting their constitutional rights.

The Constitution of Pakistan, 1973 does not address transgender people directly, but its

fundamental rights guarantee security of each and every citizen of Pakistan. Article 38, the government will guarantee all of citizen's education, job training, and Medicare services, including social insurance.

Some findings are as under:

- National Identity Card – NIC issue
- Participation and policy level work is required in electoral process.
- COVID vaccination issues due to no NIC.
- Skill Development and Job Opportunities
- Passing a law is not important, what is important is its implementation.
- Social acceptance and dignity

A human is a human, and every human should be treated like one. All the issues and challenges faced by the transgender community are created by society, and a socially aware and responsible society will need no time to eliminate all the illogical taboos and norms. The sooner the Pakistani community accepts the transgender people as who they are, the better it will be for the society.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The religious leaders have a significant role in shaping the culture of true understanding of equality and unity within communities and outside that. Therefore, special attention should be given to their aptitude and opportunities for their development.
2. Immediate steps should be taken in formation of “Blasphemy Law” where revered Figures of all religions should be equally respected.
3. Any action, statement, internet or social media content against any religious belief or way of life should immediately be prosecuted.
4. Poverty should be eradicated through skill development programs.
5. Education quota should be increased from 2% to 5% and implemented in all institutions including professional colleges.
6. Implementation of Job Quota which is 5% should be observed in all departments. Leftover seats should be re-announced and special task force will have to take necessary action to mobilize the community.
7. Necessary steps are to be taken for political representatives to guarantee the safeguard and interest of minority communities on the basis of equality.
8. Minority women are to be empowered and mobilized for taking charge of their communities.
9. On the way to synchronization, billboards can be used to be labeled with sayings and quotation of all holy books and messengers across the city; it may not necessarily be quoted with Islamic holy writings only.
10. An effective tool for both majority and minority stakeholders in bringing real change in the mindset and their communities is the creation of spaces for “Social Discourses”. Many of our social issues and their solutions are to be talked and consulted about in different spaces. So that a lot of people may own it and masses of ideas may be collected in that regard.

# Minorities Core Issues

## Questionnaire for Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Religion: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Interview Status:

Fully Completed  Partially Completed  Incomplete  Refused

\*Core Issues about Minorities in Peshawar:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

\* Suggestions and Recommendations:

- Specific issues related to your community?
- Are you satisfied with the role of religious and political leadership?

Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

Taken by Team Members: \_\_\_\_\_

## LIST OF INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS

### VISITED & INTERVIEWED

S. No.	Name	Religion	Designation/Position/Org.
1.	Mr. Wazir Zada	Kalash	Special Assistant to CM for Minorities Affairs
2.	Mr. Ravi Kumar	Hindu	MPA Provincial Assembly
3.	Bishop Humphrey Sarfaraz Peters	Christian	Head Church of Pakistan
4.	Bishop Arnest Jacob	Christian	Head of Protestant Churches of Pakistan
5.	Haroon Sarab Diyal	Hindu	Religious Leader – Social Activist
6.	Mr. Sahib Singh	Sikh	Member of RDC – Social Activist
7.	Mr. Shakeel Chander	Hindu	Advocate
8.	Transgender	Muslim	Trans-Community
9.	Mr. Muhammad Faheem	Muslim	Member of Council for Communal Harmony – Journalist
10.	Ms. Laila Shahnawaz	Muslim	Member of Council for Communal Harmony
11.	Mr. Augustine Jacob	Christian	Member of Council for Communal Harmony
12.	Ms. Shabina Ayaz	Muslim	Civil Society Organization – Aurat Foundation
13.	Ms. Saima	Muslim	Civil Society Organization – Aurat Foundation
14.	Mr. Sahibzada	Baha'i	Secretary Local Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Peshawar

15.	Ms. Rakhshanda Naz	Muslim	Ombud's Person KP Govt
16.	Mr. Rizwan	Muslim	Assistance Director, NHRC Pakistan
17.	Mr. Nakash Bhatti	Christian	Lecturer – Social Activist
18.	Ms. Manmeet Kaur	Sikh	Journalist – Social Activist
19.	Ms. Mala Kumari	Hindu	Social Activist
20.	Ms. Malalai Akhtari	Baha'i	Community representative – Minority's right activist
21.	Mr. Vishal	Hindu	Rajpoot Welfare Society
22.	Mr. Rahat Nazir	Christian	Social Activist



