

**Youth Targeted Digital Workshops on Legal Awareness and Community Building**  
**Lahore, Pakistan**  
**International Students House**  
**Maheen Salman (City, University of London)**

**Report**

**A two sentence summary of the goals of your project:**

To create youth-targeted traditional and digital workshops on legal awareness and community building, using animations, posters and engaging workshop materials in Urdu that are accessible and understandable to a wide demographic, so children better understand their rights and use them to make a positive impact on their communities. Our workshops focus on topics such as: freedom of thought, freedom of religion, the right over one's own body and the importance of a just election, and stress the importance of community and helping one another, using creative educational materials such as frame - by - frame animated cartoon videos, and illustrated comics alongside coursepacks.

**Did other fund-raising efforts contribute to your project?**

No, but I would like to take this opportunity to thank Musa Saeed (student at Lahore University of Management Sciences) for conducting and producing this project alongside me, our team for materialising this project and going above and beyond, and to my parents for their continued support.

**How did you come up with the idea for your project?**

Although the constitution of Pakistan provides for fundamental freedoms, including but not limited to, speech, thought, religion and association, in practice these are rarely upheld, and more worryingly, few are aware of the rights that are granted to them by the state. It is crucial for young people to understand these rights, not only so that they may protect themselves, but so that they do not become bystanders in the face of injustice towards vulnerable and marginalized communities.

**Why do you think the issue your project is responding to exists?**

There is a pressing lack of legal awareness and civic education platforms and resources in Pakistan, especially for children. Most of this content is in English, and uses legal jargon, making it inaccessible to most of the population, leading to children growing up without basic knowledge on fundamental rights and protections.

**Why did you choose your host site to work in?**

I had previously done research in the legal sector in Pakistan, specifically with our partner organisation, legal NGO *Insaaf Camp*, and have volunteered with numerous communities across the country, enabling me to not only understand the blank spaces prevalent in the country's legal education system, but how this impacts average people, and what methods of education and awareness are the most accessible to wider communities.

**What was it like to work in your host site?**

It was very inspiring to be able to conduct a project so close to my heart in Pakistan, and to see the impact our project was having on the communities around us. However, many times we had to be careful about the language barrier, especially when writing scripts and producing coursepacks, and consider what the best way to approach partnering schools would be given the Covid-19 restrictions in Pakistan.

**Did you feel at any point that the project was not going to work? In what ways?**

Throughout the course of the project the whole team was determined to produce the best work that we could; however, at times we struggled with ensuring consistency and crisp communication due to hybrid working, but our team was able to work through these issues and produce strong outcomes. At times it also became difficult to approach schools due to the pandemic, and we had to drastically shift our plans to accommodate the current landscape.

**What were the challenges you encountered in communicating with people?**

There was at times a language barrier working in Pakistan, and creating design materials remotely was a new challenge for the whole team that we had to work around. While writing the scripts, my colleague Musa and I had to be careful that our work could still be communicated well once translated into Urdu.

**How do you define peace?**

To me peace means harmony and unity, for communities to live alongside one another, without conflict or bias, and work together for everyone's mutual benefit. Small acts such as making the effort to understand someone else's belief system, help lift up those who do not have the same resources or protection, and ensuring that people from different streams are welcome in our communities, all help contribute to wide and lasting peace, and this is a message that we hope our workshops were able to spread.

**How does or will your project contribute to peace? Short-term? Long-term?**

Through the creation of both an online database of the workshops and physical copies sent off to schools, all the materials and resources alongside an in-depth manual are available so that individuals and teachers may continue to benefit from these resources independently. The lessons learnt and the messages sent through these workshops will help shape future citizens to be more aware of not only their own rights, but of the rights of others, and encourage them to bring forth a positive change in society to be better citizens and build more peaceful, inclusive and stronger communities.

**Please describe changes created by the project during the summer:**

Over the summer we created 4 workshops on fundamental rights, such as freedom of expression, freedom of religion, the right over one's own body and the right to vote in a fair election. The workshops included illustrated comics which were also edited into video format, and frame-by-frame animated videos which were also printed, informative course packs on legal education and framework for the use of our materials, as well as other supporting material. These materials have been sent out to be used in underrepresented schools in Lahore, and in smaller surrounding cities such as Mianwali, and an online database of these resources have been created with our partner *Insaaf Camp*. Through conducting this project we have been able to ensure that underrepresented primary school children have now been given access to legal education and awareness, where they previously did not have the resources to access such information.

**Please describe anticipated changes that will continue in the future as a result of the project:**

By creating a database of these workshops, and creating both print and digital copies of them, we hope that the resources will continue to be used and distributed. We will continue to partner with schools to distribute the materials, and will work with translators to translate the coursepacks and scripts into more regional languages, such as Pashto. We also hope to create more workshops touching upon topics such as refugee rights.

**Has your project changed the way you think about the world? How has it changed you?**

This project has taught me the importance of inclusion and understanding different communities, and ensuring that the work we produced was accessible and understandable to the communities that it was aimed at. Many times throughout the project we had to take a step back and ask ourselves if our work was accessible; if it was translated well, if we had included imagery or jokes that would be relatable to the children our work was aimed for, and most importantly, if we were producing work that these children could see themselves in. This project has taught me to see the world through a more inclusive and understanding lense.

**Was your project impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Yes, due to the pandemic we had to shift to hybrid working, and in many regards shift to complete online working. It was at times also difficult to collaborate with schools due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

**How did you advance your project goals despite these challenges?**

Our team was able to advance our project goals by quickly adapting to the new working conditions, and continuously working on creating strong communication.

**What advice would you give future PfP grantees for pandemic related challenges?**

I would advise them to consider alternative methods of carrying out their project beforehand.

**Please provide a 1-2 personal statement sentence, suitable for use as a quotation, addressing how and why this project was valuable and what was the most important thing you learned as a result:**

*“This project opened my eyes to the importance of inclusion and representation in education, and provided hundreds of children with resources and materials which will continue to shape and benefit them and their communities for years to come. Importantly, this opportunity has taught me the impact even small actions can make, and has inspired me to continue to work towards collective peace”. - **Maheen Salman***

## Section II: Photographs



Chrome

Workshop

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Maheen Salman

Eshah Zulfqar

Shabeer Shahid

Bulbul Legal

Mustawfa Majid

Upd

**Fifth panel right box** - A shining light bulb appears above his head, and we see a speech bubble.

BULBUL: Chalo doston! Ham dekhtey hain key yeh sab kya kya karein gein hamari class key liye.

**Sixth panel left box** - Bulbul goes up to a candidate. It is a duck standing in front of a podium. A crowd is assembled around the duck, all of them are looking up at him wide-eyed.

BULBUL: Hamari class mey kuch barey bachey chotey bachon key khaaney key paisey ley letey hain. Aap kya karein gein is ka?

**Sixth panel middle box** - Close-up of the duck responding. Next to the duck there is an overflowing lunch-box full of money.

DUCK: Han toh choton ko dey deney chahiye hain apney paisey.

**Sixth panel right box** - Close-up of Bulbul and his friends. Bulbul seems a bit mad (head getting bigger or colour changing or some light steam).

BULBUL: Bilkul nah! Kisi ka haq nah key woh doosrey key paisey lein!

**Seventh panel left box** - Bulbul goes to the other candidate. It is a monkey standing in front of a podium. There is a crowd surrounding the monkey, looking up at him wide-eyed.

BULBUL: Hamari class mey bachey har jaga khaana khatay hain aur gund machta hay. Aap kya karein gein is ka?

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