



# Women and Girls Fighting Two Pandemic at a Time: Domestic Violence & Covid-19

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# The Problem

- ▶ More than 90% of Women in Pakistan experience some sort of GBV and less than 10% are reported.
- ▶ The financial, domestic and health pressures during the lockdown compound domestic violence and abuse.
- ▶ Girls and Women have limited access to health and hygiene during pandemic
- ▶ Abuser and victim living under one roof 24/7
- ▶ Suspension of available support mechanisms like police and shelters.
- ▶ Schools converted to Quarantine centers, jeopardizing girls education and putting them at risk on their return to schools
- ▶ Potential of increasing child marriages since families' economic situation will deteriorate and girls will stay out of school for a year almost.



# Bedari's Humanitarian response : Short term

- ▶ Innovative methods for awareness raising on protection from infection and domestic violence, using FM radio, whatsapp messages using trickle down approach, and social media
- ▶ Distribution of hygiene kits among women and girls.
- ▶ Distribution of ration among households in program districts with priority to victims of child marriage/girls at risk and pregnant women/girls
- ▶ Psychological counselling and connecting them with available supports.
- ▶ Counselling with children on the unusual circumstances of COVID-19 and lockdown.
- ▶ Reaching to women and girls with disabilities



# Bedari's Humanitarian response : Long term

- ▶ Advocacy on health/education and GBV, through alliances where letters were posted to the relevant ministries
- ▶ Bedari has shown concern on converting primary and secondary school to quarantine and suggested proper disinfection mechanism in post Covid-19 scenario.
- ▶ Awareness raising and tracking beyond program domain.
- ▶ Training community activists including health workers to extend the outreach at the doorstep.
- ▶ Engaging women and girls in self growth activities to help them in stress management.
- ▶ Empowering women to take the lead in responding to COVID and GBV.



# Keeping connections

- ▶ Reaching out girls and women in current situation is an issue, as less than 2% of them have access to mobile phones.
- ▶ Bedari started reaching them through male family members for a limited time.
- ▶ Unlimited information present on internet is of no use to marginalized women and girls. So predesigned messaging is being used through SMS and Whatsapp.
- ▶ Radio messaging in local languages using local radio stations.
- ▶ Media forums actively engaged to write about the pandemic and women's rights
- ▶ Small video clips on GBV / Child Protection and available services through whatsapp.
- ▶ Distribution of helpline numbers in case of emergency
- ▶ Reaching the unreached through Women led Groups, CPC members, village counselors sometime risking our lives and getting into the fields for support
- ▶ Engaging Lady Health Workers since they make door to door visits.





# Photos







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