



# MAKING LOCAL GOVERNMENT INCLUSIVE (MALGI) FINAL QUARTERLY REPORT



**A Project of Youth Development Foundation (YDF)  
Funded by National Endowment for Democracy (NED)**



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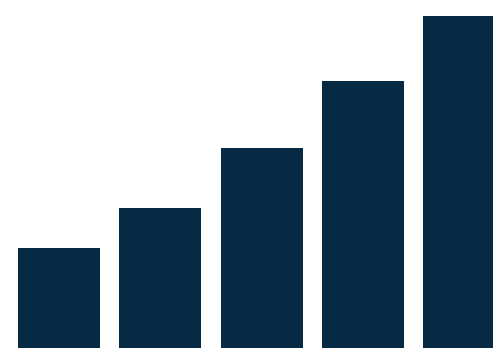
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# SUMMARY

Between 2020 and 2022, the Youth Development Foundation (YDF) collaborated with the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) to launch the groundbreaking "Making Local Governments Inclusive" (MALGI) grant program, spanning 16 Union Councils in Lahore and Faisalabad. The primary aim of this initiative was to promote the participation of women, youth, and religious minorities in the political process and empower them to take part in local government elections in Punjab by understanding local government systems. To ensure the success of this project, YDF worked closely with the Ministry of Human Rights and Minority Affairs for providing essential support to empower women, youth and marginalized religious minorities in Lahore and Faisalabad. YDF adopted a consultative and participatory approach, empowering women, youth, and minorities to engage in the electoral process with knowledge and wisdom. Through multiple activities, YDF enhanced communities' capacity to participate meaningfully in the political process, strengthening their representation in local government.

These activities were highly successful, and the NED management recognized their impact by extending the initiative to repeat in 2022-2023, focusing on women, youth, and minorities in eight more Union Councils in Lahore and Faisalabad. As a whole, YDF successfully engaged 3234 direct beneficiaries this year. A total of 10389 people from youth, women and minorities have been engaged, empowered, and motivated in the 24 target Union Councils of Lahore and Faisalabad. This resulted in a significant impact on local communities. Moreover, YDF launched awareness campaigns on civic engagement through TV and radio, reaching around 5 million people. This has empowered them to participate in the local government process and strengthening their representation. The MALGI initiative stands as a testament to the power of collaborative partnerships and innovative approaches to promoting political inclusion and empowering marginalized communities.

## OBJECTIVE:

**To promote civic participation among women, youth, and religious minorities in political processes**





# Political and Security Context Updates

As reported in Daily Pakistan on 9 January 2023, The Election Commission of Pakistan has announced that local government polls will be held in Punjab in the last week of April 2023. The Provincial Election Commissioner for Punjab, Saeed Gul Mohmand, has emphasized the importance of holding these polls in the coming spring and accused provincial authorities of attempting to delay them. Mohmand stated that the constituencies had been established under the Local Government Act passed by the Punjab government and urged critics to approach the relevant forum. Primary constituencies have been completed, and anyone with objections may come to the appropriate authority by 23 January.

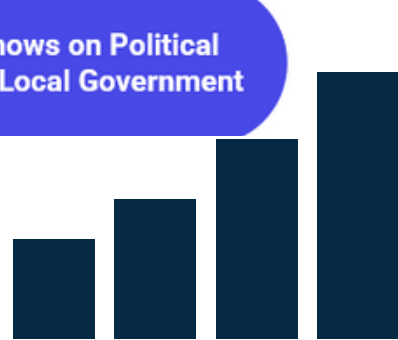
The Express Tribune says on 6 March 2023, The Supreme Court's decision on provincial assembly elections raised questions about local government elections in Punjab. The last local body polls in the province were held eight years ago, in 2015. Since the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) took power in the province, local body representatives were removed in 2019, leading to a paralyzed system for the past four years. Although the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) recently announced that local body elections would be held in April, former representatives and candidates are not optimistic. Former office bearers of local government in Punjab expressed their frustration with the prolonged delays in conducting local body polls, stating that only one election has been held in the last decade despite the enactment of five local government laws.

The Election Commission of Pakistan has recently issued a notification for the general elections in Punjab, which are scheduled to take place on 8 October 2023. The Election Commission of Pakistan wrote a letter to President Arif Alvi to explain the decision to delay the Punjab polls. According to the letter, the schedule for the elections was issued in accordance with the Supreme Court's decision, as the electoral body is responsible for ensuring fair and transparent elections. However, meetings with the Punjab governor, caretaker government, security agencies, chief secretary, and other stakeholders revealed that not all of them were ready for immediate elections. Security arrangements were also denied, creating challenges for conducting the polls. However, there are concerns about the delay in holding local government elections in the Punjab province.

## Quarterly Planned Activities

### Implementing Grassroot Actions

YDF spearheaded grassroots efforts to promote political participation and civic engagement among women, youth, and marginalized communities, with a specific focus on these topics.





# 48 Awareness Sessions to Increase Civic Engagement and Political Participation

YDF's team embarked upon a successful mission to promote civic engagement and political participation among youth, women, and minorities in 8 UCs in Faisalabad and Lahore. The endeavor was executed collaboratively with diverse stakeholders, including the Department of Human Rights & Minority Affairs, Civil Society, Political Activists, and Working Groups. The Working Groups played a pivotal role in formulating the action plan and offering support in conducting awareness sessions in the designated areas. The sessions were conducted with a pre-test questionnaire to gauge the participants' baseline awareness levels.

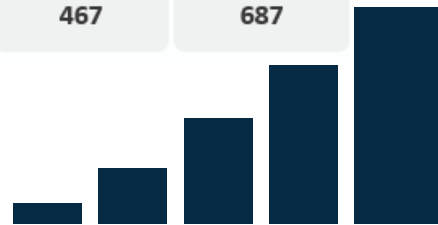
The YDF team and the Working Group Members effectively imparted knowledge regarding the significance of civic engagement, including the benefits of active participation in civic actions and political processes. The communities were also apprised of the Punjab Local Government Act 2022. The initiative encompassed 48 awareness sessions, reaching out to youth, women, and minorities in 8 UCs of both cities. It efficiently augmented the awareness and comprehension of the local government system, instilling the importance of civic activities and political processes for an inclusive governance structure. The engagement of 1364 individuals, comprising 921 young girls and women, attests to the initiative's success, corroborating the efficacy of community-based awareness campaigns in promoting civic engagement and political participation.

## Faisalabad

UC # / Name	Audience	Sessions	Male	Female	Total
10 Chak	WOMEN	2 (Each Segment)	53	121	174
184 Talwandi		2 (Each Segment)	58	113	171
15 Gokhuwal	YOUTH	2 (Each Segment)	57	111	168
16 Usman Town	MINORITIES	2 (Each Segment)	55	109	164
Total		24	223	454	677

## Lahore

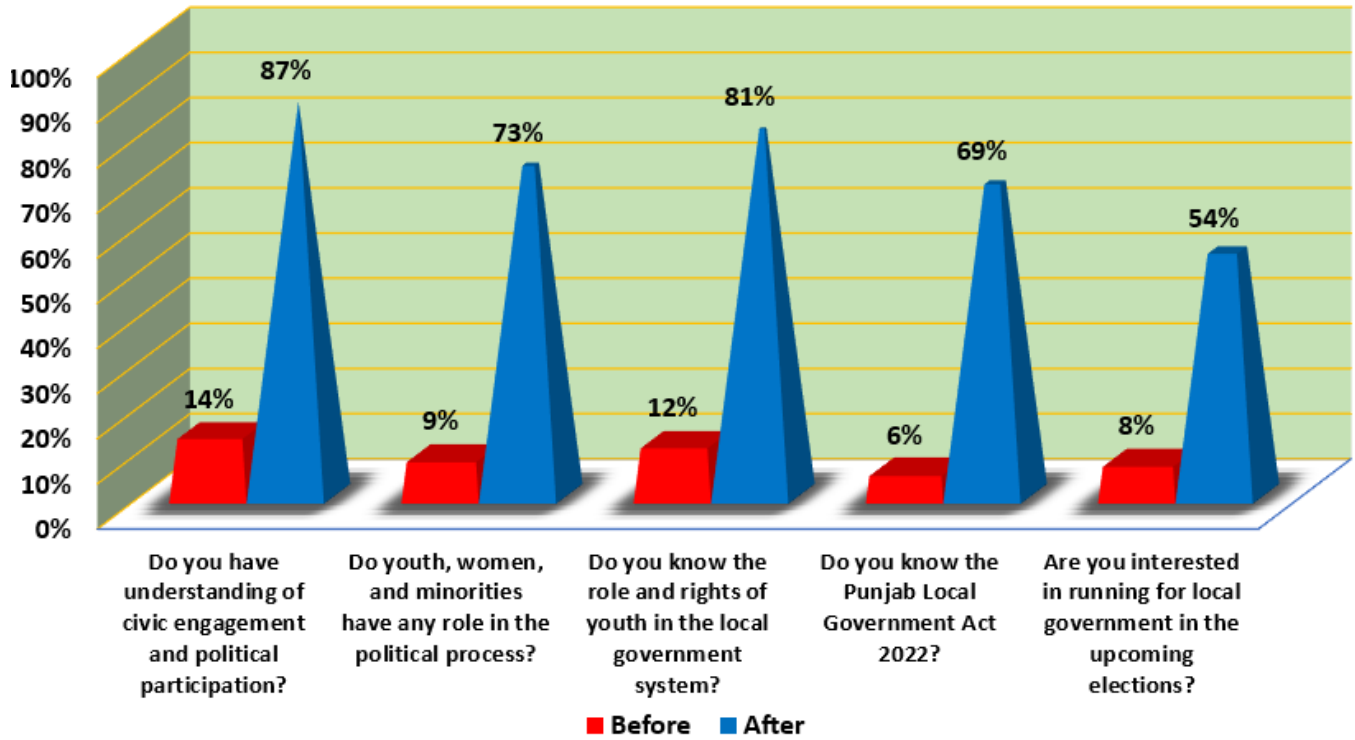
UC # / Name	Audience	Sessions	Male	Female	Total
119 Railway Colony	WOMEN	2 (Each Segment)	57	122	179
123 Garhi Shahu		2 (Each Segment)	49	117	166
125 Begum Pura	YOUTH	2 (Each Segment)	53	114	167
132 Muhammad Booti	MINORITIES	2 (Each Segment)	61	114	175
Total		24	220	467	687



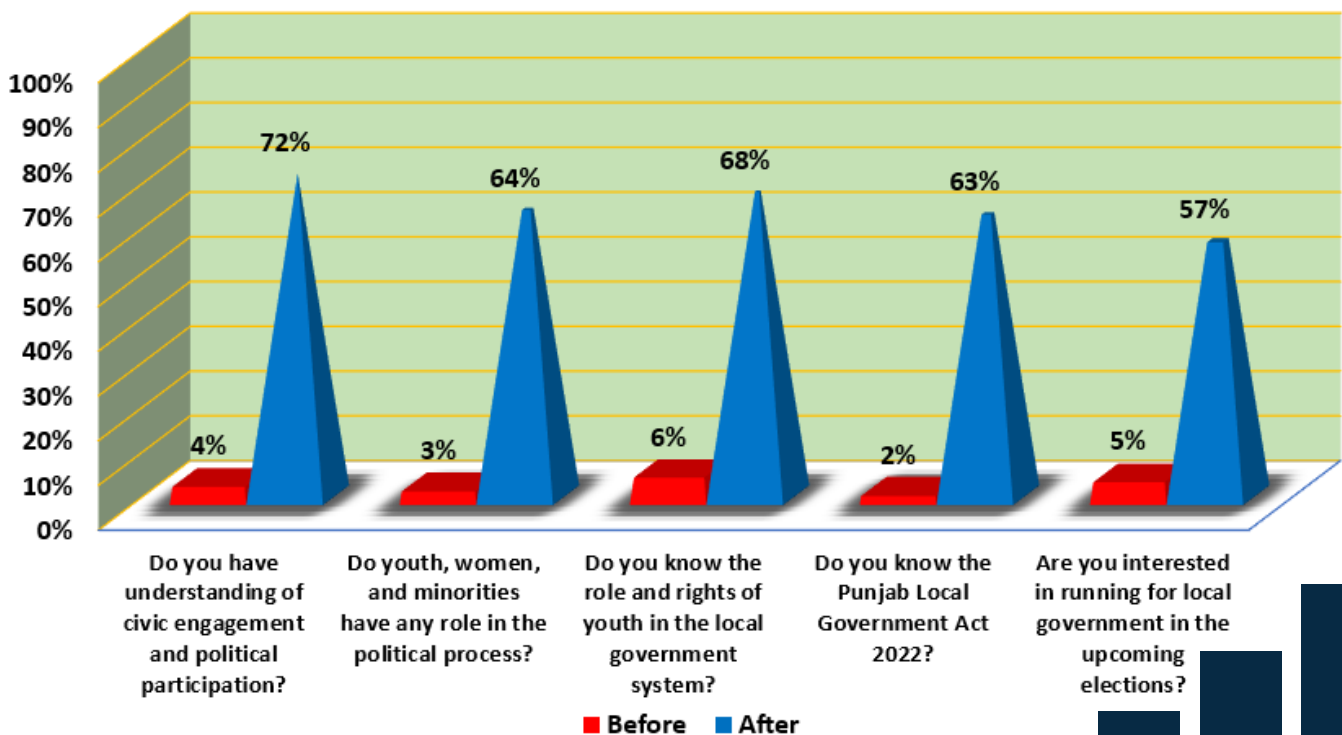


During the awareness sessions, the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer of YDF (Youth Development Foundation) gathered data using pre- and post-tests. The subsequent analysis revealed significant improvement in knowledge levels across various demographic groups, including women, youth, and minorities.

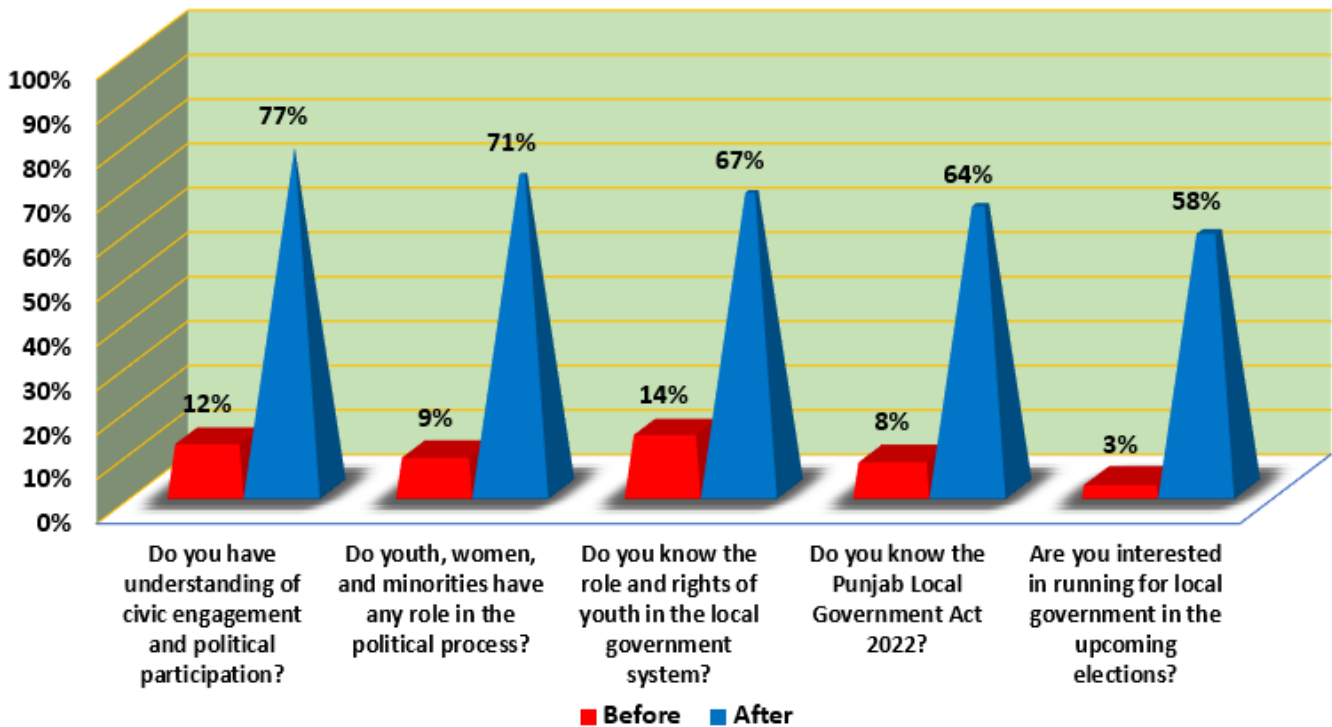
### Youth Pre & Post Analysis of the Awareness Sessions in 8 Union Councils



### Women Pre & Post Analysis of the Awareness Sessions in 8 Union Councils



## Minorities Pre & Post Analysis of the Awareness Sessions in 8 Union Councils



## 48 Mock Voting Sessions to Enhance Understanding of Complex Electoral Processes

The Youth Development Foundation (YDF) team aimed to tackle the issue of low voter participation among marginalized communities in Faisalabad and Lahore by enhancing their understanding of complex voting procedures and unfamiliarity with electoral processes. Due to the complexity of the electoral process, many people, particularly those from marginalized communities, face difficulties participating in the voting process. To address this issue, the YDF team conducted 48 mock voting sessions in 8 Union Councils (UCs) of Faisalabad and Lahore in collaboration with the Provincial Elections Commission, Department of Local Government and Community Development, District Administration and Civil Society under the MALGI project. These sessions were designed to provide marginalized communities, including women, youth, and minorities, with hands-on experience of the complex voting process and electoral procedures. The sessions were conducted professionally and organized, adhering to all ethical and professional guidelines. The YDF team, consisting of experienced professionals with expertise in conducting mock voting sessions and knowledge of electoral procedures, along with officials from the Election Commission of Pakistan, provided lectures, informational materials, and guidance to ensure that participants understood the significance and importance of participating in the electoral process. Individuals from all groups, including women, youth, and minorities, exercised their right to vote in a simulated voting process. Their experience was highly positive, resulting in increased motivation to actively participate in the upcoming elections.



# Faisalabad

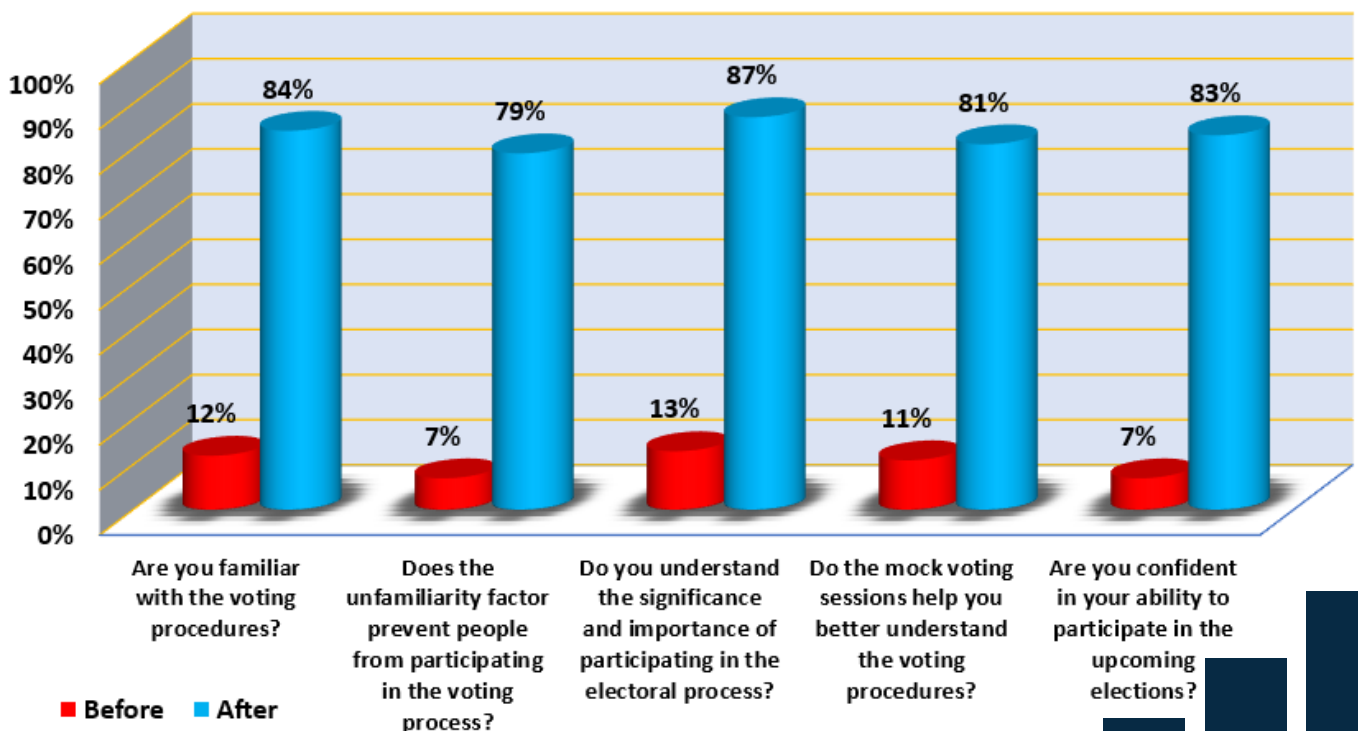
UC # / Name	Audience	Sessions	Male	Female	Total
10 Chak	WOMEN YOUTH MINORITIES	2 (Each Segment)	60	116	176
184 Talwandi		2 (Each Segment)	61	122	183
15 Gokhuwal		2 (Each Segment)	69	128	197
16 Usman Town		2 (Each Segment)	70	116	186
<b>Total</b>		<b>24</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>742</b>

# Lahore

UC # / Name	Audience	Sessions	Male	Female	Total
119 Railway Colony	WOMEN YOUTH MINORITIES	2 (Each Segment)	55	129	184
123 Garhi Shahu		2 (Each Segment)	59	128	187
125 Begum Pura		2 (Each Segment)	67	118	185
132 Muhammad Booti		2 (Each Segment)	59	120	179
<b>Total</b>		<b>24</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>735</b>

The Monitoring and Evaluation Officer of YDF (Youth Development Foundation) collected data during the mock voting exercises using pre- and post-tests. After conducting the analysis, it was found that there was a considerable increase in knowledge levels among different demographic groups, including women, youth, and minorities.

**Youth Pre & Post Analysis of the Mock Voting Sessions in 8 Union Councils**



## Two Television Programs on the theme of Political Inclusion in Local Government

YDF embarked on an initiative to promote the political inclusion of marginalized groups in the local government system. In pursuit of this objective, the organization conducted two TV programs on the regional TV channel “Capital TV”. This channel enjoys immense popularity among the program's target population. To ensure a well-coordinated and successful undertaking, YDF's team of experts and stakeholders carefully selected panelists with expertise in local government systems and democratic and political knowledge. The team also finalized talking points to address issues of unawareness and lack of interest in the political process among marginalized women, youth, and minorities.

The TV shows were graced by a distinguished list of dignitaries who shared their knowledge of the importance of the local government system in the country. These included Deputy Secretary Umar Hayat from Human Rights and Minorities Affairs, Ms. Huda Ali Gohar – Deputy Director, Provincial Election Commission, Ms. Shameela Aslam – Former MPA and District Council Member, Mr. Javeed Iqbal Bhatti – Director of Local Government and Community Development, Ms. Uzma Kardar – Former MPA and Chairperson Gender mainstreaming, Mr. Arshad Mehmmod - Social Activist & Local Government Expert, Mr. Shahnawaz Khan – Journalist & Social Activist, and Mr. Abdul Khaliq Dad – Program Manager Youth Development Foundation. The guest speakers expounded on the transformative potential of civic engagement, political participation, and the grassroots-level change that people, through local governments, can bring to deprived communities. Through their insights, the speakers encouraged youth, women, and minority groups to participate actively in the political process. They also encouraged them to take charge of their social rights through democratic efforts. Overall, the TV shows were a resounding success, as they provided a platform to motivate and inspire marginalized communities to engage in civic actions and political processes toward national prosperity. Following link contains the both TV shows.

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1babzkVXIg24S-hffg72u12aO8yyD9YDp?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1babzkVXIg24S-hffg72u12aO8yyD9YDp?usp=share_link)



A group of distinguished leaders/experts engaged in a thought-provoking discussion on the significance of active civic engagement and political participation.

# Some of Testimonials from Project Participants

"I always thought that voting was a complicated process that only educated people could understand, but after participating in the mock voting session, I realized that it is quite simple if you have the right information and guidance."

Alice Bibi, 10 Chak, Faisalabad.

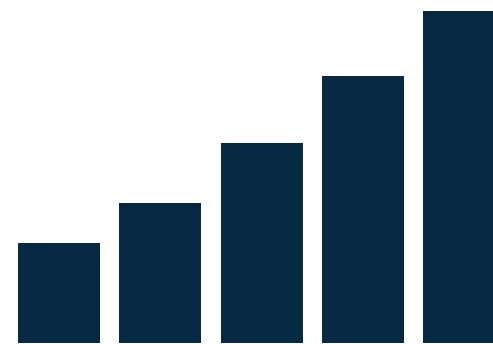


"As a woman from a marginalized community, I felt empowered by the opportunity to exercise my right to vote in a safe and supportive environment. I now feel more confident about participating in the election."

Laiba Anwar, UC 184 Talwadi, Faisalabad.

"The YDF team did an excellent job explaining the significance and importance of participating in the electoral process. I now understand that my vote can make a difference, and I will participate in the upcoming election."

Haji Muhammad Adil, UC 15 Gokhuwal, Faisalabad.





# Some of Testimonials from Project Participants

"The mock voting session was a great way to get hands-on experience with the voting process. I now feel more comfortable and prepared to participate in the election."

Ariba Tariq, UC 16 Usman Town, Faisalabad.



"As a woman, I often felt like my voice wasn't heard in the political arena, but these sessions gave me the confidence to speak up and participate in the decision-making process."

“Maria Ikram, UC 125, Lahore.

"The awareness sessions were an eye-opener for me. I never realized how important my role is in shaping my community's future through active civic engagement and political participation."

Afzal Mehmood, 10 Chak, Faisalabad



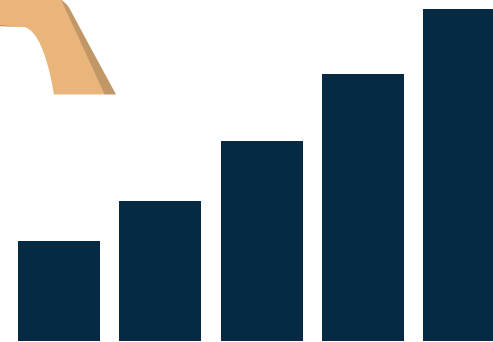
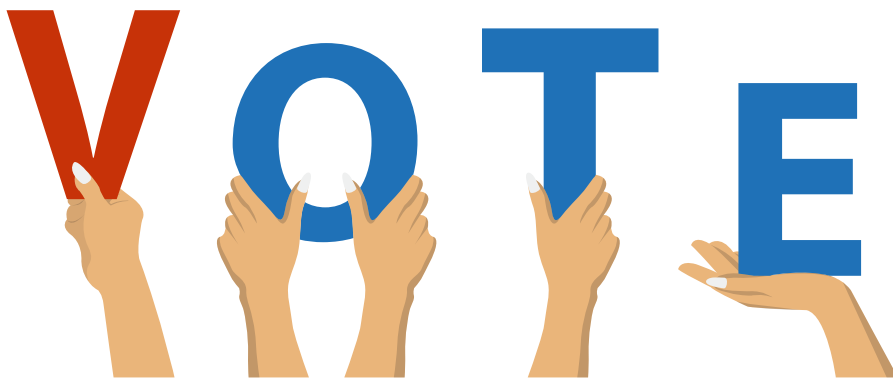


# Lesson Learned

- Awareness campaigns can be effective in promoting civic engagement and political participation among marginalized communities.
- Community-based initiatives can help increase awareness of complex electoral processes and procedures, increasing voter participation among marginalized communities.
- Government stakeholders have a lot on their plates, and engaging with them took longer than expected. It is important to be persistent for coordination in your efforts to engage with them.
- Building working relationships with government stakeholders can help establish trust and facilitate communication. Take the time to get to know them as individuals and understand their priorities and concerns.
- It is important to frame engagement with government stakeholders in a way that emphasizes the mutual benefits of collaboration. Highlight the positive impact that your work can have on their constituents and the community as a whole.

# Challenges

- Delayed local government elections may lead to frustration among former and new expected office bearers and candidates, reducing their confidence in the electoral system.
- Government stakeholders often have a wide range of official engagements and responsibilities that made it difficult to schedule meetings and maintain regular communication with them. YDF team with well-coordinated efforts resolved this challenge.
- Changes in local government laws impacting the scope and nature of civil society engagement with government stakeholders. YDF team cope it staying informed about these changes and adapting approach accordingly.
- Political instability making it difficult to engage with government stakeholders, particularly if there are frequent changes in leadership or priorities. YDF team remains flexible and adaptable in approach to engaging with government stakeholders in these situations.





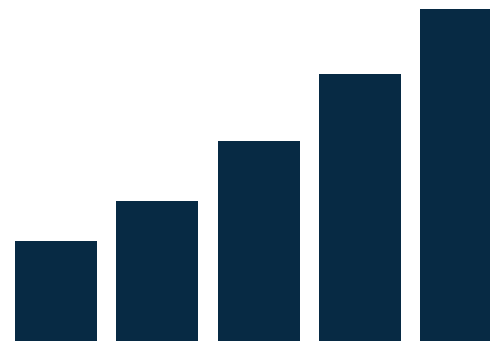
# Pictures



YDF team member elaborating the voting process with people from minorities in Faisalabad



Females are going through mock voting exercise in 10 Chak Faisalabad







**They are motivated for contesting in upcoming local government elections, UC 184 Talwandi Faisalabad**



**Ms. Huda, Deputy Director Provincial Election Commission moderating awareness session with people from minorities, UC 123 Garhi Shahu, Lahore**





A mock voting session under progress at Lahore, participants going through the voting process



Ms. Mahnaz, Chairperson Social Work Department, University of the Punjab guiding the young students about the importance of civic engagement and political participation.





Youth from University of the Punjab exercised the mock voting process, they are quite confident to participate in upcoming elections as voter.



Females of UC 125 Begumpura, Lahore very anxious to go through the mock voting process

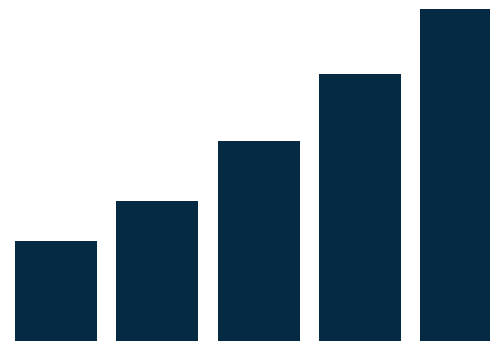




The learning will support their effective participation in electoral process



Participants were quite happy and motivated by knowing how to vote.







YDF team raised awareness at grassroots level to benefit the marginalized segments encouraging them to be part of civic actions and political processes.



Youth from marginalized religious minorities were focused on highlighting civic engagement and political participation.



# Youth Development Foundation (YDF)

YDF is a youth-led organization formed in 2010 with a vision to promote diversity, interfaith harmony, and peaceful coexistence in those areas more prone to violence, hate, and religious discrimination. Since then, YDF has expanded to 28 districts across Pakistan's Punjab, KP, and Sindh regions. These range from the most affected areas, including Southern Punjab and Interior Sindh. YDF has four offices in Lahore (Head Office), Multan, Karachi and Faisalabad, 21 full-time and four part-time employees. YDF has an outstanding diverse faith network of youth with over 12,000 (4,580 female & 7,420 male) that includes university students, community youth, and madrasa students.

YDF works with various stakeholders at different levels of government, i.e. District, Provincial and Federal. It promotes youth-oriented policies and strategies that celebrate cultural, linguistic, ethnic and religious diversity. Most recently, YDF has been working with the Ministry of Human Rights, Minority Affairs and Interfaith Harmony on drafting a strategy on "Interfaith Harmony" for Punjab province and appointed as Board member of Punjab Youth Volunteer Task Force for Corona Relief Facilitation Program (an initiative of Prime Minister of Pakistan). This exhibits a strong relationship of YDF being recognized as a Youth-in-Diversity organization among policy and decision-makers, transforming from a community to a policy development organization.

YDF has signed MOUs with 20 civil society organizations and nine public sector universities in Punjab, Sindh and KP. YDF also has a strong network of supporters and partners, including ILOGIC, Emerging Leaders of Pakistan, Karachi Youth Initiative, Acumen Fellows, Pakistan-United States Alumni Network and Punjab Youth Council. In addition, YDF has worked with the European Union (EU), USAID, UKAID, USIP, UN agencies, World Faith Global, ICRD, Finland Church Aid, Swiss Mission Office and the Government of Punjab and Sindh.



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