

## Say No to Underage Marriage of Girl

*Rukhsana* W/o Muhammad Younis Sarki of 28 years' age is a resident of village Sultan/Mano Sarki UC Sherwah Taluka Thull, District Jacobabad. She was married at the age of 12 years (1999) and is blessed with 05 daughters and 02 sons. Her education was discontinued after her marriage, however she further done Intermediate in 2011 as an external candidate. *Rukhsana* shared that she has remained unaware regarding her rights therefore has been affording the domestic violence for long period.

*Rukhsana* joined National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) in year 2000 as a Supervisor in Adult Literacy Program. She has also facilitated Sindh Rural Support Organization (SRSO) team in formation of community organization and further Local Support Organization at her village, she has also been elected President of LSO in year 2013. *Rukhsana* has also played her role in politics and currently affiliated with Pakistan People's Party.

As it come to her knowledge that Roshni Development Foundation (RDF) is working on Youth Project regarding the rights, she visited RDF office where she was briefed regarding DAI EDACE Project "Empowering Youth for Improving Social Harmony & Protection of Civic Rights" being implemented by Civil Society Support Program (CSSP) and RDF at Thull. She shared that she was impressed by the briefing and submitted her application for serving as youth volunteer. After few days she received call that she was selected as Youth Volunteer and was invited for attending the training. She participated in the training that was a comprehensive training of 08 days on different themes such as paralegal, violence against women, freedom of information. She shared that the training carried lots of information and her concepts were cleared. After attending the training, she realized that how her marriage also took place in underage and same cases are still happening in her society. And therefore she decided that to replicate her learning through training in her community through conducting awareness raising sessions.

*Rukhsana* offered her services to RDF to organize different activities of Ombudsman, Freedom of Information and Legal rights in her vicinity as there was dire need to raise awareness regarding the rights.

*Rukhsana* shared she is very much thankful to CSSP & RDF for giving her the opportunity to be the part of training and then further organizing different awareness raising activities in her community. The community had remained quiet responsive and appreciated the initiative. *Rukhsana* also engaged youth of LSO and trained them to support community in relevant issues and awareness raising.

In the result of awareness session, they have collected 03 applications to be submitted with Ombudsman office and 02 applications to be submitted with line department under Freedom of

Information Act. She is hopeful that with the support of trained potential youth we can fight for keeping women rights on top priority and should initiate a campaign on early marriage with slogan **“Say no to underage marriage of girl”** so that no girl shall be victim of early age marriage.