

This publication is dedicated to all the people who realized and recognized transgenders as equally worthy citizens of the state and contributed efforts, skills and funds to make this project a successful one.

ABOUT MOJAZ FOUNDATION

MOJAZ Foundation (MF) is a not for profit organization, registered under Societies Registration Act 1860. Established in 2008, MF has evolved into a national organization with its roots deeply embedded into Pakistan. Mojaz Foundation believes in integrated development ranging from rights based advocacy related interventions to service delivery focusing on social and economic inclusion of the marginalized. Gender equality has always featured as a major theme and unit of analysis in our work.

VISION

To promote Socio Economic Empowerment through an Inclusive rights based approach.

MISSION

To be a self-sustained organization by serving vulnerable & marginalized communities through provision of financial & non-financial services on sustainable basis.

CEO's MESSAGE

We are committed to promote socio economic empowerment through an inclusive rights based approach and by delivering essential services to the most deprived and marginalized communities. In our country, Transgender are the most deprived vulnerable and stigmatized section of the society.

Therefore, it is our responsibility to address their issues and needs in ways we address other marginalized segments. We believe that Transgender are as much a part of our society as the two other genders are. We also strongly advocate that the society as a whole need to show them respect and treat them with dignity. We need to educate the society and sensitize them towards Transgender needs. We need to break the myths and make the transgender realize that they also have an important role to play in the development of our country. We all need to speak out to support their rights. We strongly need to push for inclusivity, not simple tolerance.

I am extremely thankful to US-Consul General for the support and dedication, rendered for the cause. As, we have already taken a step to reform the perspective of our society towards gender, we aspire to continue our efforts in the future as well.

Let's all break the barriers and uphold the human rights for all.

PROJECT INTRODUCTION:

The stigma attached with the Third Gender, Transgender, or Khuwajasaras as they are known in Pakistan, is so prevalent that it has stifled all efforts taken towards creating support structures for them.

In light of this, MOJAZ Foundation in collaboration with US Consulate launched Transgender Self Employment Program in district Narowal. Under the said project MOJAZ Foundation intended to distribute 20 assets worth PKR.50,000/- to 20 individuals.

The project aimed to educate transgender people on enterprise development; hence EDTs (Enterprise Development Trainings) were conducted so that they become bread earners for themselves and their dependents.



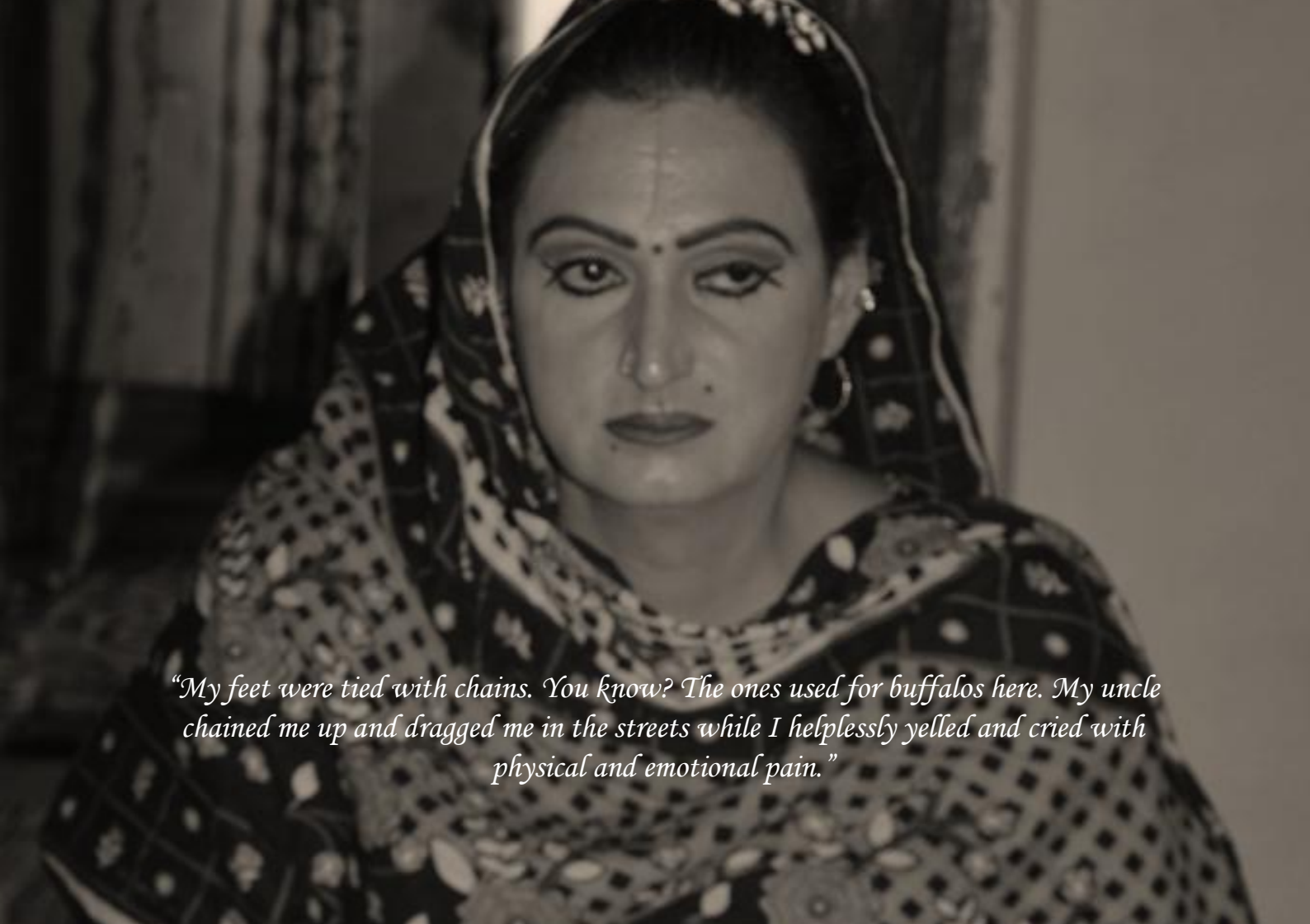
“Can you see these scars on my forehead? I was brutally hit with bricks and stones for being a transgender, for being someone my Lord chose me to be.”

KHALIDA PARVEEN

Khalid, a 54 year transgender decided to leave the house at the age of 13 when the circumstances became miserable and it was realized that the society was not ready to accept the reality. Khalid spent initial few months with the groups involved in singing and dancing and finally came under the patronage of Guru Bali. However, the destiny continued to shatter him into pieces. Guru Bali had no sympathy for his own community members and was only concerned about the money which could be rendered to him. He used to put Khalid under the load of house chores along with the responsibility to earn a handsome amount through dancing at night functions. To the extent of cruelty, he would refuse to let him keep even a little amount to satisfy his needs.

Misfortune struck him with another hit and he became a victim of Hepatitis. This made him useless for the Guru and was eventually asked to leave the shelter. He couldn't dance anymore with his declining age and health and started begging from door to door.

When we approached Khalid, he readily accepted the proposal to attend the trainings and demanded a cow so that he could serve milk in his Mohallah instead of begging for pennies. He is hopeful and contended that at least he can spend the last few years of his life respectfully. Mojaz has not only tried to make him self-sufficient to meet his necessities however, we assisted him to fight Hepatitis as well, through facilitating him for medicinal treatment.




“My feet were tied with chains. You know? The ones used for buffalos here. My uncle chained me up and dragged me in the streets while I helplessly yelled and cried with physical and emotional pain.”

DEEMO

Enrolling into an educational institution and reaching Matric was all about Abdul Nadeem's educational career. He couldn't pursue his education due to the unacceptable changes in his personality that unfortunately marked him to be a reason of shame to his parents. Leaving his family and education at the age of 17, he approached Guru Mian Aliya, who was a generous person and supported Nadeem with all his heart. However, soon after his death, the next Guru on board was a totally changed person. Hence, making him lead a miserable life. He often used to beat him for no reason, while abusing was a common practice.

Nadeem managed to flee out of the region and since then he had been earning through begging. He exclaimed that he visits his parents occasionally but tries to hide his visit in darkness. So that his parents may lead a respectable life and no one could affront them.

He further told us, that out of his sisters, the one who is poor often calls him whereas the other one who is married in Lahore and managed to become a doctor, has no feelings for him. She believes as if he is nobody to her and they have no blood ties.



“We were asked to dance at a function in a nearby village. When the program was over and we advanced to return, the same people who took pleasure in watching us perform suddenly gathered a mob and in no time, we were covered in cow dung and filth from gutters.”

IMRANO

Tehsil Zafarwal witnessed the life of M. Yaseen who was born to a humble family. Like other children of his age, he used to go to school but no later than Primary. Yaseen told us that there was a Dera (where Transgenders live in groups) in his street, and they people could sense his distinguished habits. Their Guru approached him and he started visiting them frequently. One day, when he was at their place, his father stepped in bursting out in wrath, held him firmly and moved towards the house, dragging him harshly. The moment he was taken to home, nobody could prevent his father from beating the innocent child.

Yaseen also left his house and joined Guru Gauri, who used to be kind to him earlier but when he started to live with him, he experienced a change in his behavior day by day. He was not allowed to spend the money that he used to earn through dancing and could neither get proper food. After a struggle of 8 months, Yaseen urged to live with another guru. Hence, he was sold for Rs. 45,000.

He expressed that he contributed for dowry and other expenses of his sister's marriage. And continually supports one of his sisters, who is a widow.



“Dancing in public was never a choice, it was our destiny. We had no other option.”

TARO MAI

Tariq Mahmood belongs to the Khwajasira community of District Narowal. The individual ages 35 and has been induced as a local resource person who actively participates to introduce other members of the community to the program, to be provided with an avenue to explore and subsequently break through the cycle of poverty and dejection.

He uttered that he attained education until primary and was later employed on brick kilns at a quite young age. His father, uncle and brothers used to strike him hard for his distinguished habits and often tried to restrict him to the house walls. He finally left the place and travelled to Rawalpindi, where he spent 15 years of his life among a large number of diversified population. Some were kind to him, while others constituted a mocking mob.

He proclaims; "It has given me immense pleasure to witness a program carried out for us. We are really glad that at least some one has started to consider us a valuable citizen. I never observed anyone earlier, raising voice for our issues. I hope we could adopt a respectable profession and live with dignity."

Along with the other participants, Tariq Mahmood was provided with Enterprise Development Training which was intended to support them in establishing their own small business set-ups to be self-employed and independent.



"We often encounter drunkards at night functions, who keep no limits to harass us."

CHANDA

Imran has a different story to share. The twin brothers (both transgenders) were born to a loving mother who never let them get apart. Their father died when they were quite young and their elder sister had no prejudice for them. He joined Guru Aziz at the age of 14, who was equally kind to him. He further expressed his incline towards religion and told us that he regularly offers five obligatory prayers.

However, he has faced the similar incidents of abuse and torture from the society and local population. People had been rude to him and he suffered continuous denunciation as well. But we were amazed to speak to such a humble person, who has no complaints and uttered that he must tolerate if the Lord has destined it for him. The only satisfaction he preferred was the support and love of his mother which surrounds him.

Imran is rather hopeful that with the provision of a Sewing Machine and accessories, he would be able to sustain a respectable life.



"Tomatoes and rotten vegetables were thrown towards me, when I passed the streets of a bazaar near Qillahi."

PALAK JUTT

Salamat Ali was compelled to leave the house at the age of 16 and he began to live with the community. He conveys that he has no hard feelings for his family but strongly desires that efforts must be made in educating the society about transgenders. He said that it would become easier for the families to understand and accept the individuals with ambiguous gender, just as normal people if the community stops ridiculing them. And many youngsters would still be spared from begging and dancing.

He further expressed that his father locked him up when he was in his teens and even tried to kill the innocent soul. One of his cousins was an angel of mercy for him who used to defend his existence. Salamat told us that when he left his house and started to live with Guru Laila, it was equally difficult to live peacefully under his supervision. For, he could not deny performing and was neither allowed to keep a sufficient amount of money with him. And for the days, he was unable to earn, he used to receive a great deal of abusive words.



"I was really fond of studying and wanted to be a doctor."

NANNI

Pervaiz Ahmed is a 35 year old adult, who originally belonged to Gujranwala. He was an ambitious learner and deeply desired to become a doctor. Unfortunately, the life had different plans for him. He was made deprived of his parents' love and a peaceful shelter at the age of 16. He hardly completed his Matric when his circumstances changed and he felt insensitiveness in his surroundings. Being youngest was another sin; his seven elder siblings started abusing him as they grew up and left no bounds to maltreatment.

He is residing in Narowal for almost 20 years while he regularly calls his parents and they love each other without prejudice. Yet, he does not want anyone to use inadequate words for his parents and to ridicule them; hence he never makes an effort to visit them in Gujranwala. Life was equally hard for him to meet the basic necessities for his survival and he had to earn through dancing and begging. Nevertheless, Pervaiz is now really hopeful that with our support, he would be able to set up a shop to provide lubricant in the local market.



“My younger sister goes to college and I bear all her educational expenses. I want her to achieve what I am not allowed to even think of.”

SANIA

Let us discover the immeasurable and endless affection of Adeel, towards his family who finds it shameful to give him recognition in return.

Adeel is 22 years old and has 10 siblings. He could only get education till grade 3 while the others are fortunate enough to study further. He shares that he does provide his family with amenities that could help him keep the bond intact. He doesn't want to bear the pain of separation. Adeel regularly sends a fraction of his earnings to his mother, despite the fact that his family members are opportunists.

He expressed with tears rolling down his cheeks that he contributed enormously for his sisters' marriage and rendered a great deal of support to the family. On contrary, his mother requested him to not join them on the day of wedding. It was embarrassing for her to introduce him to the guests. Hence, with a heavy heart, Adeel climbed up the roof of one of their neighbors and watched his sister taking vows for a new life. To our surprise, he uttered that he is still saving for his younger sister who will be getting married soon.



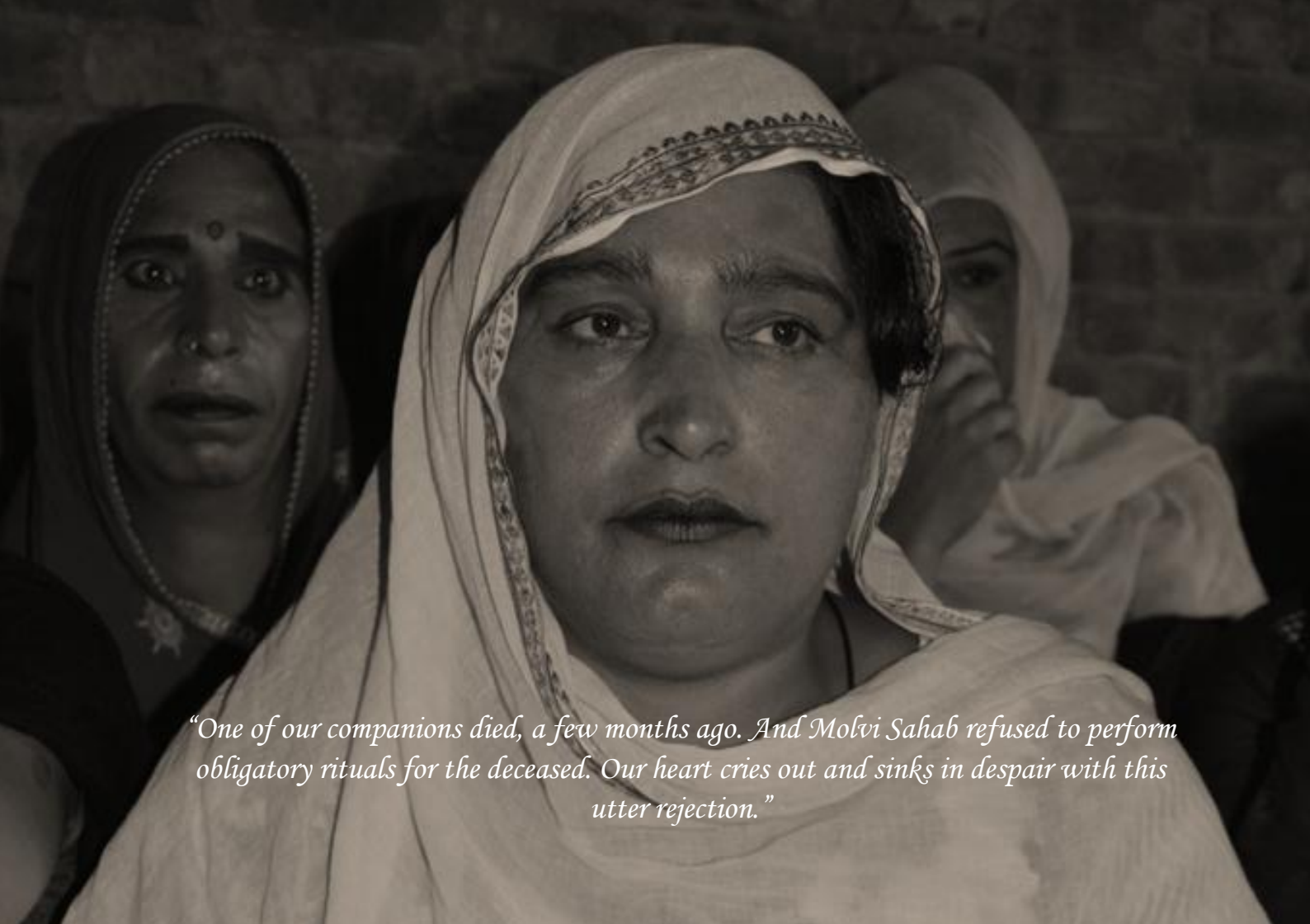
"You have no idea about the hell, which we have been into. They think, we have no feelings and perhaps our bodies are not made of the same flesh as theirs."

NAARI

What a commendable leadership!

Naari has now reached an age where she can, not only support herself but the other young people as well who come to her for shelter. She has an extraordinary spark in her personality that makes her stand out.

Though she has a similar story and had to leave her abode at the age of 12 and experienced the callousness of society and community members, she managed to fight her own battle and tried to live with dignity. Naari constructed a house for herself and resides there with some other members, whom she has provided haven. It is pertinent to mention here that it was due to her equal efforts that we were able to reach other people of her community and to convince them for self-employment. She not only desires to set up a parlor to meet her own financial needs, with the help of this program, rather deeply aspires to spread the word to let others embark on the avenues of a self-sufficient and dignified life.



“One of our companions died, a few months ago. And Molvi Sahab refused to perform obligatory rituals for the deceased. Our heart cries out and sinks in despair with this utter rejection.”

SAIMA

M. Yousaf was a resident of Gujranwala and shifted to Narowal, three decades ago. When we asked him to share his part of misery. He articulated that they all have to undergo the same level of inferiorities. It was not that he couldn't accept his destiny and was tired of this life. But he only complained about the harshness of the society. He said that when we approach people through begging, we do not always expect them to give us. We pray for those who give and for those as well who do not. However, he does want people to not make fun of them. He was once asked by a toddler to hold his ears, if he wanted money. He believes that we incorporate this into our kids being role models that transgenders are not worthy to be dealt humbly. Why?

Yousaf only felt safe at his own home until father was alive. The day, he left Earth, his uncle never bestowed mercy on him. He used every possible tool to harm him physically and subsequently psychologically.

