Global Neighbourhood for Media Innovation

Annual Report

2019
Global Neighbourhood for Media Innovation (GNMI) is a registered not-for-profit organization working for media development in Pakistan to create a better informed and responsible society. It promotes the nationwide access to media advocacy, learning and literacy in the spectrum of news, entertainment and infotainment, through intellectual and cultural engagement. It is committed to becoming the centre of developing media and civil society. GNMI works under the areas of media awareness, cultural development, providing learning resources, advocacy and social justice.
Hello World!

This popular euphemism for online code testing holds most meaning to Global Neighbourhood for Media Innovation and its team during 2019 because of the launch of most activities till date by us – in terms of numbers and impact. This year, also, marked our way forward to the future in materializing our vision for media and civil society in Pakistan.

We are graciously thankful to our partners and supporters, especially the volunteers, who believed in us and continue to do so in our ongoing activities. We are also glad that our outreach online and in communities has exploded with over 3,000 followers on social media having reach of approximately 260,000 and over 500 direct beneficiaries in communities.

We look forward to expanding horizons for GNMI and media in Pakistan in years to come.

Spectaculum Itinere_ witness our journey
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Introduction

This annual report gives an overview of the activities Global Neighbourhood for Media Innovation (GNMI) carried out in the year of 2019.

It was an amazing year for GNMI. We worked on impactful projects this year focusing on innovation in media, democratic values and gender inclusion. We arranged numerous workshops, training sessions and seminars under its different programs to meet the purpose. We took on board seasoned journalists and media practitioners from Pakistan and abroad to make our training sessions and workshops full of knowledge for the beneficiaries.

Besides the trainings and workshops, GNMI also hosted several round table discussions to pave way forward for a responsible and sensitized media and media workers.

The research desk at GNMI produced a number of research work based on these discussions and that is available on our website. We also made best use of our social media presence to engage the audience available online. The response was overwhelming. We hope for more success in next year.
Projects

GNMII worked on three projects during 2019. Each of these projects had a different objective and approach but the main aim remained the same i.e. enhancing capabilities of those working in media for the betterment of society. Here, we are presenting an introduction of each project along with their impact and results.

Media Baithak

GNMII launched Media Baithak [English: Media Drawing Room] as an online and offline community to promote intellectual, cultural and professional engagement between media and civil society. At Media Baithak, we facilitate and digitally broadcast dialogue between stakeholders from the media and civil society around subjects of democratic process, social justice and accountability, amongst other interactive activities and trainings. These include lawyers, government officials, youth leaders, rights activists, artists, media makers, journalists, healthcare professionals and sports men and women. The initiative’s goal is to create a safe space for various stakeholders and community leaders to discuss and seek solutions for issues facing Pakistan.

The areas of focus are threefold at Media Baithak:

1. Dialogue and performance sessions to support and bring focus to those individuals or groups that otherwise do not have the platform or opportunity to present their work.

2. Journalist trainings that enable the participants to familiarize themselves with the most up to date media tools and techniques in order to stay relevant and relatable in contemporary times.

3. Round-table sessions that are organized at Media Baithak are structured around impact areas that specifically pertain to different variants of human rights and how they correspond to efforts in countering violent extremism.

Activities

Media Baithak hosted a total of 21 events during 2019 at the special space that GNMII rented for it. The response to these activities was overwhelming. GNMII invited some of the most renowned social stakeholders to its activities, as well as engaged the community apart from media persons to include social activists, law makers, educators, government officials, celebrities, medical professionals, journalists and beyond.
Media Baithak also accommodates community collaborations for mutual benefits i.e. creating a responsible and free media. Following are a few organizations that used the space to conduct their activities.

- Media Matters for Democracy
- Digital Rights Foundation
- Karachi School’s Guide

**Freedom of Expression and Media Pluralism in the Age of Democratization**

This paper discusses how freedom of expression and a free press can help prevent violent conflict and make its contribution to building peace and harmony in society. It was produced on the basis of a round-table meeting held by Media Baithak on September 05th, 2019 in Karachi, Pakistan. Based on the discussion, it gives recommendations to address general practices regarding the freedom of expression and press in the context of countering violent extremism as well as advancing the role of a free media in the same context.

**Enhancing Women’s Role in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in Pakistan**

This working paper sheds light on the role of women and gender aspects in countering violent extremism (CVE). It is based on the discussion of a round table meeting that was held by Media Baithak on 26th July, 2019 in Karachi, Pakistan. It discusses the influence women can exert in preventing and countering violent extremism. It also recommends that both men and women must unlearn the rigid gender stereotypes to work together towards building a peaceful society.

**Impact**

On ground level, Media Baithak provided an umbrella under which civil society organizations could find like-minded and diverse groups and individuals. This enabled a brainstorming and resource sharing environment that they needed to empower their causes to take root and flourish. Media Baithak also emerged as a platform to these previously secluded and little-known organizations and helped them to project their messages, not only through our online pages that reach thousands of users, but to a network of established social stakeholders that can provide the guidance and resources to the former.
Research

Media Baithak also hosts roundtable meetings occasionally on different subjects. The research department of GNMI has produced following work based on these round tables. These documents can be found on the website of GNMI. Link to each document is given in the footnote.

Participation in Active Sports to Develop Peace Building and Resilience in Communities

GNMI produced this research paper to discuss the role sports can play in preventing conflicts and building peace and harmony in society. It suggests that different sectors of society must come forward to create various avenues for athleticism and sport, to strengthen a sense of community and prevent violent extremism around us. It is based on the discussion of a round table meeting held by Media Baithak on November 14th, 2019 in Karachi, Pakistan.

Online Voices: Engaging the Community against Violent Extremism by Promoting Online Voices on Social Media

GNMI hosted a round table meeting under its initiative Media Baithak on September 26th, 2019 in Karachi, Pakistan to discuss the role online community can play in ending extremism in the society. Based on that discussion, this paper presents evidence on how digital voices through online activism can help the state and the society in preventing violent conflict, and contribute towards peace and harmony.

Building Community Resilience through Public Health to Address Violent Extremism

This paper presents suggestions on how recognizing and investing in public health can help prevent violent conflict and make its contribution to building peace and harmony in society. It aims to help different sectors of society unite in the endeavor to create various avenues for a holistic approach to health, to strengthen a sense of community and prevent violent extremism around us.

6. https://twitter.com/MBaithak
7. https://www.facebook.com/MediaBaithak/
Facebook is the most used social media platform in Pakistan. Keeping in mind, the digital plan of Media Baithak relied heavily on it. The posts made on Facebook page of Media Baithak during the year 2019 reached to 269,000 unique users with a total of 332,000 impressions.

Media Baithak’s digital campaign revolves around CSOs and media, highlighting civil society suggestions of CVE, collaborative efforts and effective citizen engagement. The simplified form of social media communication includes; awareness posts, registration announcement, inspirational video, program pictures, interviews and post program digital storytelling. Between 2019 to 2020 total 502 participants attended the sessions at Media Baithak, out of which 186 (37%) were women. There were a total of 141 digital videos produced with 137 short interviews, and 21 digital stories.
* 141 Videos

* 21 Digital Stories

* 137 Total Interviews

85 Male Interviews
52 Female Interviews
What Do Beneficiaries of Media Baithak Say About It?

We are proud to say that Media Baithak is one of its own kind platforms in Pakistan which different stakeholders linked with media and society can use to discuss the issues they can’t discuss anywhere else, to raise their voice and to interconnect with each other. Our beneficiaries often get back to us and give us their feedbacks that push us to do more for them and the society.

We have visited hundreds of places in Pakistan for the performances but the environment Media Baithak has provided in its performances room it is very vibrant, it pushes the artist to perform something mystical. (Fareedi brothers Qawaal group- Mr. Mehboob Fareedi and Mr. Fareed Akram)

Media Baithak is the sort of platform that has managed to rupture through a claustrophobic and stifling environment. It has gotten people to talk to one another and listening to one another, and the gaps in communication are being eliminated through this platform. – Ahsan Sabz – Executive Producer ARY News

If we go down the memory lane, study history, the classical times of Urdu poetry, we could see the refinement in the poets’ attitudes. They used to prepare generations. If we promote these things today and arrange sessions like this we can connect people, this ultimately will leave a great impacts on the society in terms of peace-building. – Saif-ul-Islam – Writer
Lub Kushai project is an innovative forum for resource sharing and open dialogues on the gender sensitive reporting, its challenges and opportunities. It invited journalists, opinion leaders and recognized professionals from diverse fields to engage in dialogue on sensitive issues particularly related to gender equality and how it can benefit Pakistan and its people in the long run.

GNMI launched this project on International Women’s Day, 2019 with a belief that remaining silent on women’s issue was no longer an option. The project aim was to amplify the voices of women in mainstream media by providing them a platform to connect with civil society, to discuss advocacy for untold gender issues.

Activities

GNMI hosted three seminars under its project ‘Lub Kushai’ in second quarter of 2019, each hitting a separate but important subject. GNMI invited high profile guests and speakers on these seminars to hold discussion and to raise their voice collectively or the betterment of the society.

These three seminars were:

1. #BalanceForBetter – International Women’s Day Program

The first seminar under Lub Kushai banner was held on International Women’s Day, 2019. It took its theme #BalanceForBetter from the annual campaign of International Women’s Day of that year.
2. #MeToo - Credibility Risk and Legislative significance of #MeToo Movement in Pakistan

The 2nd seminar of Lub Kushai was organized to discuss the most crucial yet gender sensitive issue i.e. #MeToo movement in Pakistan. #Me Too movement is a controversial subject in Pakistan. Hence, to have a healthy debate, GNMI divided the entire discussion into two seminars. In the first seminar, the panelists discussed credibility and implementation risk of #MeToo movement in Pakistan.
3. Mother Day - The gender employment gap and the rise of #WorkingMothers

The 3rd seminar of Lub Kushai series was arranged on Mother’s Day. It addressed the issues that working women face both at their work place and home.

Impact

The Project Lub Kushai, at full, facilitated many individuals to understand the issues related to gender equality in depth. It further fostered the trend of approaching dialogues when matter seems unspeakable for example, harassment or #MeToo Movement. Generally women in Pakistan do not discuss it as a matter of concern but Lub Kushai gave them a safe space where they could talk about their experiences and concerns without any fear.

Member Sindh assembly Nusrat Sahar Abbasi was one of the attendees of our seminar that discussed #MeToo movement. She showed her interest in the project and said that she would do her best to transform this initiative (Lub-Kushaai) to interior Sindh as a provincial project. She also ensured that she would support us in this campaign within her personal and official capacity.
Reshaping the Future of Journalism - Gender Equality Reporting

The project ‘Reshaping the Future of Journalism - Gender Equality Reporting’ was launched to train journalists and media persons in sensitised reporting of gender-based violence, using modern digital storytelling tools and platforms. Through different trainings the beneficiaries of the program were taught best practices to avoid sensationalism, violation of survivors’ identity and privacy, and insensitive questions while reporting issues such as #MeToo, forced marriages, sexual exploitation, workplace discrimination and harassment, femicide, domestic violence, rape, child molestation.

In the first quarter of the program that covered the period of October to December in 2019, GNMI conducted three trainings in Sindh – one for journalists at Sukkur press club and two for journalism students studying at Shah Abdul Latif University and Institute of Business Administration, Sukkur.

- Journalists trained: 21
- Students trained: 138

Campaigns

GNMI ran a number of campaigns and participated in national and international campaigns during 2019. A highlight of few campaigns can be seen below.

16 Days of Activism
Media Coverage

Media Baithak also received massive media coverage for its work during this year. The media not only covered all the events held at our Baithak but also invited our team in their studio to talk about the project in detail.

Founder of Media Baithak and GNMI, Najia Ashar, speaks on ARY news about the important and need for Media Baithak and elaborating on the community and social need for such an organization.

Print media also gave a massive coverage to Media Baithak. Following are a few examples from leading newspapers of Pakistan featuring discussions held at Baithak on different topics.
The mainstream media took deep interests in the dialogues and discussions held under Lub Kushai project. Following are the news stories published in leading newspapers of Pakistan.
Social Media Presence and Outreach

GNMI has its official social media pages on Facebook and Twitter. These are the two main social media networks with heavy user base in Pakistan. These are also very popular among journalists. Hence, it was very essential for GNMI to have its presence on both networks to engage, interact and share its work with the journalist’s community. Following are the numbers that we hit this year using our work.

![Social Media Stats]

Conclusion

2019 was the year that opened new avenues for GNMI and its team to try their knowledge, expertise and skills for the development of media industry so it can play its just role in a free and fair manner.

GNMI worked this year on a number of projects that focused on media development and improving the condition of women in media. We believe these are ongoing effort and require constant push. If we will keep working on our goal of achieving a gender balanced and prodemocracy media only then we will be able to see the results.

The digital media is emerging as a strong platform in Pakistan. GNMI is using its digital presence to showcase its work to its digital audience and to share the knowledge with them.

GNMI ends 2019 on a good note with the hope that the New Year will bring new opportunities for it that it will utilize to give this society a better and responsible media industry.
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