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## Countering Sectarian Narratives in Pakistan

### Religious scholars/Ulema campaign for Sectarian Reconciliation

A step forward to PEF's community outreach program driven by a network of mid-level religious and civil society leaders trained as advocates for sectarian reconciliation, the pilot advocates' team have organized various activities in the four district of Punjab to disseminate the narrative of sectarian reconciliation. In more than 50 follow-up activities at community level they delivered Friday sermons, media outreach: articles/columns, social media and addressed media forums on the narrative of sectarian reconciliation, and visited to each other's madrassas. These community outreach activities are playing a significant role in engaging people to minimize sectarian hatred. Numerous influential religious leaders, representatives of Ideology council and madrasa boards are not only appreciating PEF's efforts but also endorsing the counter-narrative document that is specifically prepared to address the need of sectarian reconciliation.



### All sects ulama visit to Shia Madrassa

## Building Educational Networks between Madrasas and Universities:



Following the PEF's University Certification Programs (UCP) specially designed for madrassa students, aiming to strengthen the capacity of Pakistani madrassa teachers and provide them high quality professional development courses, PEF has organized six

UCP courses for madrassa teachers in four public sector universities during the 2nd quarter in 2017. A total of 160 madrassa teachers including 52 female teachers from diverse schools of thoughts were trained in these UCP workshops that were held in the University of Malakand, University of Haripur, International Islamic University Islamabad and Government College University Faisalabad.

*"This program has provided me an opportunity to interact with the university staff and after attending this certificate program I have*

*realized my responsibilities as a teacher” Muhammad Yasir, One of the UCP participants.”*

*As a part of PEF UCP program, the Society for Peace and Conflict Management (SPACM)—a campus based student volunteer forum in University of Haripur—has engaged madrasa-university youths in joint activities. Approximately 200 students from madrasa and university participated in different games and competitions organized in the university.*

## Faith Leaders promoting the Culture of Tolerance, Reconciliation and Peace in Society

*“This workshop helped me to take away my misperceptions and biases I have held about religious minorities. I have gained the skills to be a good teacher to all my students and work for peace in my community along with my students.” (Najaf Aftab- Faisalabad)*

These views were expressed by a female madrasa teacher trained in PEF workshop under the project of **Promoting the Culture of Tolerance and peace in Pakistan**. PEF has engaged 158 madrasah teachers, 104 Imams and 180 interfaith leaders under this project. After attending advance training workshops, the religious leaders are working in their communities as **Interfaith Champions**. PEF network of Peace Champions have conducted **twenty-three Community Engagement Programs** (CEPs) amplifying the values of interfaith understanding, religious freedom, peacebuilding and reconciliation for more than **two-thousand** of their community members. The impact of Interfaith Champions continues to reach deeper in their communities as these religious leaders incorporate importance of interfaith dialogue in their Friday sermons, Sunday Church Services and Hindu and Sikah worship practices.

One of the highlights of this program is Diversity Tours, where PEF Interfaith Champions take turns in organizing day trips to Mosques, and churches for their communities.



### Inter Faith youth Diversity tour to all worship places

## Religious Leaders: Advocating and Strengthening Democracy in Pakistan

*“...It was surprising to know that Islam and democracy shared almost every fundamental value and challenges we are facing today. Hizb ullah – a participant from Jamia Darul Uloom Haqaania Akora Khatak,”*

With the support of National Endowment for Democracy (NED), Peace and Education Foundation (PEF) initiated a program “Religious Leaders Supporting Democracy in Pakistan” in October 2016. The program aims to build the capacity of religious leaders to promote active and democratic citizenship, democratic values and increasing support for democracy and human rights in Pakistan. The aim is to capacitate influential religious leaders to amplify democratic values, religious freedom and respect for human rights by developing **Democracy Advocates** in key regions where resistance to democratic system and rule of law is highest.

Islamic religious leaders were recruited based on their influence in community, they were asked to conduct follow-up activities within their communities after attending the workshop. In the first phase, of this project, PEF have provided advanced training to seventy one Islamic leaders (Democracy Advocates), and they have conducted various activities within their respective communities to include 1) Friday sermons, 2) publishing articles within their religious journals and local print media, and 3) conducting workshops and briefs. The impact of PEF Democracy

Advocates continues to grow, by June they have reached more than 4,500 of their community members through the abovementioned activities.



**Religious leader attending training workshop on Democracy**

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