

NHDR 2015 – Report on Consultation with Youth Group

A. Basic Data

Location	Bumboret, Kalash Valley, District Chitral
Date & Time	24 Dec. 2014, 11:30 am - 12: 30 pm
Topic	National Human Development Report 2015
Participant Profiles	9 participants from the Kalash community, 3 female, 6 male, aged between 16-27, bilingual in Kalasha and Khowar, some degree of familiarity with Urdu and English
UNDP Team	Muntazir Ali (Research Analyst)

B. Overview

This was the first of the sessions planned for Chitral, KP. The initial contact was made with Mr. Wazir Zada, a prominent Kalash activist and politician from Rumbur. However, when the NHDR team reached Chitral city on the evening of 23rd December, Wazir Zada could not be contacted. The team then contacted Mr. Luke Rehmat, another prominent Kalash social worker. He got the team in touch with Said Ahmed who facilitated this session in Bumboret. Bumboret was chosen because of its relative accessibility. However, gathering participants for the session proved to be more difficult. Most young females were away in *Bashaleni*, a retreat for expectant mothers and young females having their monthly cycles. The only young males present were those on leave from various educational institutions in Chitral and a couple of goatherds. In the end, Said Ahmed was able to gather 6 young men and 3 young women for the session. Although this was an ideal group size for a focus group, getting them to speak proved difficult. One possible reason for their reluctance was that they were wary of people from NGOs visiting them and holding discussions.

C. Key issues & themes

- The participants said that there was only one school for boys and girls in their area. There were not many qualified teachers and the teacher-student ratio was really high. Most of the teachers remained absent because they were not from the same area.
- They said that most of their curriculum was in English and it was difficult for the teachers to understand, let alone students. They thought that the examples in textbooks often led to confusion rather than clarity and curiosity.
- The female participants thought that there should be a separate school for girls; only then they would learn properly.
- All of them said that they would continue their studies if they were provided the financial wherewithal.
- All of them said it was their decision which course of study to follow (commerce, computer science, pre-medical).
- One of the goatherd said that his heart was not into studies. The other one had left school in 7th grade because of some personal issues. He said he was preparing for his 10th grade exams as a private candidate because being educated opens up more opportunities.

- All of them said that they had cheated in exams. They said that a combination of factors such as the examination system and unavailability of teachers explained why they cheated.
- Most of the male participants did not see entrepreneurship as a worthwhile option. The females however were positive about it, and one of them was planning to open up a sewing centre and saw real potential in the area.
- Most of them were not clear about their career aspirations. Two of the three female participants, however, were very clear about becoming teachers.
- Most of them had not voted in the last elections. The male participant who had voted thought that he voted for the right candidate.
- Most of the male participants said that their opinion was not considered important in decision making by the elders of the area. The female participants said that elders do seek their input on domestic issues.
- The participants said that it was entirely up to the boy and girl to decide who to marry.
- Most of the participants said that it irked them when people from other areas of Chitral ask them for liquor when they tell them that they are from Kalash.
- Most of them had mobile phones that they used for chatting, making calls and listening to songs. Most of them did not have access to internet. Those who did have access used it for online English language and computer courses. Their main source of news was TV news channels.
- Most of their fears revolved around adverse climatic changes leading to land sliding and glacial lake outburst floods, and terrorism.
- Most of them were optimistic that things would be better in their area in 5 years.

D. Interesting quotes

- “Arranged marriages led to difficulties. Therefore, it is now left to individuals to decide who to marry.” *Male, 25*
- “I did not go to school. I was more interested in tending to my goats than studying. Now it is too late.” *Male, 27*
- “There is only one science teacher in our school and there are too many students. It is really difficult for her to teach.” *Female, 17*