



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**TheNetwork**  
for Consumer Protection

TheNetwork Quarterly Newsletter for Update on Energy Sector from the Perspective of the Domestic Consumer



**INSIDE**

Nov 2012 - Jan 2013

## IEC Material

TheNetwork has launched IEC (Information, Education and Communication) material that includes a poster and an advocacy brochure.

The said IEC material is used during IPC (internal personal communication) activity held in the project Districts of Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Peshawar. Linking IEC material with IPC will enhance the efficacy of the communication material.

TheNetwork has employed all the modern methods and techniques in developing the IEC material which includes conducting FGDs (focus group discussions) with numerous consumer groups in the project Districts. The issues thus highlighted in the FGDs are captured in details in the poster and brochure.

The poster illustrates both the bills for Electricity and Gas educating consumer on how to read and understand a utility bill in terms of what he is paying for; regarding units of the commodity consumed and the additional charges, taxes levied thereon. The poster translates all segments of the bill in simplified Urdu language in order to make it more comprehensive for the consumer.

The brochure is linked with the poster and educates the consumer on grievance redress mechanism in case of any discrepancies. The brochure articulates the enacted Consumer Protection Laws in Pakistan and also categorizes the rights of the consumer internationally, exemplifying the specific grievance redress mechanism of the Regulator (NEPRA and OGRA).

The IEC material has the ownership of the relevant government authorities.



**Mobilizing  
Consumer Groups**



**Orientation Sessions  
with Influencers of  
the locality!**



**Insight of the  
Workshops**



**Lawyers' Trainings**



**ECC Sub-Committee  
of Federal Cabinet**



**Press Conference**



**Consumer Helpline**

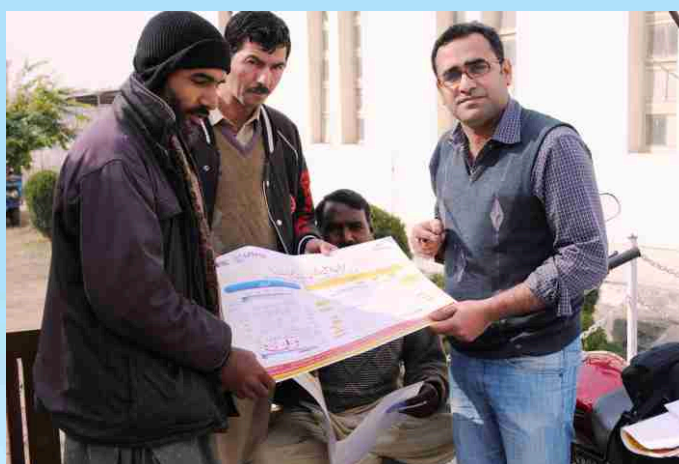


# Mobilizing Consumer Groups

During this quarter of the project, four meetings for consumer mobilization were conducted. A meeting with Market Committee of Sector F-11 was held on 17-01-2013 and another with Government Employees at Islamabad Model College for Girls at sector G-8/4 on 22-01-2013, were held at Islamabad. The other meetings were held at Rawalpindi on 23-01-2013 with Anjuman-e-Tajran at Moti Bazar and Private Teachers Association at Sharkrial respectively.

These meetings aimed at mobilizing the consumer and also linking him with lawyer groups who were imparted specific training on consumer protection laws by TheNetwork. This motion will facilitate the consumer to seek efficient and cost effective legal help.

These meetings are of the grass root level, conducted with members of the consumer groups belonging to diverse professional groups.





# Orientation Sessions with Influencers of the locality!

## Rawalpindi

TheNetwork for Consumer Protection organised an orientation session with Presidents of Anjuman-e-Tajraan, Mohallah Group, Private Teachers Association, Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Market Committees, Community Based Organization, District Consumer Protection Council and Assistant Director CPC, District Consumer Protection Council in District Rawalpindi on 31st December 2012.



## Islamabad

Another Orientation Session was held with the Presidents of PHA Housing Society, Sitara Market Committee Sector G-6, Private Teachers Association, Market Committee Sector F-11 Markaz, Minority Group, Citizen Group, Doctor's Association, Community Based Organisation, Government Employees Group and Workers of Political Parties at Islamabad on 11 January 2013.

## Peshawar:

The Orientation Session with the Consumer Groups of District Peshawar was held with the Presidents of Civil Society Organisations Group, Ladies Mohallah Group Gulberg Peshawar, Teacher Associations, Disaster Management Student's Group from University of Peshawar, PTCL Employees Group, Human Rights Group, Doctor's Association on 30th January 2013.

The orientation session emphasized the concept of consumer protection laws in Pakistan. The focus was on the Grievance Redress Mechanisms provided under the Regulatory Authorities (NEPRA & OGRA) and also under the relevant provisions of redressal in the project Districts i-e Islamabad Rawalpindi and Peshawar. The role of Consumer Council and the Consumer Court in targeted District were made part of the detail discussions.

The IEC material (Poster and Brochure) was explained, discussed and disseminated among all participants in detail.



# Insight of the Workshops



"I have been practicing in Islamabad courts for the past 5 years but its only after attending TheNetwork's training on Consumer Protection Laws that I have come to know of the existence of Consumer Judge in the Islamabad District Courts and a forum is identified where we can go into litigation on any consumer related issue such as faulty gas and electricity bills or non availability of gas etc," said

**Ms Kulsoom Rafique Advocate, Vice President, District Bar Association Islamabad.**

"This training has opened up a new avenue of practice for him as he had been mainly involved in litigation around criminal matter or property disputes but now he can sue any corporate entity and claim for damages under consumer laws"

**Mr. Sanaullah Bhutta Advocate, Districts Courts Islamabad.**



"I appreciate the struggle initiated by the USAID and TheNetwork to spread awareness on Consumer Protection and strongly support their cause" said

**Mr. Imran Adil Advocate, High Court Islamabad.**

"Until and unless the Islamabad Consumer Protection Council is formed the Consumer Courts cannot provide redress effectively to the Consumers under the Islamabad Consumer Protection Act 1995" said

**Mr. Karmran Basharat Mufti, Additional District Judge, Islamabad.**



“We will be the torch bearers to spread the awareness and understanding of the consumer protection legislation among our professional clients and also to the society at large”.

**Ms. Nida Iftikhar Advocate District Courts Rawalpindi**



The Consumer Protection Law of Peshawar needs to be seen as a whole. It also requires an active Consumer Protection Council mainly consisting of bureaucrats and eminent people from the city and civil society associations on consumers. The litigation in the Consumer Court is only done after exhausting all these forums

**Mr. Baber Khan Yousafzai Advocate Vice President High Court Peshawar**

“The absence of the council has increased the case load of the consumer complaints on the District Consumer Court. “On the pattern of Punjab, the KPK government should establish exclusive consumer courts instead of giving additional charge to the District & Sessions Judges” added **Mr. Shaiber Khan District & Sessions Judge Court of Sessions, Peshawar.**



“I appreciate the steps taken by the TheNetwork for creating awareness consumer awareness, such activities must be organised at regular basis to help address the consumer complaint”

**Mr. Tahir Taj Bhatti President Anjuman-e-Tajraan Moti Bazar, Rawalpindi.**



# Lawyer Trainings

Lawyers from Rawalpindi Bar Association, Peshawar Bar Association and Islamabad Bar Association were trained in the project Districts by TheNetwork for Consumer Protection.

TheNetwork has taken the lead in generating awareness to the consumer on their rights and also to have the specific consumer laws implemented. Thus TheNetwork has managed to create an assemblage of effective resource persons in the sector of consumer protection to successfully enforce and disseminate the message.

The workshops gained support from Chief Justice of Islamabad High Court, Mr. Hameed Ullah Khan, Chief Justice of Peshawar High Court, Mr. Dost Muhammad, Consumer Court Judge Rawalpindi, Mr. Sohail Nasir, Additional District and Sessions Judge, Mr. Kamran Basharat Mufti Islamabad, District & Session Judge Peshawar, Mr. Shaibar

Khan and Presidents of the respective District Bar Associations from each project District.

The participants were briefed on the concept of consumer rights and consumer protection laws. The concept of Regulations and its three kinds- self, co and third party- were explained to the participants.

A whole session on Grievance Redress Mechanisms by NEPRA and OGRA was included in the lawyers training. The NEPRA and OGRA regulations provide for the effective attendance of consumer in the open hearings for price determination of the tariff. However, the consumer representation in the hearings of the Regulators is negligible. Thus the participants were encouraged to represent consumers on these platforms.





## Press Conference

A press conference cum orientation session was organized by TheNetwork in Peshawar Press Club on 31st January 2013. The occasion was the issuance of the notification of secretary of the Provincial (KP-K) Consumer Protection Council. The appointment of the secretary resulted in the activation of the Consumer Protection Council as with it no meeting could have been convened and that has never happened for the last 5 years since the rules for the NWFP Consumer Protection Law were notified in 2007.

The press conference was attended by journalists from mainstream national and inter-nation media such as from Voice of America (Pushto Service), Daily The News, Daily Dawn, Express Tribune and Daily The Nation. Representatives from vernacular media including Daily Aaj, Daily Mashriq, Daily Ausaf Daily Pakistan Observer etc were also present. The event was also covered by electronic media Sama.TV. Nadeem Iqbal, Chief Executive of TheNetwork conducted the deliberation of the session. He

briefed the journalists over the role of the consumer council and consumer courts in the province and that the media has a role to educate the consumers. He highlighted that under the USAID project TheNetwork is activating consumer redress mechanism. He further elaborated that the media should counter the prevailing cynicism in the society by telling people that there are official systems of consumer redress available with them. They just have to patiently get engaged with them. At first some individuals may not get redress and have to face hardships but that would result in the activation of the system. "until and unless there is no complaint, there won't be a redress," the chief executive emphatically told journalists.

Toward the end of the session an open question and answer session was conducted where the journalists shared some of their experiences while reporting on energy issues and narrated the ordeal faced by consumers.

## ECC Sub-Committee of Federal Cabinet:

TheNetwork for Consumer Protection was officially invited by the Ministry of Law and Parliamentary Affairs to participate in the Sub-committee meeting of Economic Coordination Council (ECC). TheNetwork attend the same and presented a paper constituting policy guidelines to OGRA for the Determination of CNG tariff. The said meeting was held on 27 December 2012.

During the meeting, TheNetwork further

recommended that OGRA should develop efficient consumer complaint redress mechanism comprising of very profound procedures which should be such conspicuously publicized that a consumer is encouraged to file the complaint. It should also be assured that the Consumer Redress Mechanism should be cost free for the consumer and must have minimum opportunity cost on the complaining consumer.

# بجلی اور گیس سے متعلق شکایت کرنا آپ کا قانونی حق ہے!!

اسلام آباد، راولپنڈی اور پشاور کے صارفین گیس اور بجلی کی شکایات سوئی نادرن گیس، آئیسکو اور پیسکو کے مقامی دفاتر میں جمع کروا سکتے ہیں

اگر مسئلہ حل نہ ہو تو اوگرا اور نیپرا میں شکایت کریں

اسکے علاوہ آپ ضلع میں موجود صارف کونسل اور صارف عدالت میں بھی رابطہ کر سکتے ہیں۔

مشکلات کے سلسلے میں اس نمبر پر رابطہ کریں

**051-111-829-829**

دی نیٹ ورک صارفین کے تحفظ کا ادارہ

[www.thenetwork.org.pk](http://www.thenetwork.org.pk)

[www.facebook.com/thenetworkforconsumerprotection](https://www.facebook.com/thenetworkforconsumerprotection)