

SAMEENA NAZIR

PEACE

IS LOUD

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“GLOBAL PEACE STARTS WITH PEACE AT HOME. WE MUST PROTECT WOMEN FROM VIOLENCE AT HOME AND SUPPORT THEM TO TAKE ACTIVE PART IN PEACE-MAKING AT THE VILLAGE, COMMUNITY, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS.”

– SAMEENA NAZIR

WOMEN'S RIGHTS PROGRAM SPECIALIST

Sameena Nazir is the founder and Executive Director of Potohar Organization for Development Advocacy (PODA).

In 2006, Ms. Nazir returned to Pakistan and established a school in her native village, in honor of her mother. Shortly after, in 2007, she formed PODA and designed an annual conference of rural women and girls in Pakistan to amplify their voices and experiences. **The conference quickly grew from 300 participants in 2008 to over 3,000 women and girls in 2018. In 2009, PODA recognized the efforts of Malala Yousufzai as a prominent youth leader. Malala then went on to become the youngest Nobel Prize laureate. The conferences have tackled timely issues for rural women and girls such as land reallocation, early child marriage, and other humanitarian efforts.** Ms. Nazir reflects that, “Everywhere I traveled, I saw that the largest group of people who need help are those who live in villages, and most of them are women and girls.”

Ms. Nazir's work has been recognized globally. In 2015 she was elected as Vice President (Asia) for Women's International League for Peace & Freedom (WILPF), and she also served as a member of the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) in Pakistan. In 2010, she

was awarded the Benazir Bhutto Human Rights Defender Award by the President of Pakistan, and in 2009 she received the Annual Humanitarian Service Award by InterAction, in Washington, DC. In 2002, Ms. Nazir was recognized for her Courage and Vision for initiating projects for Afghan Refugee Women at International Human Rights Law Group. Ms. Nazir holds a Masters in Rural Development from Cornell University and an MA in English from Pakistan. Sameena currently resides as President for Women's International League for Peace & Freedom (WILPF) and serves as a member of the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW). She is also the co-author of **Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa: Citizenship and Justice** (Freedom House, 2005).

Ms. Nazir enjoys sharing the work of the unique contributions that Indigenous women and girls use for innovative problem solving. **Ms. Nazir is an informative, analytical and engaging speaker that can outline how to design and implement sustainable projects for rural communities of women and girls and how to amplify their local work globally.** Her latest work is to raise visibility and action for what she believes to be the next genocide of our lifetime taking place in Kashmir, India.

Speaking Topics

- Why peace in Pakistan is critical for peace in the world
- Attacks on Girls' Right to Education: what can we do?
- Women's voices for peace: where, how, why?
- Women's rights in the Middle East and North Africa
- Organizing women in Pakistan

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