

# PPAF organizes Amtul Raqeeb Award ceremony



*Dr Sania Nishtar, Founder and President Heart File, Qazi Azmat Isa, CEO PPAF, Ms. Samia Liaquat Ali Khan, Group Head, Compliance & Quality Assurance, PPAF in a group photograph with winners of Amtul Raqeeb Award and staff members of PPAF in a ceremony in Islamabad.*

Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) organized Amtul Raqeeb Award ceremony on the occasion of International Women's Day for female community members engaged in PPAF supported community development initiatives across the country. The Award is meant to honour and recognise the invaluable contribution by individuals especially women belonging to PPAF-supported communities in self-advancement as well as in the socio-economic development of the area they inhabit.

PPAF held the 1st Amtul Raqeeb Award ceremony where 26 women and two men were conferred with Amtul Raqeeb Award during the last four years. Dr Sania Nishtar, Founder and President Heart File, was the chief guest at the occasion. She said that the PPAF was truly reaching those people who were the resources of this country. "PPAF should be congratulated also for creating this award in the name of a truly brave woman who sacrificed her life in the course of her work and for recognizing the achievements of outstanding women who are making a difference in their communities," she observed.

She added that the equity and sustainable development were global commitments and neither were possible without the inclusion of women. "It is also commendable that PPAF invited the men who accompanied the award winners to speak to make men party to these achievements so that they realise the respect these women deserve," she added.

Hailing from different regions of the country, this year's Amtul Raqeeb Award recipients included Rehmat Bibi (Badin), Gul Bano Qasim (Rehri Goth), Hussan Jamal Bibi (Shangla), Naeema Bibi (Swabi), Sofia Sahar (Muzaffargarh), Lakki Bibi (Kech) and Ghazala (Sibbi). These women belonging to far flung areas of the country were acknowledged for their courage in the face of adversity and becoming role models in their respective communities.

The selection criteria for this year's award brought into focus women who had made through local bodies election 2015, those encountering a physical disability, women working for promotion of safe motherhood practices and the

ones working towards peace building and conflict management in their respective areas.

PPAF instituted the award in recognition of courage of Amtul Raqeeb, a programme officer at Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP), Quetta. Amtul was killed along with two other colleagues on the way back to Quetta after performing her duties in Mastung on January 24, 2011. Her immense contribution in capacity building of local traditional birth attendants resulted in a significant reduction of the mother-child mortality rate in the inaccessible regions of Balochistan.

Qazi Azmat Isa, CEO of PPAF, said that the strength, achievements and resilience of the women here was overwhelming and PPAF was committed to the journey together in bringing change and equity to the communities of Pakistan. "The heroes are the people who are working on the ground, like Amtul Raqeeb," he added.