Meher Rehman

Summary

Strategic senior leader in the anti-violence and gender justice space with expertise in feminist, racial justice, and intersectional approaches. Experience ranges from working with bi and multilateral agencies and international organizations to domestic and community-based initiatives. Has led diverse teams and managed complex programs, partnering with communities to implement social impact initiatives in gender justice, public health, immigrant rights, and youth empowerment in the domestic and international space. Proven ability to build cross-sector partnerships and strengthen grassroots ecosystems while embedding community-led approaches into programs.

Experience

The Network Advocating Against Domestic Violence - **Director of Capacity Building** *03/2021 - Current*
Chicago, USA

- Lead design and implementation of a comprehensive capacity-building strategy integrating training, public education, and technical assistance on gender-based violence (GBV), with emphasis on racial justice, anti-oppression, and culturally specific models.
- Provide strategic and operational leadership for the capacity-building portfolio while being extensively involved in fundraising.
- Spearhead expansion of training portfolio, increasing organizational visibility and strengthening partnerships. Secured international opportunities to share training model in Morocco, Iraq, and Australia.
- Oversee training portfolio, driving new curriculum development, strengthening delivery systems, and supporting long-term growth; co-created Racialized Misogyny and GBV and Criminalized Survival, Decarceration & Domestic Violence, both widely recognized.
- Oversee year-round delivery of the 40-hour Domestic Violence Training.
- Supervise and mentor a multidisciplinary team of six staff and consultants, ensuring high-quality program delivery, staff wellness, and professional development.
- Provide strategic leadership to service providers, coalitions, and community-based organizations across Illinois to advance effectiveness and equity-centered practices.
- Build and sustain partnerships across anti-violence agencies in Chicago establishing a model that addresses intersections of domestic and community violence.

Education

01/2020
Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, Chicago
Executive Leadership Program**:** Non-Profit Management

01/1998
Jamia Central University, India
Masters of Social Work

01/1996
Delhi University, India
Bachelors of Sciences

Languages

English:
Full Professional / Native

Urdu:
Native/ Bilingual

Hindi:
Native/ Bilingual

Regional experience

South & south-east Asia, Middle East, North & East Africa, North America

- Co-chair the Training Advisory Group and contribute to organizational strategy as part of the leadership team.
- Led ideation and planning of five annual Social Justice & Domestic Violence Conferences, convening over 300 participants nationwide and fostering dialogue and knowledge exchange.

Survivors Know - **Senior Advisor** *01/2023 – 05/2026*
Chicago, USA

- Provided strategic guidance to build capacity of grassroots and survivor-led organizations, empowering them to achieve their goals.
- Supported organization's mission by strengthening grassroots leadership and enhancing community-led justice movements.
- Contributed to program design and thought leadership, advancing movement sustainability and impact through innovative initiatives.
- Cultivate partnerships and support ecosystem-building efforts that center lived experience and community expertise.
- Advance non-carceral approaches through education, research, and field-building initiatives.

Independent Consultant *01/2007 - 12/2021*

- Led national-level program evaluations and capacity-building initiatives, enhancing program effectiveness across sectors.
- Conducted media landscape research on reproductive health across multiple Indian states (Spitfire Strategies).
- Designed and implemented youth empowerment and civic engagement programs at scale.
- Developed advocacy tools, training manuals, and knowledge products on violence against women and girls.
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Apna Ghar (Our Home) - **Senior Programs Manager** *01/2019 - 02/2021*
Chicago, USA

- Directed a comprehensive, culturally specific gender-based violence program with an annual budget of approximately $2 million.
- Oversaw direct services, outreach, and advocacy programs for immigrant and underserved communities affected by domestic violence, enhancing accessibility and support.
- Managed multidisciplinary teams and ensured alignment between program delivery, organizational goals, and community needs.
- Directed organizational expansion, developing and operationalizing two program sites in the Chicagoland area to increase service reach.
- Built and strengthened partnerships with community organizations, government agencies, and funders.
- Played a key role in fundraising and grant development.

Core Areas of Expertise

- Strategic Leadership & Organizational Development
- Capacity Building, Training & Technical Assistance
- Movement Building & Community-Led Advocacy
- Global Program Design, Management & Evaluation
- Grantmaking & Donor Engagement (>$3M portfolios)
- Gender Justice, Anti-Oppression & Intersectionality
- Stakeholder Engagement & Cross-Sector Partnerships
- Team Leadership, Supervision & Mentorship

Certifications

40-hour Domestic Violence Training in Illinois, 2019

Board Engagement

- Chicago Coalition to End Homelessness, 2021–Present
- Survivors Know, 2025 - Present
- Middle Eastern Immigrant & Refugee Alliance, 2023–2025
- Muslim Caucus of North America, 2019- 2021

- Enhanced internal systems, program structures, and service delivery models, significantly improving program impact and sustainability.

Geneva Global – **Program Director** *07/2017 - 12/2018*
Paoli, PA, USA

- Managed a $3M+ annual grantmaking portfolio supporting anti-slavery programs across multiple regions in India.
- Co-developed grantmaking strategy for multi-donor initiative addressing child marriage, impacting regions across Asia, Africa, and Latin America.
- Delivered high-level technical assistance to 30+ partner organizations and consultants, enhancing program quality and outcomes.
- Monitored program implementation, ensured accountability, and supported adaptive learning across partners.
- Designed funding frameworks and partnership models that enabled effective global implementation.

PAI - **Senior International Advocacy Manager** *01/2016 - 12/2016*
Washington, DC, USA

- Managed $3M+ in grants across national level partners in DRC, India, Myanmar, Ethiopia, and Pakistan.
- Provided technical assistance to partners, enhancing implementation and aligning policies with advocacy goals.
- Successfully secured second-phase funding from Packard Foundation.
- Generated insights that shaped global advocacy strategies and informed program design.
- Led multi-country qualitative research initiative identifying systemic and environmental factors impacting reproductive health programs.

Technology in Education - **Manager of Programs** *07/2012 - 08/2015*
New Delhi, India

- Co-designed and managed a large-scale 'Skills and Education for Youth' initiative in partnership with the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India.
- Led project teams to deliver program objectives, directly impacting underserved Muslim youths.
- Coordinated implementation across four states, collaborating with government agencies and diverse stakeholders.
- Engaged stakeholders across public systems and community organizations to foster collaboration.

FHI 360 - **Senior Programs Officer** *05/2010 - 07/2012*
New Delhi, India

- Led the Gender Program for India and supported capacity building across Asia region offices.
- Developed and implemented a gender integration strategy across

programs, research, and technical assistance portfolios.
- Co-managed HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, family planning, and health systems strengthening programs, enhancing service delivery and outcomes.
- Collaborated with global headquarters in the US to align country-level strategies with organizational priorities, ensuring effective implementation of initiatives.

SAARTHAK Mental Health Institute - **Project Manager**

New Delhi, India *01/2005 - 12/2006*

- Led UN Women-supported project implementing gender-responsive relief and reconstruction in tsunami-affected communities in Sri Lanka, improving recovery outcomes.
- Developed Minimum Standards of Care and Protection for survivors of human trafficking with UNDP, facilitating mechanisms for safe recovery and support.
- Trained local organizations in psychosocial support and gender-sensitive recovery approaches, strengthening community resilience and capacity.

ASK India - **Manager / Programs Officer** *08/1998 - 12/2004*

New Delhi, India

- Designed and implemented gender and governance programs, training over 300 women and significantly increasing their participation in local governance.
- Led evaluation and knowledge management initiatives for multiple development programs, improving program effectiveness and fostering stakeholder learning.
- Managed child rights advocacy initiatives, securing safe working conditions for children in hazardous industries.
- Facilitated participatory evaluations and system development for partner organizations, enhancing operational capacity and program impact.

Recognition And Publications

- Crossroads Giving Project Fellow, Chicago, 2025
- Atlas Corps International Fellowship, Washington, DC, 2008–2010
- Muslim Leader of Tomorrow, American Society for Muslim Advancement, New York, 2009
- Presented on Illinois Model of Supporting Criminalized Survivors of GBV at the International Women's Shelter Conference in Sydney, 2025
- Gender, Health and Governance: Experiences from India - Presentation at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Exposition, Washington DC in November 2011